

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

EMBEDDING THE ADVANCEMENT PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES –
LESSONS FROM THE KRESGE INYATHELO ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE (KIAI).

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JULY 2023



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ABSTRACT

The South African Higher Education academic enterprises are besieged with multiple challenges that threaten its viability. Both the government and academic leadership bemoan the dwindling fiscals and turbulent economic markets as factors contributing to this undesirable trajectory.

This manifested in 2015, following the October student uprising over increases in student fees. Their main grievance was a call for zero-percent fee increase for the sector. The call later gravitated towards a demand for free education.

Universities on the other hand, lament their dire need for student fees to augment the government funding to keep afloat. The impasse brought about by the students' demand for free education on one hand, and the University's quest for sustainability on the other, brought the South African Higher Education institutions' viability model into scrutiny.

Notwithstanding government's obligation to public funding in a South African context, Universities are challenged to develop their own Advancement capacity to mobilise resources from alternative funding sources. ***Advancement in this instance refers to a systematic and integrated approach to building and managing the external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders thereby positioning an organisation to attract support (Inyathelo, 2015).***

This research is therefore aimed at contributing towards institutional Advancement body of knowledge, positioning it as a possible viability strategy. The study employs Stanford Beer's (1981) Viable Systems Model's diagnostic capability to analyse the Advancement practice to the end of informing organisational self-knowledge.

Key words: Advancement, Viability, Systems, Complexity.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late loving parents: -

Rre. Ignatius Hosea Segadimane Sedumedi,
namane ya tholo, yo o jang mogope a bo a o lala. Mmina tshipi ha go le tlala, ha go
le kgora o bina tholo. Ha o ja ha o gadime, o gadimana ntweng. Tshipi e ncho,
Noto-a-Marolong!

le

Mme. Phemelo Dintle Sedumedi:
Morwadi wa Mofurutshe. Tshwene, makopong ga o naiwe, o naiwa mmeleng.
Ngwetsi ya Barolong. Dintle tsa moetapele, tse di gaisang tsa mosalamorago!

Your spirit will forever serve as a beacon of hope. I have felt you throughout this
journey.

Indeed, Mama, I made it.

DECLARATION

I, David Sedumedi, hereby declare the dissertation has not been submitted for a degree at any other university, and that its only prior publication will be in the form of conference papers and journal articles. Where other authors have been cited, this has been acknowledged in the text and referenced at the end of this work in the bibliography.

Signature: __

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CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT: THE CRISIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA. THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT ADVANCEMENT MUST PLAY.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explore the Viable System Model (VSM) application as a diagnostic tool to enhance the Advancement practice in the South African higher education system. Advancement, in this instance, refers to a systematic and integrated approach to building and managing external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders, thereby positioning an organisation to attract support (Inyathelo, 2015). The mission of Advancement Offices in universities is to inform and involve external stakeholders to get them to invest in a university's life through strategically co-ordinated sets of activities.

The South African higher education academic enterprise is besieged with multiple challenges threatening its viability and sustainability. Prime amongst them manifested in the blow suffered in 2015, following the October student uprising over increases in student fees. Students across the country brought the system to a grinding halt in protest over the ever-escalating fees. Their main grievance at the time was a call for a zero per cent fee increase for the sector. The call later gravitated towards a demand for free education.

On the other hand, universities (as public institutions) lament their dire need for student fees to augment government funding to keep afloat. The impasse brought about by the students' demand for free education and the university's quest for sustainability brought the South African higher education funding model into scrutiny.

Notwithstanding the government's obligation to public funding, universities are continuously challenged to develop their capacity to position themselves for alternative funding. Therefore, the aim of this study is to contribute to enhancing the Advancement

practice to the end that it mitigates the dire demands of surviving in the ever-changing higher education environment. I explore the application of the Viable System Model as a diagnostic tool to promote organisational viability.

Through this qualitative research I explore the experiences of Advancement practitioners that benefitted from the lucrative US-based Kresge Foundation's Advancement grant. Kresge collaborated with a South African based non-governmental organisation called Inyathelo, The South African Institute for Advancement. They jointly ran a programme called the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative (KIAI). The aim of the programme was to develop organisational capacity for institutional Advancement. Secondly, was to contribute towards professionalisation of Advancement through capacitating the individuals employed in the practice.

The programme enabled beneficiary institutions not only the ability to employ new staff members to bolster their human resource quantitative capacity but also exposed team members to capacity development and training on Advancement practice. Through Inyathelo and the Rhodes University Business School partnership, staff members underwent training for an NQF level 7 accredited certificate course in Advancement and Resource Mobilisation.

I am a member of the Advancement community of practice in South Africa and have benefitted from the KIAI programme. I have served at 2 of the 7 South African universities that were supported by this initiative between the years 2006 and 2017. During my career in Advancement, I have served in the following professional bodies relevant to Advancement: Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education (MACE); Higher Education Funding Forum (HEFF); and the University South Africa Fundraising Community of Practice.

I have held various middle and senior management Advancement portfolios at different universities since 2006. At middle management I have served at separate universities as Manager Communications; Manager Convocation and Alumni Relations; and Manager Alumni Relations and Fundraising. I have also served as a member of senior executive teams at two universities where I held director portfolios

for Development and Alumni Relations and that of Institutional Advancement and Internationalization.

Like some of my colleagues, the experience acquired in the programme benefitted our career paths. It earned us career progression or promotion to serve at senior levels at other local universities, some of which did not benefit from the KIAI programme. But mostly, the programme contributed to the South African universities discourse on institutional Advancement.

In terms of presentation, I start this action research dissertation by analysing the higher education environment. The purpose is to surface the complex environment within which the Advancement practice is embedded. Followed by the research context and the KIAI rationale. I will also be submitting Beers (1981) Viable Systems Model as the research's methodological source.

1.2 HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

A critical success factor for South African society hinges on a sustainable higher education system. For this to happen, individual higher education institutions must be viable. This means being cognisant and responsive to national and international environmental factors impacting the sector's future. Stafford Beer (1981), VSM, defines organisational viability as the capacity of institutions to thrive in unpredictable and turbulent environments. He posits that viability enables institutions to "adapt appropriately in their chosen environment, or adapting their environment to suit themselves, even if they find themselves in a situation that has not been seen before" (Hoverstadt, 2010:88).

In the South African higher education context, Pityana (2018) argues that the system must keep up with the fast-changing developments in science and technology. Keep up with the "see-saw in the world affairs and the continuing economic dominance by world powers... We live with the ambiguity of living in a one-world, but one which is significantly localising and nationalistic", he asserts (2018:11).

In this section, I look at various environmental factors informing the 'worldview' and contemporary discourse on higher education in South Africa.

1.2.1 The National Perspective

Higher education provision in South Africa is a public service and a government responsibility. This role is discharged through the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). In 2013, this department facilitated the adoption by of a White Paper for Post-Schooling Education and Training by the Cabinet. Their aim was “to outline a framework that defines the department's focus and priorities and curve a path that will help shape strategies and plans for the future in line with the country's 2030 developmental plans” (Nzimande, 2013).

The White Paper is premised on expanding the current provision of education and training in the country and reflects on six (6) milestones established since the dawn of democracy. These include:

1. Strengthening the College system.
2. Harnessing the energy in the private education sector.
3. Addressing the issues of disability in the sector.
4. Open learning and its diverse modes of provision.
5. The need to link education with the workplace.
6. The state and role of universities in the country.

For this research, I focused mainly on the White Papers reflection on the state of Universities in the country (6th point). This is because the section analyses the higher education environment from a national perspective and explore the policy direction and the mandate of South African higher education institutions. This context will be expanded upon in the coming paragraphs.

On celebrating the country's 20 years of democracy, the South African National Assembly took the opportunity to reflect on the journey traversed by all sectors of society. Part of this national discourse reflected on the country's journey with higher education. To this end, the parliament's portfolio committee on higher education

invited the University South Africa (USAf), formerly known as Higher Education South Africa (HESA), to lead a debate on the state of the country's higher education in context, reflecting on achievements and key challenges lying ahead (March 5, 2014).

The USAf is a membership organisation representing (through Vice Chancellors) all Universities in South Africa. The body aims to promote an inclusive, responsive, and equitable higher education system in the country, at least according to its founding documents. The USAf's credibility in this discourse is not only informed by the fact that they find present voice through higher education's most senior leaders (and sometimes thought leadership in their own right) but also because the body has a mandate to:

- Influence and contribute to policy positions regarding higher education.
- Advocate and campaign for an adequately funded university sector.
- Facilitate effective dialogue among universities, government, business, parliament and other stakeholders on issues affecting universities.
- Co-ordinate sector-wide engagement on major issues (e.g., transformation, differentiation, internationalisation, etc.).
- Commission and disseminate research on critical issues with implications for universities.
- Provide value-adding services to member institutions.
- Speak on behalf of universities on major issues with implications for their well-being.
- Strengthen the creation of a Higher Education Governance System based on the principles of cooperative governance, institutional autonomy, and academic freedom.

<https://www.usaf.ac.za/>

To help contextualise the discussion on the national perspective impacting the Environment in South African higher education, I drew from the input made by USAf in 2014, on the higher education challenges, to the National Assembly. I juxtaposed the input against the White Paper for Post-Schooling Education and Training,

published in 2013. Through these resources, I paint a picture of environmental challenges and the state of higher education.

For the purposes of analysis, I organised the discussion on the environment based on these sub-themes (listed in no particular order): Student Access and Success, Research Development, Quest for Social Justice, University Academics, Higher Education Differentiation, and Funding challenges.

Student access and success: DHET challenges the university sector to increase its participation rate to 25% from the current 17.3% by 2030, total enrolment of approximately 1.6 million students nationally. This target is modest compared to the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, which set the bar at a 30% participation rate. The NDP further specifies that the university must enrol 450 000 mathematics and science entrants by 2030.

The DHET also reaffirmed its commitment to improving student access, success, and throughput, urging that this remains a national policy priority and should be for the universities too. The White Paper, however, lamented the undesirable low national success rates in graduation, resulting in a performance 15% below the international norm of 25% for 1st-year degree programmes at contact institutions (White Paper, 2013). The NDP calls for a more than 25% increase by 2030.

The White Paper also noted the lack of a necessary relationship between the equity of access and outcomes, given the overall change in student demographics. Black students, particularly those from poor economic background seemed to be performing poorly in terms of throughput and graduation rate. The USAf observed the same situation concerning the disparities in the throughput and dropout rates between social groups.

They observed that only 16% of African students enrolled for a three-year degree at the beginning of 2005, graduated in the minimum of three years, with 41% graduating after six years and 59% dropping out in the same cohort. The comparative figures for their white counterparts were 44% minimum time, 65% after 6 years and 35% dropping out (CHE, 2012).

It is acknowledged, though, that the country overcame skewed patterns of student access to higher education from a system that relatively excluded black. With a total black majority population of 89%, pre 1994 figures indicated that black students only accounted for 40% of student enrolment. While white students, drawn from a total population of 11%, accounted for 48% of the student enrolment.

However, 2011 recorded a drastic increase in this enrolment pattern with black students accounting for 81% of the student body (CHE, 2013). The increase was enabled by interventions such as outlawing racial and sex discrimination, affirmative action, alternative admission tests, and recognition of prior learning policies, to name a few progressive interventions.

Of concern though, relating to access is that the sector seems to be failing on the social cohesion front by not being more equitable in accommodating all social groups. White students remain concentrated in historically white institutions. Access, opportunity, and outcomes, which were previously shaped by race, seem now to be conditioned by social class, argues USAf.

Research: DHET is committed to a policy focus that must ensure the growth of research and innovation. They further committed "to improving the quality of research, ensuring coherence of the policy framework guiding areas across the higher education research committees, and strengthening identified areas important for national development" (White Paper, 2013:34). The government called on a greater collaboration amongst the country's research communities between universities research councils and other private and public sector institutions.

The White Paper also acknowledged South Africa's publications output which is the highest in Africa. However, it lamented its innovation system that remains small by international standards. The USAf concurred, noting that South Africa is credited for producing bulk of scientific research in Africa, attested also to the gradual increase in post-graduate enrolment post-apartheid.

However, they cautioned that more needed to be done with regards to the country's quest for expansion and more significant equity for research and post-graduate

education, especially concerning national economic and social development needs. The observation was that enrolment and output remained low, with a 'marginal increase of 1.8% in the size of post-graduate student body' (USAf, 2014).

Perhaps the most telling statistic on how low the South African universities research output is compared to counterparts in other countries, was in the number of doctoral graduates they produced annually. The USAf reported that, in 2010 South African universities combined produced a total of 1423 doctorates. Whereas in Brazil, the Sao Paulo University alone, produced 2244 doctoral graduates in the same year (USAf 2014; Badash and Cloete, 2011).

The NDP makes a similar observation, pointing to South Africa's science and innovation system that is small, relative to its population size. Compared to Korea and Brazil, which produce 187 and 48 doctoral degrees respectively per million population, South Africa produces 28 doctoral graduates for the equal population sample.

The biggest constraint cited for South Africa's poor performance compared to other countries was the unavailability of research infrastructure and facilities. It was also noted that research performance was highly skewed, with only ten universities producing 86% of all research and 89% of all doctoral graduates.

The government, however, made a policy commitment that DHET will assist Universities with research capacity intervention which will include developing research infrastructure, facilitating access to journals and promoting SA Universities' participation in global research networks (White Paper, 2013).

Quest for Social Justice: The NDP 2030 outlines one of the three functions of the Universities as being key to providing "opportunities for social mobility and simultaneously strengthens equity, social justice and democracy", thus helping to overcome the inequalities from the apartheid past (NDP, 2012: 262). Greater social justice depends on equitable access by all population groups to quality education. Therefore, universities are expected to play a crucial role in helping South African society's discourse on social justice.

However, USAf questions the ability of higher education to fully discharge this responsibility, given their poor progress in addressing the epistemological issues of transformation. The USAf highlights the lack of transformation prevalent in university institutional culture. They bring into the debate a call for higher education transformation that "entails decolonising, deracialising, de-masculinising and de-gendering South African Universities" (2014: 07). They posit that university culture must be transformed such that institutions genuinely embrace and appreciate differences and diversity owing to class, gender, nationality, language, religion, and sexual orientation.

On the other end of the economic spectrum, Chan (2016) cautions that the higher education institutions' agenda must not overly position themselves as being value-driven and profit-seeking to the extent of being predominantly seen as private commodities whose inherent commitment to serve the public good in a democratic society is being replaced by economic rationality.

University Academics: The White Paper raised a question of the sustainability of adequate levels of academic staff at Universities. It also noted the need to substantially improve equity and developing capacity, mainly targeted at future generations of academics. An equally worrisome concern shared is the ageing professoriate. A significant number of senior academics are approaching retirement age, with not enough young people responding to the call of academia after acquiring their degrees.

The USAf highlights two key challenges threatening a development pathway for securing the next generation of academics. These being: a) the ability to produce and retain the next generation of academics, b) a challenge of transforming the historic social composition of the academic workforce in order to redress the social inequity that inhibit access for black and women academics in South African.

They cite an observation by DHET (2013) that the post-apartheid student enrolment increase was not accompanied by an equivalent expansion in the number of academics. They lament possible reversal of gains made post-1994, should strategies not be in place to secure the next generation of academics. Whose consequence may manifest in debilitating the quality of academic provision, constraining the teaching

and research capabilities, the concomitant inability of universities to develop democracy and social justice, and derailing the inclusion of black and women South Africans in the knowledge production enterprise.

Higher Education Differentiation: The observation is that the South African higher education landscape has not extricated itself from the intent of the apartheid system. Universities are still ideologically structured in response to the country's historic race, ethnic and linguistic demographics. The White Paper acknowledges this, noting that the consequence is manifesting in "great inequality among universities, some of which still find themselves with grossly inadequate resources while others are excellent institutions that compare well globally" (2013:29).

In 2012 NDP expressed the aspiration of a differentiated system, with universities on clear missions, setting out their unique contribution towards knowledge production and national development. The plan challenged institutions to identify areas of strength to develop 'centres of excellence' responsive to regional and global competitiveness needs. However, it also acknowledges that the aspired differentiation must redress the equity imperatives. In this regard, the NDP advocates for earmarked incentives and support for historically disadvantaged institutions to develop the areas of excellence in research and teaching.

Whilst the work beginning in 2001 resizing and reshaping exercise of the higher education system into a single and more co-ordinated programme is commended, the landscape still reflects historically black institutions as disadvantaged as compared to the historically white universities. The post-1994 restructuring, according to USAf (2014), does not seem to have delivered on the 'promise' of a "differentiated, diverse yet co-ordinated and articulated higher education system" (2014:10).

Whilst there is an acknowledgement both in the White Paper and the NDP that there is some degree of consensus in higher education on purposeful differentiation geared at meeting a range of social, economic and other educational requirements, the question remains: "How should higher education be reconfigured such that it is better suited to serve the country's democracy and developmental needs?" This question

highlights a need to resolve the question of institutional differentiation as a matter of policy.

The White Paper defines higher education differentiation as:

"a process which can increase the diversity in the system. A differentiated University system in South Africa [that] will address the need for the diverse institutional mission, development trajectories and identities, incorporating a wide variety of programme offerings, with increasing articulation within the University sector and between it and the rest of the post-school system" (2013:29).

To this end, the government's parting shot is to commit to engaging the sector in a discourse on differentiation aimed at developing "sufficient national consensus" towards a purposefully differentiated university system and "the adoption of institutional missions agreed between DHET and individual institutions" (White Paper, 2013).

Funding challenges: The student uprisings over the ever-escalating cost of student fees in 2015 focused light on the need for the sector to engage in a discourse on the best possible approaches to higher education funding. Students and, by extension, their parents have had to bear the burden of providing the 'live blood' of institutions through student fees to keep operations alive. With the annual inflation increases, universities have passed the bulk of operating costs to students through annual student fee increments.

This undesirable situation led to what came to be known as the #FeesMustFall movement led by students across South African higher education institutions. Their initial demand was to bargain for smaller fee increases. Later the call was for no-fee increases and finally gravitated to free education for all. The protests brought campus operations to a grinding halt towards the end of 2015.

The government set up a commission of inquiry to investigate the matter. A report was produced that essentially warned that free higher education was not feasible, at least

not in the immediate future and that alternative funding models should be explored. With that resolution, it meant the challenges for funding higher education remained.

The only intervention at the states' disposal is the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), created in 1996 through a Parliament Act. The scheme aimed "to provide a sustainable financial aid system for student loans and bursaries for academically deserving and financially needy students" (White Paper, 2013:36).

The USAf (2014) noted with appreciation the upward trend in university funding between 2006 (R11 billion) and 2013 (26 billion) but lamented the decline in higher education expenditure in student per capita terms and percentage in the governments' budget. The argued that the decline in government subsidies put pressure on the other two sources of income available to universities i.e., fee income and third-stream income.

Despite the government's commitment to continue to increase the NSFAS, USAf warns of other national imperatives signalling red-flag and likely to compound the funding challenges, these being: the desire to meet the 2030 challenge of increasing university participation by 25% as espoused in the White Paper on Higher Education and Training; the enrolment increase target set in the National Development Plan of 1 620 000 students by 2030; and the need to assimilate the ever-increasing numbers of bachelor's passes into the higher education system.

Narend Baijnath, the CEO of the CHE, in the foreword of Kagisano 10 (2016) on the backdrop of the colloquium on funding higher education, aptly sums up the quagmire as follows:

"What is clear across all the contributions [papers presented following the CHE call] is that the centre of the current situation cannot hold. Moreover, the need to consider feasibility is fundamental. And that an arduous road of research, analysis, debate, re-imagining, advocacy, and communication, with careful implementation lies ahead, while the pressure from barricades is to find instant solutions to intractable problems" (2016: 05).

1.2.2 The International Perspective

1.2.2.1 Global Competitiveness

A study on the viability of the South African higher education system must also be cognisant of the international trends characterised by an increasingly globalised and highly competitive higher education landscape. The post 1994 political dispensation of South Africa has created an enabling environment for the country's education system to contend as a player in the global landscape.

Competitiveness in the global context depends on sets of choices governments and individual institutions make as participants in the global knowledge economy projects to the 'amusement' of global ranking agencies. Notable among these agencies include the Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) and the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking agencies.

Bagley and Portnoi (2014) submit six common strategies they observed as employed by governments and higher education institutions to enhance their quest towards global competitiveness. These are:

- a) Modelling institutions on a globally focussed mission of prioritising research and encouraging interconnectivity with institutions referred to as global research universities.
- b) A deliberate decision by the government to identify and fund identified Universities with the sole purpose of positioning them as world-class institutions.
- c) Encouraging greater collaborations amongst universities in the same region.
- d) Integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions to the curricula.
- e) Cross-border collaborations which include running joint campuses, offering joint degrees and other distance education programmes.
- f) Crafting in quality assurance measures aimed at assessing performance befitting a world-class stature.

The South African government seems neither oblivious to nor inclined to object to these strategies. The DHET, in its White Paper (2013), also acknowledges internationalisation activities to be including:

"Cross-border movements of students and staff; international research collaboration; offering of joint degrees by Universities in different countries; establishment of campuses by Universities outside of their home countries; the growth of satellite and online distance education, including online education institutions; arrangement between countries for the mutual recognition of qualifications; regional harmonisation of qualification systems; and the increasing inclusion international, intercultural and global dimensions in University curricula" (2013:39).

To this end, the government, through DHET, has committed to provide international bursaries and scholarships to meet this policy demand and expand the number of black South Africans, particularly women in masters and doctoral programmes. Whilst there is no doubt that the intervention will partly address the systems' plight towards internationalisation and competitiveness, a lot more resource investment will still need to be made for a meaningful impact to be realised.

Beyond the much sought-after bursary and scholarship programmes, Marwala and Xing (2017) offers four other interventions towards Internationalisation and linkage programmes. They suggest the universities must seek international partners that will consider the following options:

- a) Twinning programmes where a local provider collaborates with an international partner on a system where course credits can be awarded at different locations.
- b) Franchise programmes where an international partner authorises a local institution to offer their programme with the international partner awarding qualification.
- c) Joint degree programmes where local and international institution co-operate with qualification awarded by both institutions.
- d) Blended learning that exploits a mixed approach that includes e-learning, online learning or on-site learning.

However, Bagley and Portnoi (2014) caution universities and governments, particularly those in developing countries, to balance the demand for social justice with the equity concerns of their people in the quest towards global competitiveness in higher education. They argue that "the mission of postcolonial or post-conflict nations will [must] look different from those of industrialised nations" (2014:09). This means that higher education must, as a primary focus, be responsive to the country's local context. The need to meet the local communities' mandate of providing affordable higher education must supersede the global reputation race quest.

1.2.2.2 The Fourth Industrial Revolution – a new phenomenon

Like all previous Industrial Revolutions, the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is bound to have a disruptive effect on the cause of business in society. As such, the higher education sector was not spared from the first industrial revolution, characterised by water and steam power for efficient manufacturing, to the second revolution of electricity-based manufacturing technology. Then the third, characterised by computerisation and the internet of things – higher education has had to play a pivotal role in reskilling society, enabling it to navigate the crest.

This fourth industrial revolution, denoted by the not-so-well-known world of artificial intelligence and robotics, is already placing considerable pressure on higher education institutions to ready society to be responsive to the 'new order'. The main challenge about the 4IR seems to be the possibility of catapulting society into the relatively unknown.

Penprase (2018: 215) writes: "The 4IR extends the paradigm of the industrial revolution into a future when many of the elements of what we might consider industry – fixed and centralised factories, massive labour forces with large corporations – will no longer exist". Marwala and Xing (2017) concur, adding that industry will be revolutionised so significantly that much of the work that exists today may not exist in 50 years.

Whilst the exact extent of the new revolution is not known, it is certain that higher education must position itself such that it produces and distributes knowledge that is

of relevance to the envisaged dawn, however opaque. This may even call for introducing new institutions with a different focus, as observed during the second revolutions in the US.

Penprase attests that "in the United States, the period of the first two revolutions brought about a large crop of innovative new educational institutions – founded through public and private funding" (2018:209). Stanford University, founded in 1885, and the University of Chicago (1890) are some of the examples cited to have been established in the era.

For higher education to be responsive to the 4IR, Marwala & Xing (2017) challenge universities to rethink their teaching, research, and service approach. They argue for an interdisciplinary university with virtual classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and teachers. Teaching must exploit the technology of wearable devices to enhance learning and training and embrace the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offerings enabled by the 3IR. They further suggest that teaching must be non-linear but be a blended mixing of e-learning and face-to-face methodologies.

Research, they argue, must appreciate open innovation – exploiting the combination of humans and computers to accomplish innovative tasks. Research must not only appreciate the existing technologies but must also appreciate innovation and invention of new technologies. Research institutions, particularly in higher education, must be wary of an 'academic gatekeeping' culture that work against shortening the innovation cycle.

1.3 CONTEXT

If the high-level environmental analysis exercise undertaken above is anything to go by, it should follow that higher education has to be categorised as a complex system. Hadzieva et al. (2017) argue that "the word complexity has to be an unavoidable part of the definition of higher education" (2017:42).

Their observation was that higher education generally depicts features of a complex system. They are unpredictable contexts and place value in networks and interactions

between different elements of the system and the environment. Their self-organisation and survival hinge on their ability to adapt to a continuously changing environment.

The purpose of this study is to explore a viable Advancement model for the South African higher education system, aimed at enabling universities to navigate better the complex environment within which they exist. The secondary purpose is to stimulate a discourse amongst Advancement partitioners on how to contribute towards better positioning their institutions to attract the much-sought external resources in the face of the ever-dwindling fiscals, due to the precarious turbulent economic markets.

With the post-1994 higher education transformation programme having gone a long way in moulding institutions into responsive entities in teaching and learning, research, and community engagement, the same cannot be said about their plight for financial sustainability. Most of these universities, particularly the historically black institutions, are dependent on the public purse and student fees to fund their operations.

Other possible income is derived from procuring of professional services, use of special skills, development of new technologies, implementation of knowledge/skills/experience, development of innovative products. (DUT Third Stream Income Policy, 2012)

Alternatively, institutions must develop their capacity to attract and mobilise philanthropic Rands through donations from markets like corporates, trusts and foundations, or individuals and alums, amongst the least chartered markets. Chan (2016) concurs, positing that the decline in financial aid and the ever-rising tuition fees exacerbates the universities' need to grow their dependency on the philanthropic involvement of the wealthy to fund academic and professional programmes.

This approach places expectation on practitioners responsible for fundraising and development, marketing and communications, and alumni relations. It also puts a sharp focus on how universities institutionalise the Advancement practice.

As a contribution to theories-in-use, Inyathelo – a South African Institute of Advancement based in Cape Town (South Africa), through its seminal work, has

developed a conceptual framework that it recommends as a guide for higher education institutions and non-governmental organisations to better focus the much sort after advancement practice.

The framework points to ten (10) elements affecting Advancement practice. These are:

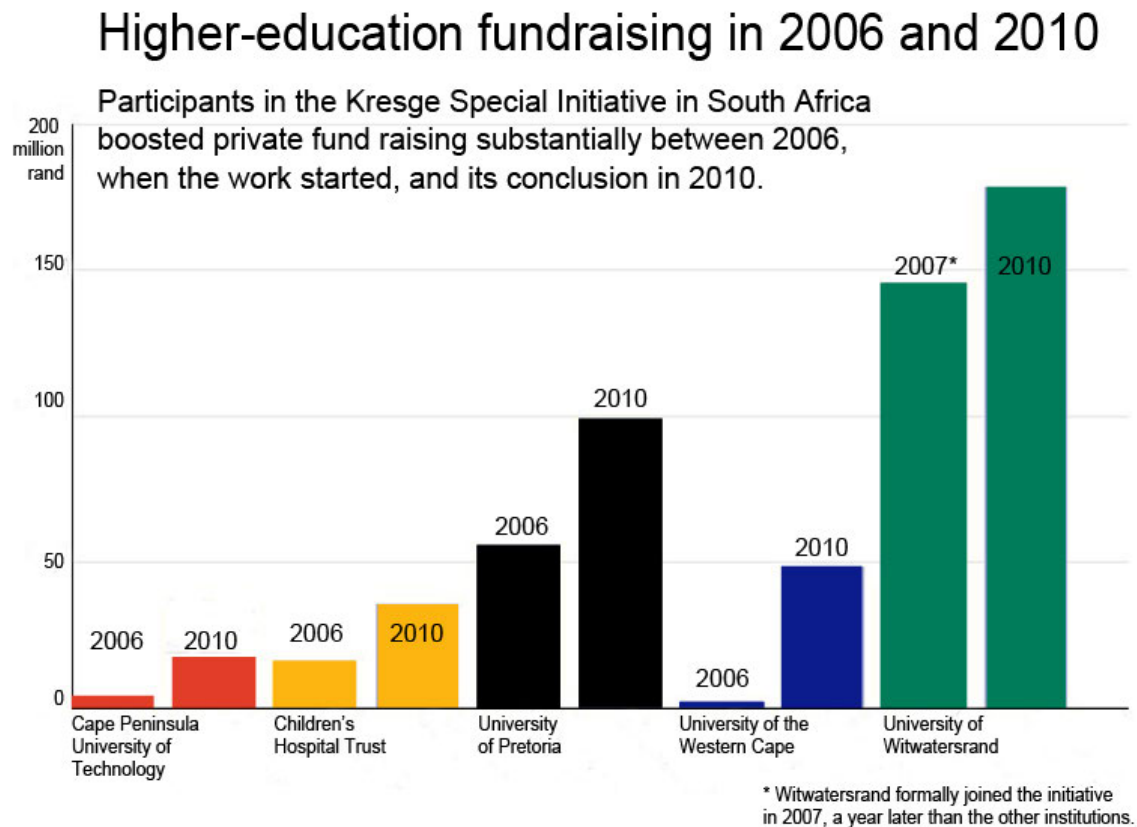
1. Leadership
2. Strategy and Planning
3. Governance structure and practice
4. Monitoring and evaluation
5. Financial management
6. Fundraising tools
7. Visibility
8. Voice
9. External relations
10. Human capacity

They posit that the organisational discipline or lack thereof in terms of the mentioned elements may positively or negatively impact the institution's ability to leverage donor funding.

1.4 Rationale

Between 2005 and 2017, the US-based Kresge foundation invested a significant amount of philanthropic dollars in South Africa to contribute to the institutionalisation and capacity development of the Advancement practice in higher education in the interest of organisational sustainability. This investment boosted private fundraising substantially, between 2006 and 2010 at selected South African universities following this intervention, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Kresge report on fundraising



Source: Kresge Foundation report

The five universities listed in the graph above are the lead institutions that benefited from the \$10.5 million that Kresge committed towards capacity development in the Advancement offices. According to the Kresge Foundation report, through this programme, these institutions raised a combined \$11.8 million annually from their donors, beginning in 2006.

The success of this cohort led Kresge, with support from Inyathelo, to a further investment of \$640 000 per institution in Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, the University of Johannesburg, and the University of the Free State. The four were selected from 19 out of the total 23 universities through a competitive bidding process for this challenge grant. The main aim of the grant was to challenge grantees to explore innovative and systemic approaches to the institutionalisation of Advancement practice. The Kresge Foundation used this

'Challenge Grant' as a tool to promote giving and fund capital campaigns (Gastow, 2012).

Therefore, my aim with this study is to explore the viability of the Advancement practice in the South African higher education environment beyond the Kresge investment (no further grants were made after the 2012-17 cohort). I draw from the 'Community of Practice' established under the auspices of the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative (KIAI) project. I anticipate that the outcome of this study will offer the basis for a model that may assist other practitioners and South African universities that were not selected to participate in this lucrative challenge grant.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Use of the Viable Systems Model

Appreciating the context above made it necessary for the phenomenon of the study to be looked at through the prism of Systems Thinking. The intention was to use the Viable System Model (VSM) as the methodological source to inform the improvement of advancement as a practice in the South African higher education sector.

The VSM model is attributed to Stafford Beer, and this research makes a conceptual link between Advancement and the VSM. His model focuses on viability as the vital element – by which he means the organisation's ability to survive and even thrive through meeting the challenges associated with a changing environment. I will, in later chapters demonstrate how the Advancement framework and VSM were conceptually linked.

Beers (1981) says that VSM can be used either as a diagnosis or design process. For this study, VSM was used for diagnosis purposes. VSM has some core concepts, one of which is Recursivity. The concept is defined in literature as referring to a structural design within a system whereby autonomous units of an organisation have within them other autonomous units structured “where organisational cohesion is achieved by the willing alignment of individual purposes, which recognises the synergistic advantage of their coordination” (Espejo and Reyes, 2011: 87).

Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) concur, likening it to a Russian doll with systems that are nested to each other and structured in the same way. It is about the architecture of the complex organisation and is premised on the understanding that all living systems are composed of a series of sub-systems, each having self-organising and self-regulatory characteristics (Espejo and Gill, 2011).

Within this recursivity framework, 5 sub-systems of connective integration are also necessary for the organisation to maintain its viability. These are:

1. Implementation and unit management.
2. Inter-unit coordination.
3. Auditing and standards maintenance.
4. Strategic intelligence and knowledge management.
5. Policymaking, communication and control systems.

The subsystems listed above require channels of communication to take place horizontally at each level of recursivity and vertically between levels of recursivity (Reynolds and Holwell, 2010).

The most pertinent use of VSM was the application of its framework and principles in the unfolding and managing of the complexities within which the study was undertaken. Cardoso-Castro (2018), who studied the application of the VSM framework to guide adaptive organisational response in times of instability offer VSM as a practical complexity management framework for social systems, particularly when seeking to guide a design or analysis of viability in organisations.

Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) and Jackson (2000) concur, adding that VSM is also helpful when seeking to surface deficiencies in existing systems. They argue that a proper application of its five systems and six channels can enable a thorough navigation of complex systems. The model introduced concepts like variety engineering, self-organisation and self-regulation, recursion and control, hierarchy versus autonomy, viability, and adaptability, amongst others being applied in a particular context in this study.

1.5.2 Methodological Approach

The research strategy I adopted was an action research approach. Bryman (2012: 397) defines the action research approach as: "an approach in which the action researcher and members of a social setting collaborate in the diagnosis of a problem and the development of a solution based on the diagnosis". Consistent with Bryman's explanation, this approach was motivated by a desire to enhance my understanding of the Advancement practice through an empirical collaboration while adding to the theoretical understanding of the field.

I drew data from the Advancement community of practice. I selected participants from practitioners that were exposed to the KIAI programme. These colleagues would have been employed by the seven institutions that participated in and benefitted from the lucrative programme between 2006 and 2017.

I must note though that at the time of this study some of the colleagues were no longer with the seven universities that were selected for the KIAI programme. I will explain this further in chapter 4 when analysing the profiles of each participant.

The institutions selected at different stages of the Kresge Challenge Grant are WITS, Pretoria University, and the Cape Peninsular University of Technology (referred to in the grant programme as Lead institutions). The second cohort included Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, the University of Free State, and the University of Johannesburg.

I conducted the interviews via online platforms with the identified participants. The initial plan was to conduct face-to-face interviews, but unfortunately, data was collected at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic with the country locked down.

I based my interviews on a pre-set list of open-ended questions that was subjected to a peer review amongst members of our community of practice. The preference for open-ended questions was informed by a desire to generate richer data from collaborative participants. I invited the participants telephonically, then followed up by email enclosing consent forms.

I applied VSM's analytical approach to guide the collection of data. The research questions were constructed based on the five sub-systems features and principles. The actual data analyses were done via NVivo's qualitative analysis project software. More details on the methodology will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In this study, the aim was to explore the Viable System Model (VSM) application as a diagnostic tool to enhance the Advancement Practice in the South African higher education system. As outlined in the introduction section of this dissertation, Advancement, in this research is defined as a systematic and integrated approach to building and managing external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders, thereby positioning an organisation to attract support (Inyathelo, 2015).

The mission of Advancement Offices in Universities is to inform and involve the external stakeholder to get them to invest in a university's life through strategically co-ordinated activities. The following research question underpinned this study.

Main Question.

How responsive are South African universities to Advancement as a possible viability strategy?

Sub Questions.

1. What characterises the operational environment underpinning the Advancement function?
2. How do institutions co-ordinate the Advancement activities?
3. How do institutions manage the performance of the Advancement operation?
4. How does the Advancement operation contribute towards institutional viability?
5. How responsive is the institutional policymaking programme to the Advancement strategies?

NB: The five sub-questions have been deliberately crafted to fit the theme of the VSM sub-systems.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

This dissertation is organised into six chapters, themed and presented as follows.

Chapter 1: The higher education crisis with reference to South Africa. The vital role the Advancement must play. In this first chapter, I endeavour to make a case for Advancement intervention in the higher education sector, locating it as this study's phenomenon, with a potential to contribute towards addressing some of the crises that besiege South African higher education institutions.

I set off by analysing the national and international perspectives influencing the higher education environment we experience today. The primary objective of the analysis was to bring to light some of the factors informing the 'worldview' and contemporary discourse on higher education in the South African context.

I then present the rationale of this study through a good story of a US based Kresge Foundation that partnered with our local South African Institute for Advancement – Inyathelo. The two are responsible for the establishment and support of Advancement operations at no less than 9 institutions in this country, between the period of 2006 and 2017.

I conclude the chapter by present highlights on the research strategies and methodological approach employed. I also introduce the Viable Systems Model as methodological source and a master organising idea of the entire research project.

Chapter 2: Understanding Advancement from the literature. In the chapter, I give a historical background of Advancement. I also provide definitions of concepts and terms used in the practice within the public, private and civil society movements. I explored theories in use that helped shape the phenomenon.

Notwithstanding other approaches, I utilise Inyathelo's ten principles of Advancement, to map out what could be the boundaries defining Advancement in the higher education environmental setting. However, this framework is not viewed in isolation. It

is analysed in consideration of other frameworks and theories from different scholarships.

The other frameworks and theories explored in this study includes the Goettler Associates' (2006) Strategic Advancement framework; David J. Weerts' (2007) Engagement Model of Institutional Advancement; Roy Y. Chan's (2016) conceptual model on Advancement that he based on resource dependency theory and institutional theory; and the brand community strategy approach as present by McAlexander, Koenig and Schouten (2006)

In the discourse, I demonstrate the congruency between Inyathelo and Goettler Associates' framework. I also present how the Weerts; Chan; and McAlexander et.al challenges the Advancement principles as conceptualised by Inyathelo.

Chapter 3: Viable Systems Model – an innovative tool of analysis. In this chapter I present greater details on the VSM as part of systems thinking and complexity body of knowledge, submitting it (VSM) also as a potential theoretical framework to help analyse and model the sought intervention to improve the Advancement practice within South African universities.

I then lead a discussion on VSM's structural components of five sub-systems and six support communication channels. Upon making a case for higher education as a complex system, I also explore VSM's concept of recursion to unfold the complexity in a system. I will present a graph locating Advancement (system of focus), within universities (meta-system) that are embedded in higher education (supra-system).

Chapter 4: Utilising VSM to assess the Advancement operation. This being a research methodology chapter, I provide greater detail on the research strategy and methodology choices made in the interest of the study. The chapter covers the sourcing of data, the sampling method used, data collection and the analyses that ensued. A computer-based NVivo software is introduced as a data analysis aid. I will also reflect on the rigour and ethical considerations made during the research.

Chapter 5: A critique of the Advancement practice by applying the viable systems model. In this chapter, I will be presenting the study findings. The presentation of such findings is organised around the five sub-systems of VSM but categorised in themes that emanate from the data analysis process.

Chapter 6: Learnings and recommendations. In this last chapter, I share and discuss my learning experience and the research project's recommendation. As part of the learning, I link VSM and the Advancement frameworks as an outcome of a collaborative effort with colleagues that participated in the study participants.

I end the chapter with a presentation of a proposed Advancement system based on the Viable Systems Model. This model also recommends exploring VSM's communication channels to facilitate the desired organisational dialogue to embed the Advancement practice within South African universities.

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING ADVANCEMENT FROM THE LITERATURE.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with an exploration of the origins and background of the Advancement practices, provide a definition of the concept and the activities that characterise it in higher education and other organisational settings. I then introduce models and conceptual frameworks that ground institutional Advancement.

These are the South African based Inyathelo's 10 elements; Weerts (2007) engagement model of Advancement; McAlexander, Koenig and Schouten (2006) brand community strategy approach; and the US based private firm, Goettler Associates' (2006) Strategic Advancement model.

In terms of approach, I submit Inyathelo's model as a lead conceptual framework, using its elements to the boundaries for the Advancement literature. I adopted this framework because of its dominant application as the main theory-in-use in the South African context. I also submit Chan (2006) institutional theory to explain how factors such as coercion, imitation and conformity may have influenced Inyathelo's dominance in the practice as it obtains today in our sector.

I explore in greater detail their 10-element conceptual framework on Advancement to understand the phenomenon from a local context and establish possible boundaries for the literature. The ten elements are not viewed in isolation but are juxtaposed against an arguably similar approach to Advancement offered by a US base fundraising firm, Goettler Associates. They, in aid to their clientele, proposed 8 elements that inform 'good practice' for strategic Advancement.

I also reflect on Weerts' engagement model for institutional Advancement. Weerts (2007) proposed what he refers to as "an engagement model of institutional Advancement" rooted in Hutchinson and Huberman's (1993) knowledge flow theory.

He compares what is contained in the “traditional Advancement practice” against what ought to be, as espoused in his "engagement model of institutional Advancement".

Followed by McAlexander, Koenig and Schouten (2006) research on how to build relationships of brand community in higher education. In their research they wanted to ascertain key relationships that one would expect to find in a healthy university brand community, in the interest of Advancement. I use McAlexander et.al and Weerts to challenge what the Inyathelo’s framework offers towards enhancing the Advancement practice.

I conclude the chapter by framing the literature within systems thinking and complexity as a theoretical framework. I also contextualise in this chapter higher education is a complex adaptive system, owing to the attributes of its behaviour within the complexity theory body of knowledge.

2.2 BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The concept of Advancement in South African higher education can be traced to the late 90s, largely popularised by Inyathelo – the South African Institute for Advancement. In the US, according to the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), the term's origin is owed to the 1958 joint conference between the American College Public Relations Association and the American Alumni Council.

However, Chan (2016) credits Westley Rowland, the 1986 editor of the Handbook of Institutional Advancement, for coining the phrase "Institutional Advancement".

Rowland (1986), in his seminal work, defines Institutional Advancement as "encompassing activity and programme[s] undertaken by an institution to develop understanding and support from all its constituencies in order to achieve its goals in securing such resources as students, faculty and dollars" (1986: xiii).

Muller (1986) posits that historically "institutional advancement is a uniquely American component of higher education" (1986:01). He contends that the phenomenon came into being owing to the American governance system concerning higher education. He

claims that although higher education is an activity of public interest and, therefore, a public responsibility in the United States, it does not necessarily follow that such a responsibility resides with the central government. The responsibility was therefore carried largely by non-government entities like the church, the private sector, and benefactors of the 'service'.

In that context, he concludes that the function of Institutional Advancement became critical for individual American colleges and universities to enable them to secure the much sought after resources in a competitive environment outside the government's support.

In South Africa, pioneered by Inyathelo, Advancement is defined as: "a systemic and integrated approach to building and managing external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders in order to attract support" (Inyathelo, 2014:01). The Institute's founding Executive Director Shelagh Gastrow contextualises the definition to include a "holistic approach to how an organisation positions itself and engages with its external environment to attract support" (Gastrow, 2014:01).

Weerts (2007) concurs with Gastrow and Inyathelo approach, submitting that advancement refers to: "campus external relations offices charged with building relationships with a full range of external stakeholders" (Weerts, 2007:81). He further lists the external stakeholders include alumni, donors, community partners, corporate partners, state legislators, governors, and government official (state, federal and local level).

Leonard III (2005), who looked at an exploratory model of advancement but from a value chain perspective, defined it "as a collection of activities performed by areas of development, alumni relations and public relations to generate voluntary financial support for the institutions". (Leonard III, 2005:142). He argued that Advancement activities and their income streams provide the life of organisations enabling institutions with economic value-add margins beyond the tuition fees.

Based on the above definitions, not an exhaustive list by far, a common principle that identified the Advancement practice is that it preoccupies itself with enabling

institutions to sustain themselves through resource mobilisation strategies. It is also worth noting that there are disparities, in terms of naming, on how institutions label their operation.

Some in the sector prefer the use of the word "Development" in naming offices charged with this responsibility rather than "Advancement", with others sticking to "Fundraising" or "Resource Mobilisation" units. According to Chan (2016), the term "development" came into use in the 1920s following North-western University's establishment of the first Department of Development. He points out that the term did not gain widespread recognition at least until after World War 2.

Goettler Associates, a US-based fundraising firm (established in 1965), contributes to the definition by distinguishing between Development and Advancement. In their seminal work published in 2006, they submit that:

"While "fundraising," "development," and "advancement" are often used more or less interchangeable, their connotations are quite different. The term "development," now generally considered a euphemism for "fundraising," was intended to elevate the original term, with its over-emphasis on the bottom line. "Development" conveys a sense of mission and purpose, emphasising the impact on the organisation. "Advancement" broadens the concept of development by incorporating related functions, and explicitly indicates positive forward movement." (The Goettler Series, "Strategic Advancement" 2006 Volume 12:2).

According to Muller (1986), the term fundraising has been used commonly to describe the actual solicitation of gifts/donations from private sources. He, however, contends that "central as such an activity is to Institutional Advancement, it falls short of being comprehensively descriptive" (Muller, 1986:4).

Applied in a university, the gist of the above definitions is aptly conceptualised by the US-based Ohio State University for their context. They defined in their 2012 Advancement Framework Planning Report, this phenomenon as:

"an integrated, University-wide approach to expressing what Ohio State stands for, strengthening relationships with University stakeholders (students, faculty and staff, alumni and donors, business leaders, and Ohioans), and managing engagement and fundraising activities in support of the university's mission to educate student, create knowledge, and serve communities. This is accomplished by aligning three essential functions:

- Marketing and communications.
- Development.
- Alumni relations."

(Ohio State University – Advancement Framework Planning Report, 2012:10)

Buchanan (2000) though, at the dawn of the new millennium, advocated that the Advancement practice and setting was likely to evolve into the field of integrated Marketing. He berated the old order professional competition amongst practitioners calling for a spirit of collaboration that can enable “the kind of integration the marketing approach demands of different administration units” (2000: 69).

2.3 MODELS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS OF ADVANCEMENT

2.3.1 INYATHELO CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ADVANCEMENT

The first model I present is the 10-element framework conceptualised by the Inyathelo Institute of Advancement – a Cape Town-based NPO. As already alluded, this organisation is credited for the development of the Advancement concept, at least in the South African context.

The institute was established in 2002 under Shelagh Gastrow, arguably a thought leader in the country's Advancement sector, both in higher education and civil society. Before leading the establishment of Inyathelo, Gastrow worked for the University of Cape Town (UCT) and established UCT's first Development office in 1998, the first in the country.

Over the years, Inyathelo pioneered developing the Advancement idea conceptually through training programmes aimed at higher education institutions and non-profit sector organisations. Their seminal work led to the development of 10 elements that are key to the Advancement approach (see Figure 2 below).

These are:

- Leadership.
- Governance.
- Human capacity.
- Strategy and planning.
- Organisational voice.
- Organisational visibility.
- Building relationships.
- Fundraising tools.
- Financial Management; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

I will expand on them in the coming sections.

Figure 2: Inyathelo's 10-Element of Advancement.



Source Inyathelo 2016 Annual Report

Inyathelo framework was important to my study not only because of its local origins but also because most of South African Advancement practitioners model their approach around its principles. Inyathelo's advocacy for their work earned them partnerships with Rhodes University and later Wits University in developing formal curriculum for professional qualifications in Advancement.

I have noted though that the two South African universities partnering with Inyathelo are not the only offering professional qualifications in Advancement. Three other know

programmes are offered by the Indiana Centre on Philanthropy; the Peabody College of Education at the Vanderbilt University; and lastly the University of San Francisco (Kozobarich, 2000).

The evolution of the Inyathelo framework within the South African higher education environment could also be explained through use of Chan's (2016) conceptual model for Advancement that was based on resource dependency and institutional theories.

Chan set out to assist teacher-scholars and practitioners in a discourse on how institutional Advancement structures and practice tend to be similar in form and relations as owed to the market forces and other societal pressures. He grounds his approach on the concept of isomorphism – explained to mean: "a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991: 66).

Three mechanisations of isomorphism are explored i.e., coercive, mimetic and normative forces. Chan argues that coercive forces have influenced Advancement practice to be what it is today. By this, he means that the practice and its structures owe their homogenous approach to the coercive authority of external funders, for instance. Advancement operations must be seen as donor-centric in structure, climate, and behaviour, with similar institutions hoping to attract major gifts.

Organisations also turn to imitating programmes from other organisations in the same practice if they perceive such organisations to be successful or reputable in the Advancement practice. Chan here attests to the proverbial "no need to reinvent the wheel" mantra. It suffices to justify a fundraising programme with a motivation "it is based on best practice" rationale.

Equally, practice norms are conceived from practitioners' advocacy projects. Professional organisations like the International Council on the Advancement of Education (CASE) or the local South African Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education (MACE) pioneer the setting of norms and standards with practitioners creating rules, rituals, and procedures for the practice.

Viewed in a South African context, Inyathelo has played a leading role in providing platform for discourse on shaping the Advancement practice as it obtains today. Amongst other activities they have hosted dialogue sessions between non-profit organisation and donors (coercive force), facilitated conferences and workshops amongst Advancement peers and university leaders (enabling programme mimesis) and published resource materials that still guide Advancement engagements to this day (normative force).

Gastrow (2012) submits that the concept has matured from inception to include amongst other principles, a greater understanding of organisational positioning locally and internationally. In addition, the framework expands on the leader's role in building organisational trust and confidence for advancement, the importance of diversifying stakeholders and partners for long-term relations, good financial management and effective organisational governance. It also expands on organisational outlook principles like the impact of voice and visibility and clarity of purpose amongst organisations.

The philosophical disposition advanced in this conceptual framework seeks to debunk the notion of seeing Advancement as just a fancy word for fundraising but as "an integrated approach to engaging the external environment and positioning an organisation to attract support. It is about building, maintaining and improving support, skills and funds for an organisation." (Gastrow, 2012:45).

Trachtenberg (2010) poetically puts this as "the art of moving the institution forward, to the point at which it has to worry far less about receiving financial and ideological support from those who know it best" (2010: 18).

For the purposes of this study and based on the justification argued above the Inyathelo conceptual framework is utilised as the main framework that provide boundaries for the literature review for the rest of this chapter. I am however going to introduce three other models that will be juxtaposed against Inyathelo's 10-elements in the final discussion.

2.3.2 ENGAGEMENT MODEL OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

The second model I present is David J. Weerts' (2007) Engagement Model for Institutional Advancement who proposed an Engagement Model of Advancement rooted in Hutchinson and Huberman's (1993) knowledge flow theory.

He explains the knowledge flow theory as helpful when examining "the transfer of knowledge within and across settings with the assumption that knowledge will result in learning, exchange of information or perspectives, acquisition of new perspectives and attitudes, or increased ability to make informed choices amongst alternatives" (2007: 86).

The fundamental principle that informs Weerts' model is the emphasis he places on the concept of engagement, as a transition from higher education's traditional linear and unidirectional model of knowledge transfer to a two-way systemic change. His prime resolve was to produce an Advancement model that focuses on creating a shared public agenda for higher education.

He was lamenting what he saw as the erosion of the "public" in public colleges and universities in the US, unless practitioners addressed identified limitations in Advancement strategies of the day, lest a public institution's character gets reshaped to reflect private interests.

Chan (2016) shares Weerts' lament. He also observes that higher education institutions seem to be gravitating towards a value drive that is profit-seeking. He posits that: "Typically, postsecondary education is predominantly seen as a private commodity in which higher education's commitment to serve public good in a democratic society is being replaced by economic rationality" (2016: 03).

Weerts challenges fundraising professionals to be responsive to a new generation of donors who seek acceptance of their vision, ideals, and opinion, not just their money. These donors, he argues, "are motivated by giving opportunities that will make a tangible impact in society" (2007: 90). To this end, the point being made is that such donors must be viewed as long-term social investors rather mere positive prospects

to traditional fundraising solicitation programmes. "I advance a new course for institutional Advancement aimed at strengthening higher education's fiscal position while forging a deeper, more meaningful relationship with the public", he submitted (2007: 84).

He further argued that "improved financial stability for public higher education is predicated on a more authentic relationship with external stakeholders that emphasise reciprocal sharing of knowledge and resources" (2007:84). He calls for a mind-shift from the prevailing ivory tower mentality universities to a more inclusive culture of equitable partnership with stakeholders.

Table 1: Weerts' Engagement Model of Institutional Advancement

	Traditional model of advancement	Engagement model of advancement
Epistemology	<i>Positivist:</i> Knowledge is value neutral and detached. Knowledge is “out there” to discover and found through university methodology.	<i>Constructivist:</i> Knowledge is developmental, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated by internal and external partners.
Role of institution and external partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus mission carried out through traditional means (classroom instruction, research, one-way outreach). • Advancement office and external partners are separate from the academic culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief that knowledge lies inside and outside of traditional boundaries. • Advancement office and external partners are part of higher education's teaching and learning community.
Philosophy of advancement (adapted from Hutchinson and Huberman, 1993)	<p><i>Dissemination paradigm Spread:</i> One-way broadcast of institutional work and programmes to “sell” to external stakeholders</p> <p><i>Choice:</i> External relations officers seek to match institution's work with stakeholder interests.</p>	<p><i>Systemic change paradigm Exchange:</i> Stems from a public agenda, institutions and external partners exchange perspectives, knowledge, materials, and resources for public benefit.</p> <p><i>Implementation:</i> Interactive process of solving societal problems and bringing about systemic change.</p>
Structured participation strategies	<p><i>Alumni, donors:</i> Home and office visits, college advisory board memberships, campus visits. Development staff “prioritise, show, tell, solicit”.</p> <p><i>State relations:</i> Legislative campus visits, capitol visits. Government relations staff “prioritise, show, tell, solicit”.</p> <p><i>Corporate and foundation relations:</i> Office visits, campus meetings, and tours, match interests of foundations and corporations.</p> <p><i>Community relations:</i> promote campus outreach with community partners.</p>	<p><i>Discovery teams:</i> Interdisciplinary cross-stakeholder teams consisting of institutional partners (faculty, staff, students) and external stakeholders (alumni, donors, foundation officers, legislators, community partners, corporate partners) to promote education, dialogue, advocacy, and financial support for public agenda.</p> <p><i>Interdisciplinary councils:</i> Federation of discovery teams to promote education, dialogue, advocacy, and financial support for public agenda (e.g., Council on Environmental Stewardship, Council on Cultural Enrichment)</p>

<p>Role of advancement staff (boundary spanning roles)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote opportunities to be supported by stakeholders (lobbying, donor solicitation). • Promote interests of dean, institution, select faculty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate stakeholder participation in discovery teams, councils, student learning programmes. • Solicit financial, political, volunteer support for public agenda.
<p>Role of faculty, academic staff, students</p>	<p><i>Faculty and staff:</i> Passive unless programme is a college priority. Featured speaker in “show and tell” to legislative staff, alumni, donors. May have separate corporate or community relationships. <i>Students:</i> Passive beneficiaries of support. Serve as marketing tools. May participate in service learning or corporate internship.</p>	<p><i>Faculty and staff:</i> Active participant or facilitator of discovery teams and student learning programmes in collaboration with external partners <i>Students:</i> Active learning participant on discovery team and learning programmes. Fully engaged with external partners.</p>
<p>Role of deans, chairs, and central administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek support for individual school, college, departmental, and institutional needs. Convene and direct activities of advisory boards, corporate roundtables, legislative visits around these needs. • Retain primary solicitation and stewardship responsibilities based on institutional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate overall vision and needs of the school/college/ institution in the context of the public agenda. Solicit support to meet these needs. • Facilitate creation of council and discovery team leadership and stakeholder selection. • Assume solicitation responsibilities in the context of institutional and team/council needs.
<p>Development cycle (major gift fundraising)</p>	<p><i>Prospect identification:</i> By college, department affiliation, degree of gift alumnus. <i>Cultivation:</i> Development officer visit, dean, faculty contact, College Board of Visitors membership, campus visits <i>Solicitation:</i> Development officer, and dean match donor interests with department or college needs <i>Stewardship:</i> Recognition and ongoing contact with project/programme.</p>	<p><i>Prospect identification:</i> “Open agenda” Identify prospects by area of interest. Direct prospect to appropriate discovery team and council within the public agenda. <i>Cultivation:</i> Participation on discovery team, Council member, development officer visits, dean, faculty contact. <i>Solicitation:</i> Development officer, discovery team leader match gift to advance team and council progress. <i>Stewardship:</i> Recognition and continued work on discovery teams and councils.</p>

Source: Traditional and Engagement Models of Institutional Advancement (International Journal of Educational Advancement. Vol.7 No.2

The table above depicts Weerts' illustration of the traditional versus engagement models of institutional Advancement approaches through the prism of the knowledge flow conceptual framework. His opinion on the two models is that the traditional model is built on a unidirectional knowledge flow whereas the engagement model that he advocates for is grounded on a two-way knowledge flow philosophy.

The epistemological worldview informing each is that the former views knowledge as value-neutral and existing on its own and is the preserve of the university's scholarship to find it. The latter views knowledge as developmental, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated by internal and external partners.

He submits that in the traditional model, the roles of Advancement practitioners and external stakeholders are separated due to the inherent academic culture of campuses. This approach, he laments short-changes the institution of an opportunity to develop a shared agenda with its external stakeholders.

He, therefore, advocates for a partnership where the external stakeholder and Advancement practitioners are integral to the university's teaching and learning outcomes. Also submits that the stakeholders must "be given an opportunity to share perspectives about key issues necessary to improving the quality of life in their community, state, and the nation as a whole" (Weerts, 2007: 94).

He challenges Advancement practitioners to lead universities towards a deliberate systemic paradigm shift when conceptualising their programmes. Instead of a one-way broadcast of an institutional programme being sold to external stakeholders, the university programme must be conceived from a public agenda informed by both institutions and external perspectives, knowledge, materials, and resources for the public benefit.

To institutionalise this engagement model of Advancement, Weerts advocates for what he calls "Discovery teams", which he describes as interdisciplinary teams consisting of faculty, staff and students representing the university, alumni, donors, philanthropists, corporate and other community partners representing the external

stakeholders. With a role to promote dialogue, education, advocacy, and financial support for the public agenda. The discovery teams in his view will declutter the approach to solving societal problems, in the traditional model.

Chan (2016) also advocated for a similar type of collaboration. He suggested that if institutions are to realise their full fundraising potential, they must establish platforms for inter-organisational cooperation with their external environment better to understand the economic rationale from the donor's perspective. He proposes this approach as being donor-centric or donor-oriented in attitude.

Weerts also encourages Advancement practitioners to expand their boundaries to include facilitation on such teams beyond lobbying and solicitations. Faculties and staff are urged to play an active role in the team in collaboration with external partners.

Contrary to the passive role limited mainly to "show and tell" sessions showcasing departmental work. Students, too, are challenged to have a more significant role over and above being beneficiaries of the support. He contends that participation in the teams will go a long way towards full engagement with external partners.

The principle of the engagement model also seems set on challenging the silo approach at resource mobilisation, especially where individual academic leaders are concerned. The Deans, for instance, are challenged to articulate the overall vision of the institution in the context of the public agenda rather than their narrow school or departmental context.

Weerts (2007) challenges the Deans to play a meaningful role in facilitating and creating discovery teams' leadership. This includes the selection of members from the stakeholder communities.

Lastly, Weerts (2007) anticipates that in the engagement model of Advancement, the mooted discovery teams will and must also 'disrupt' the ordinary course of the development cycle of fundraising, especially where the much-sought major gifts are

concerned. Crucial fundraising activities like prospecting, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship must seek the full engagement of discovery teams.

In conclusion, Weerts (2007: 91) suggests that:

"Under an engagement model of Advancement, external relations officers – development, government relations, alumni relations, corporate relations, community relations – have a critical role in facilitating the institutional transition towards a deeper, more authentic relationship with external stakeholders to the mutual benefit of their campuses and society at large."

He acknowledges that a limitation to successfully implementing such a model may be a lack of interest in the public sector (owing perhaps to time) to engage deeply with universities in their quest to be responsive to their local context. He also cites the prevalent trust deficit between the university leadership and external partners as a possible threat that might hinder the implementation of such a model.

2.3.3 USING BRAND COMMUNITY STRATEGY TO INFORM AN ADVANCEMENT FRAMEWORK

The third contribution towards developing an Advancement framework that I found relevant to my study was McAlexander, Koenig and Schouten's (2006) research on how to build relationships of brand community in higher education. These marketing professors set out to measure "key relationships that one would expect to find in a healthy university brand community" (2006: 107).

They defined brand community as "the product of social relationships amongst users of a brand, regardless of their geographical location, who recognise their commonality and who share rituals, traditions, and a sense of responsibility towards a brand" (2006: 108). They further break this brand community construct into four parts, commonly used in marketing i.e., customer-product relationship; consumer-brand relationship; customer-institution relationship; and customer-customer relationship.

Applied in the context higher education, and based on an assumption that loyal alumni are a mainstay of financial support for universities, the research investigated alumni's

experience in relation to universities product (their education), its brand (including the university name, logos, mascots), the institution (agents such as faculty and staff), and other alumni.

Their objective was to understand “how the collective influence of those relationship would impact loyalty outcomes like current behaviour (e.g., wearing university logo clothing) and behavioural intentions (e.g., future donations)” (2006:112). This research was conducted to through a survey with alumni constituency of a particular university.

To ascertain alumni-product relationship, they asked them about their experience with the use of their degrees, skills acquired and ability to learn at their university. Their relations with the brand were assessed based on questions probing their connection with the brand position such as mascots. Whereas their relations with the institution and other alumni was assessed based on current attitudes towards professors and fellow alumni respectively.

The study found that “integration in a brand community in higher education can contribute to such valued behaviour as donations, college referrals, engagement in alumni groups, and participation in continuing education” (2006: 115). Based on this finding they challenge Advancement practitioners to recognise the “strategic value that comes from viewing a university’s connections with its students and alumni both broadly and holistically” (2006: 115).

They also urge Advancement partitioners who seek to enhance university brands to leveraging the efforts of alumni associations that look to build interpersonal relationships among graduates. They caution though that the timing of fostering relations is not when students are alumni but rather when they are still in the university. Their observation was that “establishing brand identity with current students, offer the potential of enduring alumni loyalty” (2006:117).

2.3.4 GOETTLER ASSOCIATES’ STRATEGIC ADVANCEMENT FRAMEWORK

The fourth and last model of Advancement framework that I found was one developed by a US-based private firm called Goettler Associates. This firm was founded in 1965

by its patron Ralph H. Goettler. His mission was to lead non-profit organisations towards realising their full potential with regards to their philanthropic goals. The Association also helps its clients with Advancement services such as capital campaigns, planned giving and strengthening of endowment programmes.

Goettler Associates also contribute to the Advancement discourse through publishing relevant materials in publication such as Fundraising Matters and Goettler Series amongst other. Their orientation on Advancement is premised on an understanding that Advancement is a team effort and does not operate on a vacuum.

They define Advancement as "a strategic approach to the alignment of fundraising and development with related functions – in order to attract stronger volunteer leadership; generate increased philanthropic support; and advance the organisation more rapidly" (The Goettler Series, "Strategic Advancement" 2006 Volume 12:4).

They also agree with Gastrow's (2012) position that Advancement is not a euphemism for fundraising. Its orientation broadens the concept of development by incorporating related functions. It does not operate in a vacuum and goes beyond the narrow definition of fundraising. It has particular fundamentals that address a "broader context of institutional Advancement which brings together and aligns, in theory and practice, several important functions of the organisation" (The Goettler Series, "Strategic Advancement" 2006 Volume 12:2).

Like Inyathelo, Goettler Associates also conceptualised their Elements of Strategic Advancement in aid to their clientele in the US. They however offer 8 elements of what they believe to be absolute and "irreducible essentials of success" in Advancement. They advocate for organisations to undertake the following:

1. Research, analyse, and assess the organisation, its performance, and its environment.
2. Design and implement an effective strategic plan for Advancement.
3. Strengthen and empower your governing and/or foundation board.
4. Strengthen and empower the development function.

5. Brand and position the organisation to communicate your core mission, vision, and competency.
6. Build and present a compelling case for support.
7. Increase positive awareness and visibility of your organisation.
8. Pursue continuous improvement in the organisations' fundraising capacity.

I found the Goettler Associates framework to be strengthening Inyathelo's argument of Advancement. Perhaps the most conspicuous difference between the two conceptual frameworks is that the latter proposes eight elements whilst Inyathelo conceived of 10. The principles behind the elements of both frameworks will be discussed later in this section. The two interestingly, presented a complimentary story.

At face value, both conceptual frameworks appear congruent to each other save for Inyathelo's further consideration of the role of leadership and the importance of Financial Management as distinct elements in the Advancement practice. Goettler Associates framework was relevant to this study because its ideological orientation is similar to that of Inyathelo.

When analysing the Advancement frameworks as presented by the two organisations, I observed that the two shared comparable principles. The pairing as presented in Table 1 below was guided by the themes or inherent message conveyed by the respective elements of the frameworks.

Table 2: Analysis of Inyathelo and Goettler's Advancement Frameworks

Inyathelo's 10 Principles	Goettler Associates' 8 Principles
Leadership: Advancement is reliant on strong leadership aimed at organisational sustainability. Donors look to invest in organisations that have credible leadership.	
Building Relations: deliberate efforts of building external advocacy for the organisation's work.	Research, analyse, and assess the organisational performance against its external environment.
Strategy and Planning: understanding and engaging the organisation within its context and responding appropriately to its external environment.	Design and implement an effective strategic plan for advancement activities.
Governance: ensuring that the governance structure of the organisation is representative of correctly skilled members who can attract support.	Strengthen and empower the organisational governance structure
Organisational Visibility: ensure organisational visibility by exploiting available media channels. Publicise the work of the organisation.	Brand and position the organisation to clearly articulate its vision, mission and competencies.
Organisational Voice: maintain a coherent and clear organisational voice in all messaging to all stakeholders.	Increase the positive messaging and visibility of the organisation.
Fundraising Tools: develop a compelling Case for Support supported by sound organisational practice from prospecting to donor relations and stewardships.	Build a compelling Case for Support
Human Capacity: organisations need to invest in its people as assets. This is critical for success in Advancement processes and practice.	Strengthen and empower the development function.
Monitoring and Evaluation: monitoring organisational data to clarify programmes and projects. Use the data also to evaluate effectiveness and impact.	Pursue continuous improvement in the organisation's fundraising capacity.
Financial Management: sound financial management and administration is said to be the heart that pumps blood and oxygen through the organisational body.	

Source: Original work developed for this research

Following on the above exercise, Inyathelo's elements that focus on leadership and financial management could not be directly paired with any from Goettler Associates. However, this does not necessarily suggest that Goettler Associates do not view the two elements as irrelevant to the implementation of Advancement strategies. They submit a different nuance in terms of the approach where these elements are concerned. I will reflect on that as the discussion below unfolds.

The other commonality between the two was that both frameworks were designed for the purposes of assisting organisations to better position themselves so that they can increase their chances of attracting external support. And as such they hold as a fundamental the understanding that Advancement is predominantly an outward looking function.

The last was that both share an expanded definition of Advancement. They appreciate that Advancement is not just the act of fundraising but appreciate that there are certain fundamental activities that precede the act.

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

In this section, I will be discussing elements of Advancement guided largely by Inyathelo's approach as a dominant theory-in-use in the South African context. Effort will also be made to debate other views, principles and ideas that were presented by other scholars as discovered the course of this literature review.

2.4.1 Role of Leadership

As mentioned earlier, the discourse on institutional Advancement in South Africa, particularly in the higher education sector, is based on Inyathelo's 10-point conceptual framework. The framework's point of departure is premised on a fundamental belief that Advancement is about organisational positioning and must therefore be driven by the organisational leadership – understood to mean the Vice Chancellor, in the case of a university or Executive Director in the case of a non-profit organisation. However, the operational effect of Advancement is supported by Marketing and Branding, Public Relations and Communication, Development (fundraising) and Alumni Relations units.

Goettler Associates' (2006) approach is premised on a different perspective concerning the locus of control for Advancement work. Their point of departure is premised on the understanding that Advancement is a team effort. They believe Advancement largely "depends on the alignment, coordination and support of several closely related functions" charged with advancing an organisation. They list fundraising development, strategic planning, board development, marketing (including brand positioning), public relations and communication functions as pivotal in the programme.

Their orientation suggests that a cumulative positive effect of the said functions necessarily leads to increased organisation visibility and advocacy amongst constituencies around the organisation's shared vision, mission, purpose, and competencies. A solid governing board and foundation support this. They accept, though, that notwithstanding a team effort, the chief officer assigned with the development function needs to be an integral part of the top management team, "helping to shape, guide and drive the destiny of the organisation on an ongoing basis" (The Goettler Series, Vol.12 [3]).

For Kozobarich (2000) the role of Advancement must be embraced and supported by everyone in the university from the newest student to the university president. He accepts though that in reality, the actual "responsibility for development, alumni relations, and communications, as well as other related areas such as government relations and public relations [should] lie in a cadre of professional staff specifically trained in their fields" (2000: 25).

Inyathelo's sentiment on the role of leadership in Advancement resonates well with Chan's (2016) conceptual model for research in higher education philanthropy. In his work aimed at understanding the inter-organisational relations between higher education organisations and private funders, Chan submits that organisational capacity to be effective and efficient in their search for financial resource mobilisation depends on its leadership, including board members, president, provosts, deans, and chairs.

He came up with a model grounded on four critical forces impacting the professional fundraising practice in higher education. These are: a) personal forces, b) role forces; c) institutional forces; and d) environmental forces. Relevant to the discussion on the leadership role, Chan's work directly links the president to the personal and role forces in the fundraising equation.

Firstly, where the personal force role is concerned, he argues that fundraising professionals "are highly influenced by the president of the chancellor of a college or university" (2016: 09). He also submits that the fundraising practice itself, together with the strategies must be aligned with the traits, habits, preferences, attitudes, values, and beliefs of the president, if they aim to secure large philanthropic gifts. He sees the president as a prominent figure who brings knowledge and expertise to institutions. He concludes that:

"The President's vision and leadership style will largely influence the decision-making process for professional fundraisers, of which, in return affects their ability to attract resources and networks from large scale philanthropic organisations and external groups/community supporters" (2016: 10).

This leader, in the higher education context, at least according to Buchanan (2000), must be a creative thinker with an appreciation of the difference between "flexibility and capitulation in a rapidly changing environment". Must also perfect the art of collaborations without necessarily compromising principles "and must be a professional who is devoted first and foremost to the cause of education" (2000: 69).

Secondly, still buttressing his case for the central role of the leader in fundraising, Chan submits that the role force of the president influences the fundraising practice as the inherent chief fundraising officer. This is motivated by the defining lead role of articulating the institutional vision, mission, and priorities. This role wields power to influence decisions within academic structures of higher education whose output may affect the fundraising ability to attract resources and networks to the institution (Chan, 2016).

Gastrow (2013) concurs with this line of thought, which adds to this inherent role force phenomenon that the prime responsibility of a leader in an Advancement operation, particularly in a higher education setting is to ensure adequate resourcing for the unit; active involvement in high-level relationship building and fundraising meetings; leveraging personal connection for support, and be the leader in the development of an Advancement plan that orders priority projects for the university.

Both Inyathelo and Goettler Associates are aligned that all considered, the Advancement function should not be relegated to a minor role in the organisation's periphery with no authority in the larger scheme of things. The function needs to enjoy proximity to the CEO or the board chair, argues the Associates.

Inyathelo (2014) laments that a buffer between the organisational leader and the Advancement function often leads to an ineffective and misaligned operation that undermines the strategic component of the entity's management system. They add that when the Advancement function of an entity is positioned as part of the leadership structure, the efforts to attract support are strategically synthesised into the entity's image, marketing, communication, resourcing, and positioning.

2.4.2 Building external relations.

Any organisation's next crucial consideration in its quest for Advancement is its external environment. Chan (2016), in his conceptual model, points to the environmental force as one of the four forces that influences the fundraising practice. This force may manifest in the economy, inflation rates, political dynamics and the general attitude towards higher education.

Gastrow (2013) encourages the organisation to build quality relationships with the external environment. She submits that organisations are only as good as their external relationships and that these relationships with stakeholders play a pivotal role in the long-term sustainability of such organisations.

"Building relations with people outside your organisation is key to raising the resources that you need. Importantly, you should have a range of different relationships that attract different sources of funding," she adds (2013:08).

People outside the organisation, particularly in the case of universities, may refer to the donor community; government departments and agencies; trust and foundations; corporates and captains of industries; and individuals including alums, high net-worth individuals, leaders in society and parents.

In a broader context, Goettler Associates enlist stakeholders to include, "those who benefit from the services the organisation provides; those who support the organisation financially; and even those who know something about the organisation but are involved only marginally or not at all" (The Goettler Series, 2006:6).

The orientation that universities should have in relation to these stakeholders, at least according to Weerts (2007) is one that appreciates stakeholder as knowledgeable partners in higher education's teaching and learning community. And their role in the relationship should be respected as such.

Drawing from McAlexander, Koenig and Schouten's (2006) community brand strategy approach is the advice that universities should leverage their relations with their alumni to derive insight and benefit with their external stakeholders. They view alumni's integrated position within the community as powerful tool to offer insight into building stronger bonds and understanding between the university and its external environment.

From Inyathelo's perspective, the brief to lead this lies squarely with the organisation's leader. They believe that relations that he or she should build these strategic connections, for the benefit of the organisation across constituencies. Such relations may be ignited by the leader availing him or herself for networking opportunities and event invitations. Once such networks are established, the Advancement teams must support the leader in maintaining these relations and cultivating interest in the organisation.

Interest in the organisation may be enhanced by keeping partners informed on significant activities in the organisation. These may include updates on staffing and or board representation, an invitation to signature events, and or sharing organisational publications of relevant interest to partners and their stakeholders.

"If the organisation's plans change, it is incumbent on the leader [of the organisation] to renegotiate with its donors so that there is clarity on what [received] funds are being used for" Gastrow advises (2013:10).

Goettler Associates note though that the effort to build external relations starts with research, analysis, and assessment of the organisation against its performance and environment. They caution organisations against jumping into strategic planning exercises that are not preceded by "thorough and objective research into the organisation, how it is performing and how it is perceived by not only its 'insiders' (such as professional staff or board, but also others who are not as close to the organisation" (The Goettler Series, 2006: 6).

They posit that research into the stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, interests, and concerns about the organisation will provide real data that can elucidate underlying assumptions and pave the way to authentic conversation for relationship building. They encourage organisations to use external service providers to undertake research projects if the purpose is to get people's thinking and not what you want to hear about your organisation.

"With the benefit of this information, the organisation is in a strong position to undertake a strategic planning exercise that is firmly grounded in its current realities – including the environment in which it operates", concludes the Associates (The Goettler Series, 2006: 7).

Chan (2016) has a holistic view of engagement with the environment. He views individual institutions as part of the environment and challenges them to forge links amongst themselves – meaning university to university. He argues that greater collaboration between professionals may assist "to embed communication structures within their external environments that are crucial in securing significant gifts from elite

philanthropists” (2016: 11). He concludes by challenging practitioners to understand the power dynamic between universities and philanthropy and how this shapes government expectations and the public response to higher education.

Chan’s approach resonates with Weerts’ advocacy for “discovery teams”. Weerts suggested that for philanthropy to be meaningful, Advancement practitioners must be challenged to be deliberate in embracing the role of external partners. They must move away from the traditional approach of lobbying donors to an engaged model that acknowledges mutual participation of partners in the design of solicitation strategies.

2.4.3 Strategy and Planning

Advancement interventions must be borne out of a deliberate effort by those driving the programme. Key to this programme is a conscious decision by an organisation to plan and strategise for Advancement activities. Before strategies are put in place, Gastrow (2013) advises that organisations must research to understand better the context within which they operate.

In the previous chapter I discussed the environment within which higher education institutions exists. I presented some of the complexities that besiege the environment, at least according to some academic and political leaders. Salient in the debate is the expectation by society that South African universities must play a leading role in the transformation and redress of our country’s unjust past.

Amongst issues raised the universities are challenged to transform themselves such that they are reflective of the demographic they serve. They must equitably improve their student access and success rate, prioritising the historically marginalised and disadvantaged. They must also improve their research output to be on par with counter parts from comparable economies.

When addressing these challenges, the universities are also urged not to lose sight of the international perspective. The global village they are part of demands that they be internationally competitive. Their education provisions must prepare graduates for the new world order as accessioned by the fourth industrial revolution, amongst others.

Strategy and planning for institutional Advancement must be informed by an understanding of the above context, if Gastrow's call is anything to go by. She suggests that practitioners must be proactive and anticipate change, adapt to the ever-changing external environment, and then take advantage of new opportunities arising from change. This responsiveness to change bodes well with Beers (1981) quest for organisational viability.

To keep sight of a tree in the forest, Goettler Associates advocate for Advancement activities that are aligned to the broader vision, mission, goals, and objectives. They argue that appropriately crafted strategic planning process allows the organisation to align such activities. This planning process provides a golden opportunity for organisations to:

- Clarify the role of philanthropy in the advancement of the organisation.
- Realign the goals of the development function with those of the organisation.
- Empower development staff who may not have been involved or marginally involved in the past.
- Empower and energise trustees, volunteers and other participants in the process (2006:08).

Gigl (2000) encourages organisations to invite their external constituencies to be part of their round table when analysing particularly the external factors impacting the programme on the institution, lest the assessment fails resulting in inappropriate objectives and ineffective strategies.

This strategic planning challenges practitioners in the field of Advancement to see their role as flexible strategists for campus activities or leaders with the capacity to help position their institutions to achieve their goals. Buchanan (2000) suggest that "they must be sufficiently skilful to effectively lead the advancement function for which they are directly responsible and successfully collaborate with others in charge of other functions they do not lead" (2010: 69).

2.4.4 Governance

University councils, and boards of non-profit organisations, have a pivotal role to play in the discourse of institutional Advancement of any organisation. Institutions need to be able to call upon their board or council members to assist and support their Advancement work.

Inyathelo and Goettler Associates argue for due consideration by organisations when selecting members to these governance structures. They argue that organisations should ensure that the governance structure of the organisation is representative of correctly skilled members who can attract support and that such structures should be strengthened and empowered appropriately.

Board members must understand that they, too, have a role in the Advancement value chain to help seek financial support for the organisations they represent. They must appreciate the organisation's programme and protocols for fundraising. They must also be available to the organisation's leadership and Advancement practitioners.

Goettler Associates (2006) caution that before such governance structures are constituted, members of boards must be evaluated against the rules and guidelines. Gastrow concurs, adding that, "a good record of effective board leadership and organisational oversight goes far in cultivating a donor's confidence in the organisation" (2013:17).

Chan's (2016) contribution to this debate is that he sees such governance structures as one of the institutional forces affecting the fundraising practice. The others are organisational history and traditions. To this end, he challenges fundraising professionals to properly understand this history to leverage a particular stakeholder. He also points out that institutions are becoming complex and dynamic, as such decisions on solicitation, whilst aligned to the university mission, must appreciate the institution's history and culture.

2.4.5 Organisational Visibility

Advancement practice must be concerned with the image presented by the organisation being served. Both Inyathelo and Goettler Associates exploit the concept of organisational visibility in advancing their discourse on strategic advancement. Gastrow (2016) explains organisational visibility as an aligned link between a good marketing plan and a particular organisational brand. Operationally, she charges the Marketing, Communications and Public Relations teams with the following vital deliverables to give impetus to Advancement:

- Positioning the institution concerning others in the field and within context.
- Profiling the entity's leadership.
- Ensuring events serve the advancement of the organisation and enable follow-up to strengthen good relationships.
- The distribution of newsletters and annual reports as important tools to enhance existing relationships and to build new ones with strategic constituencies.
- The use of major events, such as the graduation or installation of a new chancellor at a university to build relationships that further the objectives of the institution.
- Use of communications to enhance the organisation's reputation, and effective crisis communications reduce risk to such reputation (Gastrow, 2014:09).

Such teams must ensure organisational visibility by exploiting available media channels.

Goettler Associates (2006) takes the brief further arguing that the brand and the organisational position must communicate the organisation's core vision, mission, and competencies. The visibility of the brand must also proclaim who you are; why you exist; what you stand for; what you do best and how you add value to people's lives; and lastly, what you hope to achieve and what kind of future you aspire to create.

Gastrow supports this brand positioning argument citing that people do not give to organisations they know nothing about. She adds that, "it is important that your

organisation and the needs you are addressing become known in your community and elsewhere in the country" (2013: 06).

They emphasise the importance of presenting a good image of an organisation borne of a belief that the image strongly influences how people respond to organisations.

The view on brand positioning in relation to resource mobilisation is also supported by McAlexander et.al who observed in their community brand strategy in the case of alumni that support for their *alma mater* is collectively influenced by the quality of education, relations with university staff and the shared experience with fellow alumni. They found that "the collective influence of those relationships would impact loyalty outcomes like wearing university logo clothing and future donations" (2006: 122).

2.4.6 Organisational Voice

Beyond organisational visibility, Communication offices are responsible for increasing the positive messaging to all stakeholders to maintain a coherent and clear organisational voice. Gastrow proposes that, "organisations that speak with one voice are infinitely more attractive to donors than those speaking in fractured ways or tell conflicting stories about themselves" (2013: 10).

However, she is not oblivious to the fact that organisations are not necessarily homogenous and without dissenting voices. Nevertheless, the advanced point is that effort must be made to preserve disagreements from the public eye.

Kozobarich (2000) also observed the same dynamic. He attributes this challenge to a lack of understanding or appreciation of the Advancement function on the part of some academics. He submits that some academics are uncomfortable with public universities having to ask for and accept money from the private sector.

Contextualised to the US, they argued that the trend "poses many questions regarding the mission of land-grant universities, as priorities of the donor may conflict with the public interest of the tax-paying citizens" (2000: 28).

Nevertheless, Kozobarich advocates for a close collaboration with faculties and other university administrator to set institutional priorities. Their conversation must address the following question:

- What are the needs of the university?
- What academic areas will benefit most from additional investment?
- Which priorities are likely to appeal to friends of the university?

He concludes that “clearly set and articulated priorities help the development staff focus on the core values of the institution” concludes Kozobarich (2000: 26).

Goettler Associates also supports the idea of communication coordination, notwithstanding organisational complexities. They suggest that organisations must endeavour to have well-written plans and strategies to help 'maintain a consistent look, tone and feel'. Such plans must identify key constituencies and have specific objectives for each desired outcome. Deliberate effort must be made to seek organisational buy-in and consensus from internal stakeholders.

They believe that sorting internal communication enable consistent messaging in the marketing collateral material intended for fundraising purposes. And that such material must be integrated and well-adapted for print, audio-visual and electronic media for websites and social media platforms. "When these tools are based on a well-conceived strategic plan and a compelling case for support, you will certainly improve the marketing, and ultimately the result of your development programme", contends the Associates (Goettler Series, 2006:16).

2.4.7 Fundraising tools – building a compelling Case for Support

Inyathelo defines fundraising as a 'process of securing money and support for your organisation so that you can carry out your aims'. They dispel the notion that fundraising equates to begging for support. They contend that, "when you raise money from people who are passionate about what you are doing, you are providing them with an opportunity to achieve something special as your partner rather than simply as your donor" (Gastrow and Bloch 2013: 03).

However, Kozobarich (2000) advises that the benefit that accrues to the universities from the private sector should not be downplayed for it enables universities to enhance their mission. His observation was that while government funding covers in part basic cost such as tuition, research contract and some contractual agreements, “private money makes the difference between adequacy and excellence [enabling] the university to go above and beyond mere day-to-day operations” (2000: 26).

The Advancement operation, therefore, needs to play a leading role in the coordination of all fundraising activities of organisations. The division needs to render several crucial services germane to the resource mobilisation programme of the organisation. To fulfil this mandate, the Advancement operation needs to develop or acquire some practical tools to enable it to discharge this mandate. These include a case for support, prospect research programme, funding proposals; a stewardship programme; an operating budget; and an up-to-date database of donors.

Utilised in a fundraising cycle Kozobarich submits that the process “begins with priority setting within the institution, progresses through to identification, cultivation, and solicitation of donor prospect; and ends with a heartfelt thank-you to donors” (2000: 26).

Based on institutional priorities, Advancement practitioners must build and present a compelling case for support, supported by sound organisational practice from prospecting to donor relations and stewardship. "Such a case must describe, from the donor's point of view, the merits of the organisation, the cause it represents and the specific objectives of the programme for which support is being sought" (Goettler Series, 2006:15).

The art of writing such a document must be such that it is not only factual, but it must be appealing to the human element. It must seek to connect with the donor and appreciate shared values and aspirations.

Fundraising is also supported by good prospect researching (also referred to as cultivation). This is a process of identifying potential support from sources that share

the same values and objectives as the organisation being represented. The team must try to research possible donors before making a solicitation. The media, organisational database, alumni and friends of the organisation or previous donor registers provide good leads for this research.

Once such research is conducted, the team puts together prospect profiles to be used by the leadership or Advancement staff charged with the solicitation. This record is kept as a tool for an up-to-date database of donors (Gastrow, 2016).

The operation must also arm itself with proposal writing skills to help the organisation put together funding proposals for different programmes and, campaigns. Such proposals are informed mainly by prior fundraising meetings with potential donors or compiled in response to calls by potential funders.

In the case of proposals that arise as a follow-up to a fundraising meeting, Gastrow (2016) advises that such proposals must pay particular attention to the prospect's interest, size of the possible donation, angle, and administration details such as deadlines, format, reporting lines etc.

After funding has been given, the team completes the fundraising cycle by appropriately putting together mechanisms of thanking and recognising the donor for the support. Kozobarich speaks of a heartfelt thank-you to donors. He submits that, "a thoughtful thank-you is the first step in preparing to ask for another gift, thus completing the fundraising cycle" (Kozobarich, 2000: 27).

Other mechanisms may include periodic reports, ensuring adherence to agreed spending, issuing a tax benefit certificate where applicable, inviting the donor back to the organisation to observe the funded project for evaluation or recognising the donor as mutually agreed, e.g., naming rights. These activities form part of what is otherwise known as donor stewardship (Inyathelo, 2014).

2.4.8 Human capacity – empower development the function.

Like in any other organisational operation, human resource is one of the most critical assets an organisation has; therefore, it is prudent for such assets to be strengthened and empowered – the same goes for personnel in the Advancement operations. Inyathelo charges the organisation's leadership with the responsibility of motivating and inspiring the staff in the Advancement office to help build internal relations in the organisation.

Goettler Associates (2016), however, while agreeing on the need to empower the development personnel, advocate for closer proximity to the CEO and a prominent role when the organisation sets its fundraising priorities. They lament that the chief development officer should not be viewed as a 'rainmaker' capable of attracting philanthropy by magic when they have limited authority and resources.

The case for human resource investment by universities was established through an annual survey commissioned by Inyathelo. In that project, private consultants were assigned a research survey to investigate the state of philanthropy in the South African higher education environment. This survey was conducted annually between the years 2014 and 2020.

On average, ten universities participated throughout the years of the project. Amongst other objectives of the survey, the research probed whether a case could be made for a direct correlation between the investment a university makes in terms of its staffing to the Advancement office and the number of donations such a university may record.

The report concluded that:

"The pattern for the six years of ASPIHE reporting, show a direct correlation between the number of staff engaged and the number of donor income receipted (2019 Main Report). Arguably, large incomes with several donors need to be managed by more staff rather than less. On the flipside, a large staff does not automatically translate to more income. Hence, a more nuanced analysis of the quality-expertise and qualifications of Advancement Office staff

aligned to a futures-oriented human resource strategy, to garner philanthropic aid, might need to be considered." Annual Survey on Higher Education Philanthropy Report, (2021:35)

Beyond provision of personnel, Kozobarich cautions universities to be mindful also of the organisational model in relation to staff deployment. He argues the pros and cons of centralisation versus decentralisation of Advancement operations. He submits that:

"A centralised model may provide more fundraising for the president's priorities, and staff are likely to have a similar institutional view, whereas a decentralised model affords more support for priorities of the individual units. Fundraisers who are housed in academic units are likely to be more immersed in and better able to articulate the academic mission of the unit" (Kozobarich, 2000: 27).

In his view, the decision to centralise or decentralise should be informed by the size of the institution. And in either of the approach, he submits that the people directly responsible for fundraising must be supported by a central Advancement operation with prospecting, solicitation strategies and donor stewardship. These central operations must also set out policies and procedures that guide university-wide approach to Advancement.

2.4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

Organisations are often expected to produce reports to donors on how they have utilised donations received. Such reports may also be required by the executive management and council or boards to evaluate the effectiveness and impact. The Inyathelo framework places this responsibility in the offices of Advancement. The team need to collect and monitor organisational data to clarify programmes and projects.

To take away the 'pain' of producing such reports, Advancement teams are encouraged to consider monitoring and evaluation as part of their work to measure impact (Emdon, 2012). She further challenges practitioners to go beyond the apparent quantitative aspect of their work when measuring impact. Balance must be sought with the not-so-easy qualitative measure of impact. "This will satisfy our stakeholders and

donors and will assure them that we are in fact a valuable organisation in our landscape", concludes Emdon (2012: 100).

Goettler Associates have also shown concern for 'continuous improvement in the organisations' fundraising capacity. They, however, emphasise a fundraising plan as a guide on a year-to-year basis. They argue that such a plan "should provide not only for incremental improvement in performance and productivity but also for continuous improvement – both qualitatively and quantitatively in the organisation's fundraising capacity" (2016: 17).

2.4.10 Financial Management

'Sound financial management and administration is the heart that pumps blood and oxygen through the organisational body helping it to deliver on projects and programmes' this is Inyathelo's mantra when training Advancement practitioners in the higher education and non-profit sector organisations.

They argue that Advancement operations' plight to assist with resource mobilisation should include advocating for good governance and sound financial management practice in the organisation they serve. "The leader of the organisation is required to take a proactive role, especially in relation to the organisation's financial position," concludes Gastrow (2013: 12).

As may have been observed in the discussion of above, Advancement does not operate in a vacuum. The application of principles presented must be understood in an organisational context – higher education setting, in the case of my study. In the next section of this dissertation, I will be discussing the eminent challenges to be considered in a quest for a systemic institutionalisation of the Advancement framework within a complex higher education environment.

2.5 NAVIGATING ADVANCEMENT IN A COMPLEX HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

The purpose of this study was to explore the application of the Viable System Model (VSM) as a diagnostic tool to enhance Advancement practice in the South African higher education system. By their design and nature, Advancement operations are aimed at enhancing organisational strategies towards viability and sustainability. To understand VSM and its application, it is necessary to locate viability within systems thinking and complexity theory.

In the previous chapter, I contextualised higher education as a complex system when analysing the environmental factors impacting it. This assertion was based on the observation made by Hadzieva et al. (2017) that higher education depicts features of complexity. Higher education operates unpredictably, places value in networks and interaction between different elements of the system and the environment and must adapt to the ever-changing external environment.

To address this proposition, I reflect on complexity theory and systems thinking approach. The intention is to: a) lay a foundation for understanding the notion of systems in general - their origin, concepts and their application in social settings; b) understand higher education institutions within the complex environment that they exist in.

2.6.1 Complexity Theory

What is complexity? Kauko (2014) suggests complexity refers to "an epistemological choice presupposing unpredictable event progression with irreversible changes" (2014: 1683). It concerns itself with interconnected ideas of nonlinearity.

Espejo and Reyes (2011) depart from the Oxford Dictionary's definition of the complex, as in a 'complex situation' – that which is made of closely connected parts. Based on that, they argue that "the complexity we see in something relates to our ability to distinguish the parts and relations constituting this something" (2011: 33). Also, the

complexity observed in any situation is related to the number of behavioural distinctions the observer makes of it.

According to Jackson (2003), the development of complexity theory owes its conception to chaos theory, pioneered by meteorologist, Edward Lorenz. The origins of the research about chaos may be traced to the fields of biology, ecology, and evolution as a development of chaos theory (Serrat, 2017).

Chaos theory was refined in 1984 following the establishment of Santa Fe Institute - a multi-disciplinary research centre on complexity theory. Jackson credits this institute for transitioning the term 'chaos theory' to the conception of 'complexity theory'.

In his view, the justification of the shift was based on the interpretation of the scope of chaos theory seen as "limited to the mathematics of non-linear dynamic behaviour in the natural system, such as weather". In contrast, complexity theory "is represented as applying to the behaviour over time of complex social as well as natural systems" (2003: 115).

Jackson (2003), informed by Lorenzo's work, explains the complexity theory around six fundamental theoretical notions of 'sensitivity dependence on initial conditions, 'strange attractors, 'self-similarity', 'self-organisation', 'edge of chaos, and the 'fitness landscape'. Serrat (2017) later produced a more 'refined' approach informed by the seminal work at the Asian Development Bank through its Overseas Development Institute, listing ten concepts organised into three domains (see table below).

Table 3: Overseas Development Institute’s confinement of Complexity Theory

Complexity Domains	Related Concepts
Complexity and Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="635 1742 1374 1827">• Systems characterized by interconnected and interdependent elements and dimensions are a key starting point for understanding complexity theory. <li data-bbox="635 1854 1326 1912">• Feedback processes crucially shape how change happens within a complex system. <li data-bbox="635 1939 1369 2018">• Emergence describes how the behaviour of systems emerges, often unpredictably from the interaction of the parts, such as the whole different to the sum of the parts.

Complexity and Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With complex systems, the relationship between dimensions are frequently nonlinear. Meaning when change happens, it is frequently disproportionate and unpredictable. • Sensitivity to initial conditions highlight how small differences in the initial state of a system can lead to massive differences later – butterfly effects and bifurcations are two ways in which complex systems can change drastically over time. • Phase space helps to build a picture of the dimensions of a system and how the change over time. This enables understanding of how systems move and evolve over time. • Chaos and edge of chaos describes the order underlying the seemingly random behaviour exhibited by complex systems.
Complexity and Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive agents react to the system and to each other, leading to a number of phenomena. • Self-organisation characterises a particular form of emergent property that can occur in systems of adaptive agents. • Co-evolution describes how within a system of adaptive agents, co-evolution occurs such that the overall system and agents with it evolve together, coevolve over time.

Source: Understanding complexity. In *Knowledge Solutions* (pp. 345-353). Springer, Singapore.

The theory's contemporary point of departure, according to Serrat (2017: 349), is that "random events, if left to happen without interference, will settle into a complicated pattern rather than a simple one".

Based on the seminal work of the Overseas Development Institute, Serrat (2017) submits that complexity theory is regulated by three main domains and concepts. The first being **complexity and systems**. He argues that systems can be described as complex if interconnected and interdependent elements characterise them. Their feedback processes shape changes in the complex system and the unpredictable emergence that describes the system's behaviour.

Secondly, he speaks of **complexity and change** and relates the concepts through which complexity manifests itself. He refers to the relationships between dimensions that are frequent and non-linear, the sensitivity with which change is to the initial condition, the phase space that enables the understanding of how systems move and

evolve, and the chaos and edge of chaos describing the order underlying the seemingly random behaviour exhibited.

Lastly, he speaks of **complexity and agency** as it relates to adaptive agents and how their behaviour manifests in complex systems. He explains that agents react to the system and each other. They self-organise to form emergent properties that occur in systems of adaptive agents, leading to co-evolution such that the overall system and the agents within it evolve.

Literature locates higher education institutions as Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) units of analysis within the broader complexity theory body of knowledge. Cardos-Castro (2018) defines CAS as systems composed of self-similar agents whose interaction shows self-organising and complex behaviour as they interact with their environment.

The categorisation fits higher education institutions given their diverse, active, independent adaptive agents that are self-organising yet linked in a common dynamic by a common goal (Bento, 2011). Their internal and external adaptive agents act in a non-linear pattern of behaviour, influencing the unpredictable emergence and co-evolution from their interrelations.

Martin (2019) supports this categorisation. He submits that higher education's behaviour must be understood as a complex adaptive system made of independent agents such as students, staff, faculty, and administrators "interacting and adapting based on knowledge, experience, feedback from the environment, local values and informal system" nested to a larger ecosystem of complex systems (2019: 59).

The systemic question was how to help us Advancement practitioners create a holistic understanding of the system we seek to advance whilst designing strategies that can harness the systems' collective energy to achieve the ultimate institutionalisation of the Advancement practice.

Jackson (2003), citing Stacey (1996), advocates for adaptive complex systems to operate on the edge of chaos - the narrow transition zone between stability and

instability. He argues that the operating edge of chaos brings about spontaneous processes of self-organisation and the emergence of innovative patterns in behaviour.

The challenge with attaining this zone, he argues, is that it requires the system to strike a balance between forces that promote stability and those that continuously challenge the order of the day. Stacey (1996) refers to these forces as 'legitimate systems' and 'shadow systems', respectively.

Jackson explains the legitimate system as consisting of "the dominant corporate and those structures, process and power hierarchies that support it", promoting the 'normal' pursuit of organisational ends and objectives. Moreover, shadow systems, he says, contain the "informal aspects that harbour the potential for contradiction, conflict and change" (2003: 123). The value of the shadow system is its ability, if in proper use, to challenge legitimate systems' decisions and choices constantly. It brings about necessary tension in the system.

However, if the shadow system is too dominant, it creates anarchy. The whole system risks sabotaging the pursuit of objectives, raises anxiety levels amongst the workforce, and prevents creativity, pushing the system into an unstable zone. The trick, therefore, is to strive to maintain an appropriate degree of tension between the organisation's legitimate system and its shadow system. Jackson concludes that:

"The edge of chaos, the preferable state, demands therefore that creative tension be maintained between the legitimate and shadow system. The legitimate system must provide clear guidelines, authorise appropriate structures and procedures, and contain anxiety amongst the personnel. At the same time, the shadow system must give rise to diversity of perspective. It is the source of innovation, contention and political struggle as different groups engage in dialogue and learning, and entertain alternatives to the status quo" (2003: 123)

2.6.2 Systems Thinking Approach

In this section I begin with a historical journey tracing the origins of systems thinking. Dominic and Roblek (2016) trace the concept of "system" to the period of the ancient Greek civilisation. They argue that its actual theoretical development as a systemic approach only occurred after the Second World War. The concept of a 'general system's theory arose, they posit:

"as a reaction to the dichotomy of science, whereby physics, chemistry, biology, economics, psychology, sociology and other sciences individually explore and deepen their own scopes, creating theories, solutions, and models that are useful only in their narrow segment. General system theory, in contrast, acts as an integrator of the various scientific fields" (2016: 227).

Literature defines a "system" as corresponding parts, organised as interdependent components or sub-systems that form a complex whole together. Put differently, a system is a whole made up of properties of parts such that the interconnectedness is between the parts and not about the parts in isolation (Martin, 2019; Dominic & Roblek, 2016).

Jackson (2003) concurs, emphasising that a holistic approach must be considered for a system to be understood. "The parts of a system can only be understood, it seems, in terms of their relationship with each other and with the whole" (2003: 115). He goes further to argue that attention should be on relationships as these determine what the system does. Its systemic nature emerges from the relationship of its parts, which are abstract (Aspejo and Reyes, 2011).

Serrat (2017) also explains this relationship as one in which at least two parts interact dynamically to function as a whole and exhibit properties that are not obvious from the properties of their parts. Typically, the relationships are characterised by six (6) properties. These being:

- a) Number of interconnected and interdependent elements (or dimensions).
- b) Local rules that apply to each element.

- c) Constant movement and response from these elements.
- d) Adaptiveness so that the system adjusts to guarantee continued operation.
- e) Self-organisation, by which new settings in the system take off spontaneously.
- f) Progression in complexity so that the system becomes larger and more sophisticated over time.

Systems must also be understood as a sub-system nested into the wider society. They are guided mainly by the demands, policies, and values of the society they find themselves in. Metaphorically, a system can be seen as a person who is a member of a family, that is part of a community, in a village that is in a province within a country and region, that is part of a continent in a global community, on earth in a galaxy of the universe (Serrat, 2017).

Bento (2011) suggests that the relationship between the system and the sub-system must be co-evolutionary, with the sub-system impacting changes in the overall system. Espejo and Reyes (2011) add that systems are mental constructs "some are grounded in the shared realities that allow us to describe something. Others are intellectual devices that allow us to explore existing situations and possibly create something new" (2011: 04).

They also argue that systems get named arbitrarily by their observer, who select parts and the subsequent relations according to the purpose the observer ascribes. To this end, naming a 'higher education system' or 'prison system' or an 'Advancement system' is informed by selecting particular social parts of interest and their relations according to the purpose of the system name.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The literature review above highlighted points of interest to this study towards developing a better understanding of the Advancement practice. The first being that its conception and subsequent evolution is influenced by forces within society to resemble other units that face the same environmental conditions. This is based on Chan's logic that fields of practice in higher education, Advancement included, do not

necessarily evolve out of innovation but towards similarity with other administrations in like-minded institutions as advocated for by professional bodies of the sector.

It also elucidated the practice's conceptual understanding and related elements impacting the intended purpose of the phenomenon. Located in the South African context, I critiqued Inyathelo's 10 element approach (as dominant theory-in-use) in relation to other models. The discussion presented how this model could be supported by similar approach – the Groettler Associates, for instance. And notes challenges it may encounter as observed in other studies related to this phenomenon.

Lastly, the environment within which Advancement practice in the context of this study is manifestly complex. In fact, the literature defines higher education as complex adaptive systems. To this end, the systemic diagnostic or design intervention on the Advancement practice sought may be best served if grounded on the philosophical orientation of complexity management theories.

In the next chapter, I explore Beers' Viable Systems Model' systemic approach to analysing, for enhancement, the Advancement practices in a complex environment. I seek to use VSM as a systemic diagnostic tool of analysis that may better inform the sought after intervention of embedding Advancement practice in the South African higher education system.

CHAPTER 3

VIABLE SYSTEMS MODEL – AN INNOVATIVE TOOL FOR ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I reflect on Stafford Beers' contribution to the systems thinking body of knowledge. The predominant focus is on the Viable Systems Model (VSM), advocated for as an alternative organisational management-thinking tool. I explore its origins and evolution over time.

I start off by laying a foundation for a contextual understanding of concepts that apply in the design or diagnosis of VSM interventions. The VSM is utilised as a methodological source aimed at organising and understanding the Advancement framework as a sub-system of a university.

I then share how the study explored the VSM concept of recursivity to help unfold the complexity levels in the system that I was observing. The aim was to locate the recursive level in which the Advancement sub-system is embedded, contextualised within the complex South African higher education environment.

I end the chapter by presenting a graphic representation of the VSM structure, followed by an analysis of its five sub-systems and six channels character. This discussion is presented through the lenses of different scholars and VSM practitioners that applied the model in various contexts.

3.2 BACKGROUND OF THE VIABLE SYSTEMS MODEL

Literature traces the origins of the VSM model to the 1950s, by Stafford Beer. He developed this model out of his determination to break ranks from traditional ways that informed management thinking in companies. Drawing on his experience in cybernetics and systems thinking theory, he developed an alternative "science of organisation". A complete model of his VSM was published in 1972 in the seminal book entitled "Brain of the Firm" (Reynold and Holwell, 2010).

Jackson (2003) credits Beer for redefining the science of effective organisational modelling into accurate and functional constructs. Beer used the idea of a brain as a neurologically accepted 'viable system' concerning a body functioning to underpin his model. Jackson accepts this 'brain theory' citing "the human body, controlled by the nervous system, as the richest and most flexible viable system of all" (2008: 86).

The 'science' that predicates VSM is its preoccupation with constantly monitoring the external environment that influences organisational thinking. The external environment in this context refers to the organisation's "external circumstances as well as trends and issues perceived by an observer as relevant to the organisations' success" (Espejo and Reyes, 2011: 81).

Reynold and Holwell (2010) are also advocates of VSM and criticise traditional modelling of organisations as failing in most cases because they are based on linear, deterministic and hierarchical features. They lament that this deterministic approach assumes that the external environment is static and, therefore, predictable, which is rarely the case in today's modern world.

Espejo and Reyes (2011) add that organisational modelling must consider environment monitoring as a strategic concept and have dedicated people who observe and gather information to inform organisational intelligence. The information may pertain to future variation, relational actors, coordination of actions and communication processes.

So, the science behind VSM, is to seek features in any system that make it viable. Viability in this context "describes the competency of a system to exist, have an identity and survive despite disturbance" (Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2014: 18). It is about an organisation's tenacity towards stability and capability to adapt to its environment to sustain itself in unforeseen situations (Reynold and Holwell, 2010).

Espejo and Reyes (2011) add that systems are said to be viable if they can maintain a separate existence, in the sense of having their own knowledge creation and problem-solving capacity (Espejo and Reyes, 2011).

The VSM appreciates that systems must have a balanced variety equation for viability to be maintained. In this regard, VSM learns from Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety. According to Espejo and Reyes (2011), this concept was developed in the 1950s, having been proposed by the British cybernetician Ross Ashby.

The principle behind this law of measuring variety is premised on the understanding that only variety (i.e., complexity) can absorb variety. Reynold and Holwell (2010) explain this to mean that if an environment requires a certain number of varieties (or complexities) for a system to deliver on its promise, and a system has that number of varieties, such a system is said to have a requisite variety.

However, at a strategy level, Espejo and Reyes (2011) caution that the quest to attain requisite variety should not necessarily imply that for a system to perform well, it must focus only on increasing its complexity to match that of the environment. They posit that organisations should "gather together complexity management strategies that, similar to using a pulley for lifting a load beyond us, allow [the system] to match the situational complexity" (2011: 50).

The strategy they suggest involves two actions towards gaining the balance of complexity. They advise that organisations should first be designed so that fewer activities of the practice respond to several different complexities in the appropriate external environment. Secondly, they advise managers to classify the distinct external complexities relevant to their operation into categories to reduce their complexities into manageable situations. This exercise they refer to as the amplification and attenuation of a complex environment. (Espejo and Reyes, 2011).

Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2014); Reynold and Holwell (2010); and Jackson (2003) explain the strategy as variety engineering. And offer VSM sophisticated application as good enough tool to help managers navigate this variety engineering and balancing the complexity equation.

Hoverstadt (2008) concurs, his premise is that complexity in the environment, theoretically, has no end. Therefore, managers need to pay attention to and be

selective about which aspects of the external environment they need to be concerned with, bearing in mind the complexity of their entire organisation.

In terms of its use, VSM can traditionally be used either for design or to diagnose deficiencies in organisational systems (Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2014; Espejo and Reyes, 2011; Jackson, 2008). However, Hoverstadt (2008) adds a third use for VSM, nuancing the diagnostic use of the model. He believes that the model could also be used beyond diagnosis for organisational self-knowledge.

In design, VSM is said to be helpful when devising new organisations. As a diagnosis tool, VSM can assist in analysing deficiencies in already existing organisations. With self-knowledge, Hoverstadt (2008) beams light on VSM's capacity to facilitate organisational learning aimed at a greater understanding of what an organisation does.

He argues that if adequately applied, VSM provide answers to questions like:

- a) What does the organisation do.
- b) How does it do this.
- c) How and where performance is managed.
- d) How are its parts co-ordinated.
- e) How does the organisation adapt.
- f) How or where are decision taken.
- g) Based on what information.

The model is also hailed for its capability to offer "a systemic form of observing collective behaviour in today's society" and enabling the observer to "diagnose the structural mechanisms of an enterprise and use them as a platform for organisational design" (Espejo and Reyes, 2010: 91).

I used VSM in the main as a diagnostic tool to help understand the Advancement process in the higher education context. It was also used for self-knowledge purposes, given this project's secondary objective, which is aimed at enhancing the

Advancement practice already in existence in the South African higher education landscape.

VSM uses a concept of recursivity to help unfold the complexity levels in the system that is being observed. The idea of recursivity is about the architecture of the complex organisation, which is premised on the understanding that all living systems are composed of a series of sub-systems, each having self-organising and self-regulatory characteristics. This results in a layered structure of a system, sub-system, and sub-subsystems (Reynold and Holwell, 2010).

According to Jackson (2003: 86), recursivity also refers "to the fact that systems exist in hierarchies, and that the organisation form of high-level system can be found repeated in the parts". These systems are autonomous and have a "capacity within them to adapt to the change in their environment and to deal with the complexity that is relevant to them", adds Espejo and Gill (2011: 02).

Hilbrand and Bodhanya supports the discourse, further adding a principle of local autonomy as another core feature of VSM. The principle, they argue "grant lower recursive level decision-making powers, as long as their activities do not threaten the coherence of the over-all system" (2014: 188).

Appreciation of the recursivity principle also offers units in structures the added advantage of enhancing their problem-solving capability at all levels enabling the system to explore and promote their complexities to the full extent. The units should be able to create their meaning concerning policy, self-regulate in terms of management services and can implement in line with their mandate.

Therefore, Espejo and Reyes (2011: 87) conclude that "recursive structures imply having autonomous units within autonomous units where the organisational cohesion is achieved by the willing alignment of individuals purposes, which recognises the synergistic advantage of their coordination".

In the context of my study, this suggests that whilst individual Advancement units responsible for fundraising, communication, marketing and alumni relations must be

autonomous of each other, the true effect of the Advancement output will best be realised if the units function collectively in a coherent manner.

Compared to other management models, VSM challenges the use of hierarchical structure in terms of decision making. The fundamental difference where VSM is concerned is that it appreciates that different levels of the organisation deal with different aspects of complexity (Reynold and Holwell, (2010). Hence its premise that there must be a shared understanding of the organisational complexity, thereby empowering all units, regardless of their recursive level, to have the latitude in deciding and implementing their own decisions owing to basing such decision on the knowledge and intelligence gathered at each level.

Before exploring its application, it is perhaps prudent that I acknowledge criticism levelled against VSM. The challenge observed is that VSM is a conceptual model and not a methodology. In fact, Reynolds and Holwell (2010) advice that VSM is applied as an organisational model which must be supported by some methodology. They conclude as follows:

“VSM itself is a conceptual model not a methodology – you need some sort of methodology to apply it, but it is not a methodology itself, it’s a model of organisation. As a model, it encapsulates some principles, laws and axioms of organisation, but it isn’t a methodology – a way of addressing a situation – a step by step process of investigation.” (2010: 127).

3.3 UNFOLDING THE COMPLEXITY

I also applied VSM's concept of recursivity to identify the complexity levels in the meta-system I observed. The exercise was intended to locate where the Advancement intervention may play its envisaged pivotal role specific to the challenging South African higher education environment.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I contextualised the complex issues that bedevil the South African higher education environment. Salient amongst them since the dawn of democracy are interconnected issues of Student Access and Success, Research

Development; Quest for Social Justice; University Academics; Higher Education Differentiation; and Funding Challenges (USAf, 2014; DHET, 2013 & NDP, 2012).

Figure 6 below is an adaptation of Jackson's (2008) Triple Recursion Level system analysis. Contextualised to this study, the meta-system that embed our phenomenon is the South African higher education environment, plotted in the graph as the recursive level 0.

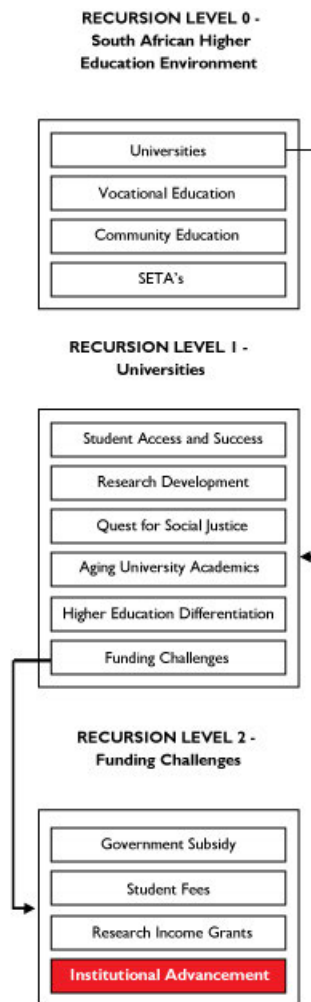
This environment (recursion level 0) that the university is a sub-system of, exists alongside other sub-systems such as Vocational Education (also known as TVET colleges), Community Education (catering for adult primary education, amongst others) and the Sector Education Training Authorities (responsible for driving the skills development agenda of the country) peculiar to the South African context.

In the next recursive level, we have the university – system of focus on level 1, listing identified challenges impacting it and its desired output driven by societal expectation and political rhetoric. The graph also shows the university as a sub-system forming part of a broad context of public higher education meta-system. They owe their existence to an act of parliament mandating them to produce and distribute knowledge.

Institutional Advancement is offered in the graph as a contributing solution to universities funding challenges amongst its many promises, if it is being designed such that it is itself viable.

Advancement is 'unfolded' at recursion level 2 as an alternative resource mobilisation strategy to augment the available revenue streams alongside government subsidies, student fees and research income grants. In the first chapter of the dissertation, I established that the last three revenue streams fall short in terms of affording institutions financial sustainability.

Figure 3: Triple recursion level (adaptation Jackson, 2008)



The graph is an original material developed for this research.

The VSM enable practitioners or managers to constantly make decisions on how to unpack system's complexity, mapping these against the complexity of the environment and the complexity drivers within which they operate. It also helps its users as frame for working out the pros and cons of adjusting in the organisation.

Espejo and Reyes (2011) concur, pointing out that "while the emergence of the improbable may throw the viable system off balance, the fundamental characteristic of viability lessens its vulnerability to the unexpected, making it more adaptive to change" (2011: 92).

The parts of the system are given autonomy and empowerment without any threat to managerial control for organisational cohesion purposes. As opposed to a hierarchical order, where there is an assumption that senior managers, under their placement in an organisation, know more than their juniors in everything including their daily operational activities and requisite strategies (Jackson, 2003).

Reynold and Holwell (2010) support this line of thought. They lament that hierarchical decision-making does not inspire implementation. They take the debate further, making the following observation that:

"There is a strong correlation between involvement in a decision process and rejection of the decision or resistance to it. The more hierarchical the decision process, the fewer people involved. The fewer people involved, the less the rest of the organisation will trust it. The less likely they will be to carry and actually implement it." (2010: 119)

3.4 VSM STRUCTURE

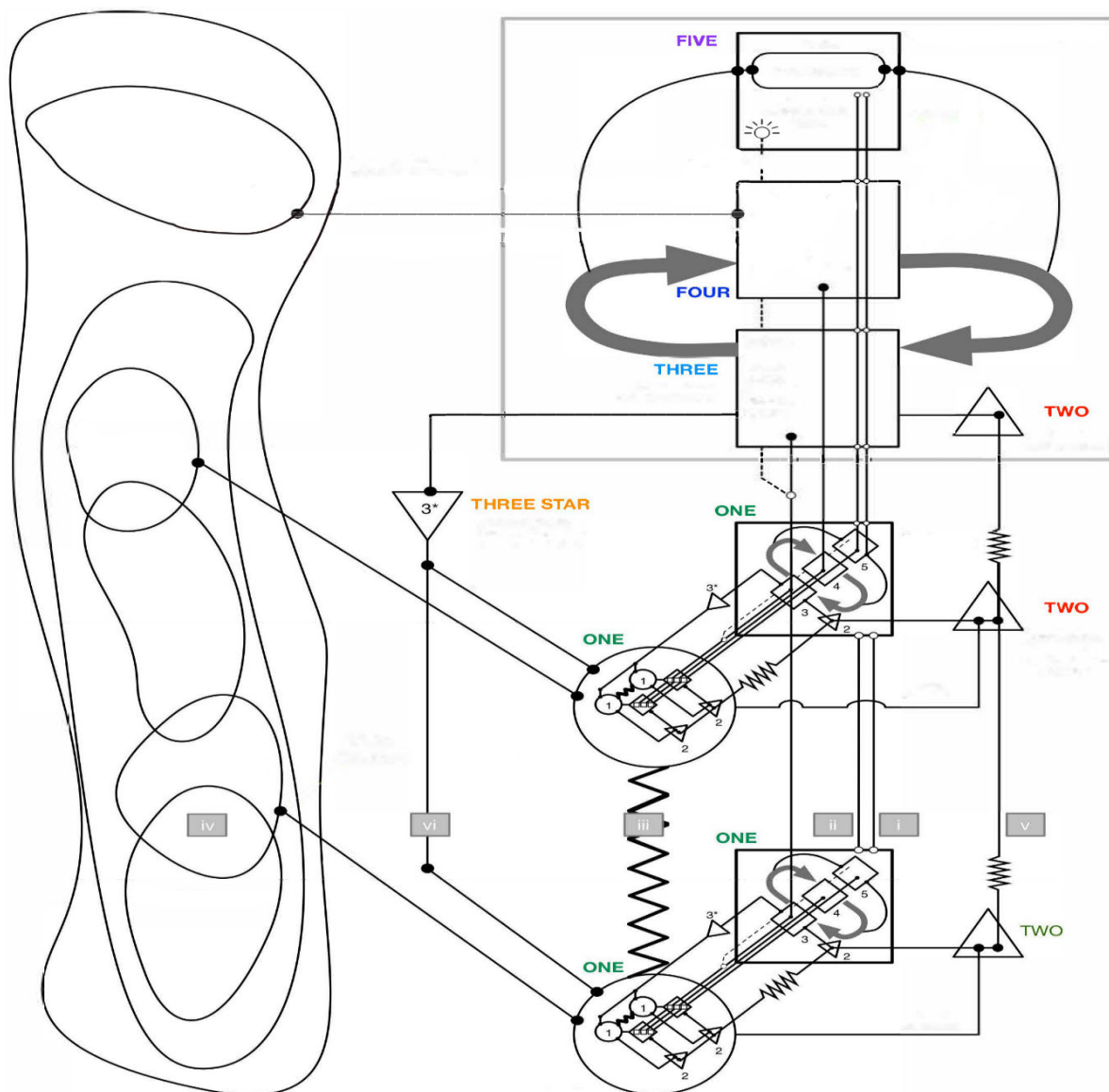
Structurally, the VSM model comprises five sub-systems and six vertical channels, as graphically depicted in Figure 5 below. The Roman numeral figures (i-vi) depict the six channels. In both words (in different colours) and digits, the numerical identifies the five sub-systems. According to Espejo and Reyes (2011: 92), its essence is "about enabling connectivity and structuring the system to facilitate a healthy development of relationships and ultimately effective performance".

The entire graph is an example of a VSM model with two operations illustrating the recursive nature of systems. As depicted, the relationship between the channels and the sub-systems is that channels support the interaction and communication between

the different sub-systems. The channels also provide monitoring, coordination, and an enabling environment for cohesion in the entire system (Espejo and Reyes, 2011).

Although presented in a graph model, it is essential to note that the connections between sub-systems, shown as lines and arrows, represent feedback loops in a complex organisational equation manifesting in a non-linear pattern. Reynold and Holwell (2010) aptly explain the imagery as a depiction of "how the organisation reconciles the fact that the environment is more complex than itself and [also] that its operations are more complex than management" (2010: 128).

Figure 4: The Viable Systems Model (modified from Beers, 1986)



As I explained earlier, the numbers in the graph represent the five sub-systems that characterise the VSM model. Important to note is that these systems do not necessarily represent different people or teams in an organisation. They rather depict different types of activities connected in a particular manner. Reynolds and Holwell (2010) label the sub-systems as responsible for the following activities:

- System 1 – Operation
- System 2 – Coordination

- System 3 – Delivery
- System 4 – Development
- System 5 – Policy

However, in literature I noted inconsistencies in naming of the sub-systems. Scholars have used different nomenclature when naming the systems, owing perhaps to their experience in the application of VSM. Though, the activities that characterised the sub-systems remained consistent. For this dissertation, the systems will be referred to by their numbers to facilitate the discussion. I will however mention some of the different name tags attached to the systems.

The individual roles of the channels are explained as follows (Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2014):

1. Channel (i) is referred to as the corporate intervention channel responsible for transmitting instruction and ensuring standard corporate compliance throughout the organisation's entire operation.
2. Channel (ii) facilitates communication linkages for resource bargaining purposes between units of operation and management.
3. Channel (iii), also referred to as a squiggly line, enables exchange between operational units.
4. Channel (iv) has an external outlook. Its communication deals with the environment. It is responsible for helping to inform operational units' responsiveness to the external environment.
5. Channel (v) is responsible for coordination. It coordinates activities between systems One, Two and Three.
6. Channel (vi) assumes the audit function in the system. It is responsible for the control of activities to ensure cohesion in the organisation.

In the next section I explore, in detail the systems individually. The aim is to build a better understanding of VSM properties with a full appreciation of its complex application.

3.4.1 System ONE (S1)

Literature offers several titles used by different scholars in naming this system. These include Operations (Reynold and Holwell, 2010; Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2015) or Implementation (Espejo and Gill, 2011) or Management (Schwaninger and Scheef, 2016). Despite the difference in nomenclature, there seems to be a general agreement that the system, with whichever name, is responsible for the function to do with unit implementation and management activities.

Its primary operations comprise "the set of activities that the organisation does which provide value to its external environment" (Reynold and Holwell, 2010: 89). This system sits at the core of the VSM recursive model. This means that within system 1, "there will be a set of operational sub-activities, each of which will also be a viable system with the same systemic needs and systemic structure as the whole" (Reynold and Holwell, 2010: 90).

The premise of VSM is that every organisation is established with some primary objectives. These objectives will be at the organisation's core, helping to give an entity its distinct identity. Out of the objectives, organisations formulate primary activities, which are tasks that the organisation does that deliver value to the external 'customers' of the system.

VSM offers focused lenses with which practitioners, either in organisational design or diagnosis, can make an important decision in distinguishing primary activities from the necessary support activities that must enable the organisation to meet its mandate, responsive to its external environment. Reynold and Holwell (2010) submit that distinguishing primary from support activities should be based on the value exchange between an organisation and its environment. These activities deliver such value and must be accepted as primary.

Espejo and Gill (2011) support this view. They argue that products and services produced by an organisation are embedded in its primary activities and the organisation's value chain. "The term primary is a statement of the purpose the

organisation exists to fulfil and the expectation that the customers have of the organisation", concludes Reynold and Holwell (2010: 97).

Once such activities have been defined, the next task is to ensure that the units responsible for those activities enjoy a level of autonomy and are adaptive to their respective external environment (Cardoso-Castro, 2018). Autonomy in this instance refers to the freedom to make and implement immediate decisions. It ought to permeate throughout the whole system. This includes being as authorised as possible to deal with own external environment. In other words, S1 must be designed to be viable in its own right.

Jackson (2003) explains this autonomy as an ability to respond to environmental changes according to priorities. Management at this local level must be able to agree on goals with the next level of management and have the required leeway to interpret such agreement for own operation. And must be trusted to take corrective measures upon receiving feedback on its performance.

This autonomy is however not without limitation. Jackson points out that "the only restriction on the autonomy of S1 elements stem from the requirement that they continue to function as part of the whole organisation" (2003: 93). Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) agree, adding that autonomy enjoyed must be in keeping with the plight of systemic coherence.

While they have their policy, development, operational control, coordination, and implementation function, they are part of a more extensive system that influences the bigger picture. To this end, Jackson (2003: 93) elaborates:

"...they [primary activities] receive confirmation of their goals and objectives from System 5, refined into targets by System 3, down the vertical command channel, and are subject to coordination and audit by System 2 and 3* respectively. They report back on performance to System 3".

Over and above being autonomous, the system must have the capacity to be adaptive, given the complex environment within which it operates (Cardoso-Castro, 2018).

Adaptability in this instance refers to the ability of units of an organisation to change to match unmet needs in the environment. The capacity to "address a new or different complexity driver [that] has effect on enlarging the organisation and changing the organisation's boundaries with its environment" Reynold and Holwell (2010: 102).

3.4.2 System TWO (S2)

System two (S2) often referred to as a Coordinating system, is depicted in the graph in figure 1 as upward-facing triangles. As the name suggests, the function of this system is to coordinate "the interfaces of its value adding functions and the operations of its primary sub-units" (Espejo and Gill, 2011). It facilitates the smooth running of the system. Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) support this view submitting that S2 softens the oscillation of operations between operational units.

The oscillation role is pivotal for maintaining the balance between the primary activities. This is crucial, given the level of autonomy the primary operation activities enjoy. The S2 must ensure that such autonomy does not occur in a disruptive manner at the expense of activities in other units. Reynolds and Holwell (2010) argue that the more interdependent operational activities influence the same environment, the greater the pressure on S2 to help reduce or prevent inter-operational disruptions.

Jackson (2003) suggests that S2's makeup should include rules and regulations aimed at ensuring that parts of S1 act coherently. The regulations give authority to governance, finances, human resource-related matters, and the general quality of the performance in the given mandate. It is responsible for designing tools that enable a coherent and regulated operation. He cites an example of a timetable in a schooling operation or a production schedule in the case of a manufacturing environment. The tools, he argues, are there to ensure harmony between elements of S1.

Reynolds and Holwell (2010) add protocols, mutual adjustment mechanisms, boundary agreements, everyday standards, common language, organisational practices or culture to the coordination tools or mechanisms list. Failure or absence of S2 functions in a typical sense may manifest in incoherent and sometimes mixed messaging coming to the organisation.

Espejo and Reyes (2011) concur. They also highlight the critical role S2 plays in enabling the primary activities in S1 to be self-regulatory, thereby releasing pressure on S3, which is entrusted with the system's cohesion. The idea of system cohesion is explored later in this report when dealing with system three.

More importantly, Reynold & Holwell (2010) argue that application of VSM enables practitioners to identify potential coordination problems before they occur. They encourage practitioners to scan the system for parts with connections between operational units and monitor the nature of their interdependence. They observe that: "coordination problems rarely go away. They tend to either occur periodically, simmer away constantly under the radar of management or are escalated to higher management for resolution" (2010: 104).

Functions of S2 must also be responsive to change in the environment both within and external to the organisation. Suppose an organisation wishes to change its strategic direction or re-engineer its primary activities, the S2 function must be responsive to the implications of these changes and shift accordingly using the appropriate mechanism. A schedule may need to change to get a better synchronisation of activities. Language may need to be standardised to ensure that team members mean the same thing when communicating between different units.

3.4.3 System THREE (S3)

Different scholars ascribed different labels to this system. These include Operative Management and Control (Cardoso-Castro, 2018; Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2015; Jackson, 2003), Cohesion (Espejo and Reyes, 2011); and Delivery (Reynold & Holwell, 2010). However, there is consensus among these scholars that the system is responsible for resource allocation, accountability, and implementation of policies in order to ensure cohesion amongst primary activities (unit S1).

The S3 comes with a sub-component denoted in figure 1 as THREE STAR. This discussion will be referred to as S3*, as it is commonly referred to in literature. This sub-component is responsible for the monitoring and audit function between S3 and

S1 operational activities. It acts as a monitoring channel through which the information flows get validated (Cardoso-Castro, 2018).

In support of S3, S3* sporadically monitors variables otherwise not covered by S3 and S2 controls. In a nutshell, S3* is "a servant of S3, fulfilling an audit role to ensure that targets specified by S3, and rules and regulations promulgated by S2 are being adhered to", as Jackson (2003) sums up.

Reynold and Holwell (2010) elaborate that the operational activities identified must be assigned related management activities to build cohesion. They submit that structurally, sets of activities in operation must be managed to ensure synergy between them. Owing to the recursive nature of the system, management must also ensure that the performance of the operational sub-system it manages, when combined, delivers the performance this level of the organisation itself is responsible for.

As part of a systemic model, the S3 function assists the model with the diagnostic ability to monitor performance at each level within its operational context. The information becomes useful when looking at the systemic consequences of failure in performance. The S3 provide feedback on performance measures specific to activities of a particular operation. Its modelling provides design templates for appropriate measures that provide the information needed about activities that are supposed to be measured. (Reynold and Holwell, 2010)

Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) add that S3 must aim to attain synergy and optimum performance of the whole system. "It engages in resource bargaining with operational units, executes corporative instructions and controls the operational units", they argue (2015: 189).

Jackson (2003) advises that the conversation contemplated must not necessarily be marred by power play between management and those on the coal face of the operation. Instead, must be informed by targets set in S1. Resources must be assigned based on established and agreed-upon performance targets. Reynold and Holwell (2010) advocate that S3 must lead this resource bargaining exercise. They

also caution against a management approach that seeks to impose rather than negotiate resource allocation. They make the following point:

"...arbitrarily imposing performance targets or budgets risks loading impossible burdens onto operations and also risks management basing their decisions making and strategy on levels that are not achieved, and which may have been totally unrealistic". (2010: 108).

The above argument resonates well with Espejo and Reyes (2011), who prefer using the word 'cohesion' rather than 'control' when analysing S3. They lament that control carries a negative social connotation in the bargaining exercise. They further posit that cohesion implies a mechanism of mutual strategy with a dynamic but stable relationship between managers and primary activities at a high level of performance. Key to the cohesion function, they observe, is also to foster self-regulation and self-organisation amongst primary activities at S1.

In the same vein, they advise that the monitoring function must be applied to build cohesion. They posit that: "monitoring can take a variety of forms, from obvious auditing of programmes to informal conversations, unscheduled visits, sharing [of] common tasks and many more." (Espejo and Reyes, 2011: 102). They also caution that such interventions must be as infrequent as possible, lest they risk undermining the trust and authority vested in the management of autonomous units.

3.4.4 System Four (S4)

Also referred to as a Development sub-system, S4 is primarily responsible for maintaining healthy relations between the organisation and its external environment. Its purpose is to ensure a two-way intelligence function between an organisation's primary activities and its chosen external environment. The fundamental key to this intelligence is ensuring organisational adaptability. Espejo and Gill (2011) suggests that this adaptability intelligence be based on two functionalities.

The first is a duty to provide primary activities with "continuous feedback on marketplace conditions, technology changes and all external factors that are likely to

be relevant to it [primary activity] in the future" (2011: 04). The second functionality is to assist the organisation in projecting its identity and messaging to the external environment. They charge that S4 must balance the flow of external feedback with the capacity of the system to listen, interpret and act on the external data acquired.

Reynold and Holwell (2010) concur that S4 must ensure that the organisation maintains a healthy fit with its external environment. Its intervention must ensure that "the organisation is doing right things and able to maintain some sort of value exchange with its environment so that it can remain viable in the future" (2010: 113). The S4 must keep sight of the changes in the external environment and those in the organisation to help predict and create the future.

Hilbrand and Bodhanya (2015) support this view, emphasising that S4 should be concerned with the outside and the future. Its primary objective is to help the system forecast and navigate external trends and possible future threats and opportunities. Practically, the S4 function is conducted through research and development departments. Its outlook is based on a long-term orientation, in charge of exploring the "there and then" likely situation for an organisation (Cardoso-Castro, 2018).

Reynolds and Holwell (2010) enumerate five different but connected roles that S4 must fulfil concerning its quest to understand the future, the environment outside the organisation and the fit between the organisation and the environment. These are:

1. Scanning the external environment for changes or potential future changes and specifically scanning for strategic risks.
2. External communications (other than those directly related to operations).
3. Innovation.
4. Managing change.
5. Building and holding the organisation's model of itself. (Reynolds & Holwell, 2010: 113).

3.4.5 System Five (S5)

The S5, commonly referred to as a Policy system, is responsible for defining the organisation's overall vision, mission, goals, and objectives. It clarifies the organisation's culture and values (Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2015; Espejo and Gill, 2011). In essence, S5 is responsible for both the identity of the organisation and the overarching governance of the institution.

Functionally, S5 performs this role through the mandates assigned to Corporate Boards or University Councils, in the case of South African higher education institutions' organisational setting. Jackson (2003) advises that efforts must be made when composing such structures to enhance variety by recruiting experts to serve in the bodies.

Functionally, Espejo and Reyes (2011) suggest that S5's preoccupation must be to manage organisational complexities as it relates to "the inside organisation now, or its internal environment, and that of the outside organisation challenging its long-term viability, or its complex environment (2011: 106). Reynolds and Holwell (2010) concur, suggesting three fundamentals that are core to the function of the Boards or Councils.

The first is good governance, characterised by a healthy fit between the organisation and its external environment. The S5 must be concerned with grounding internal structures to ensure quality and capacity to enable operational activities (Espejo and Reyes, 2011). Secondly, the S5 must manage its duty to create and maintain organisational identity. It must articulate the identity and purpose of the whole system.

Lastly, S5 must ensure a balance of relations between the system-in-focus and the system it is embedded in – the meta-system. This duty entails enabling the organisation to position itself for possible environmental opportunities and threats. In Espejo and Reyes (2011: 106) words: "it is concerned both with the turbulences likely to make bumpy the organisation's gliding in its environment, and the corridors for free and exhilarating flying".

The S5, therefore, shoulders the ultimate responsibility for the organisation's overall performance. It must ensure that the policies it conceives of are sound for the intelligence it receives from S4. It must also ensure mechanisms of communicating such policies, filtering them through S3 for implementation by departments (S1). The S5 must also perform a high-level function of managing conflicts that may emanate from resource allocation disputes between S3 and S4, potentially.

According to Reynolds and Holwell (2010), the failure of an S5 operation often signals the early symptoms of organisational death. They argue that this failure triggers a 'death spiral' that eventually leads to systemic organisational failure. This phenomenon starts with the "failure of a governance to ensure that there is a balance of strategic decision making and specifically a failure to address external and future factors" (2010:126).

The S5 can be thrown off balance by the inaction of S4 (intelligence function) to detect and alert of the unforeseen changes in the environment hitting the organisation. This outcome is that S5 vests the organisation with decisions devoid of requisite adaptability, spiralling through to the operational activities (S1).

Risking S1 defaulting into a reactive mode and triggering instability within the units at the expense of normal operations. In its quest to curb the unfortunate spiral, the local management (S1) will, by default, occupy itself with controlling the operations at the expense of its duty of focusing on the broader organisational strategy.

Reynold and Holwell (2010) conclude that when the organisation cannot adequately navigate its responses to environmental changes at an operational and strategic level adequately, the organisation starts to fail.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the VSM model as an innovative tool for analysis. I offer VSM as an appropriate and potentially effective theoretical framework and modelling process to frame the empirical dimension of the thesis – where we will

engage with stakeholders to create a design framework for evaluating Advancement practice.

Notwithstanding the criticism often levelled against VSM concerning its 'insufficientness' as a methodology, I found it advantageous as a master organising idea or framework. In the following chapters, I will demonstrate how VSM informed my research question, helped organise data and provided a framework for the discussion, finding and recommendations from this research.

Also in the next chapter, I will also demonstrate how the VSM's five sub-systems were deductively used to help organise data for contextual analyses. The sub-systems also helped to decipher the discussion themes based on data classification and categories.

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CHAPTER 4

UTILISING VSM TO ASSESS THE ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present and explain the research methodology I applied in this study. I discuss how I utilised VSM to inform and guided the research questions and the data collection. This includes how application of VSM's five sub-systems influenced the themes and categories during data analysis.

I also contextualise my research approach locating it as a qualitative study. I give an account of the research strategies I adopted and the choices I made in terms of the epistemological and ontological orientation of the study.

I then present the data collection plan matrix outlining who the study participants were and what sampling method was employed to arrive at their selection. This matrix will also outline other methodological decisions made and the justification thereof.

I also discuss how I utilised Braun and Clarke's (2016) six-step guide on thematic data analysis to guide my analysis together with the NVivo programme - a computer aided analysis software. The software assisted with the coding process and creating case profiles of study participants to ensure individuals' anonymity. I also used it to generate concept maps based on themes and related concepts underpinning the individual themes.

I conclude the chapter with a reflection on the compliance effort made concerning the ethics code that ought to guide such projects and its responsiveness to the rigour test.

4.2 THE VSM INTERVENTION

As observed by Reynolds and Holwell (2010), VSM application possesses a propensity to serve as a "master organising idea". I engaged the model to overarchingly guide the methodological decisions.

The other significant VSM touchpoint in this research was in the conceptualisation of the research questions. I deliberately moulded the research sub-question to mimic the five sub-systems characterising the VSM architecture and framework. Specific questions were designed and themed to probe the Advancement practice based on issues operations (S1), coordination (S2), delivery (S3), development (S4) and lastly, policy (S5).

Lastly, although I used NVivo as the data analysis tool, I also used VSM to help organise and manage data. The five sub-systems that make VSM's framework were deductively employed to map out the initial boundaries for labelling nodes and codes before analysis.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

This research is qualitative, based on an interpretive approach. Which concerns itself with the social construction of meaning (Neuman, 2000). This approach also requires researchers to appreciate the subjective meaning of social actions (Bryman, 2012). Bryman further argues that the emphasis of this approach is "on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants" (2012: 380). The interpretive approach helped me not to lose sight of the shared social construction of the Advancement phenomenon at universities.

The ontology was grounded in the constructivist belief, which asserts that social actors are continually accomplishing social phenomena and their meaning and are in a constant state of revision. This is in stern contrast to a view that suggests that social order exists independent of its social actors.

Interpreted in the case of this study is a belief that the Advancement practice may not be independent of deliberate action or inaction of her practitioners (Bryman, 2012). In other words, Advancement like any other practice owes its development (or lack thereof) to the input made by its practitioners, informed by their lived experience.

I adopted an action research approach. Bryman (2012: 397) defines the action research approach as: "an approach in which the action researcher and members of

a social setting collaborate in the diagnosis of a problem and in the development of a solution based on the diagnosis.

In terms of character, McNiff and Whitehead (2010: 17) identified the following as main characteristic of action research, that it:

- is practice based, and practice is understood as action and research.
- is about improving practice (both action and research), creating knowledge, and generating living theories of practice.
- focuses on improving learning, not on improving behaviours.
- emphasises the values base of practice.
- is about research and knowledge creation and is more than just professional practice.
- is collaborative and focuses on the co-creation of knowledge of practices.
- involves interrogation, deconstruction and decentring.
- demands higher order questioning.
- is intentionally political.
- requires people to hold themselves accountable for what they are doing and accept responsibility for their own actions.
- can contribute social and cultural transformation.

Action research is also referred to in the literature as 'practice-based research' or 'practitioner research'. According to McNiff (2016), it is referred to as such because it is carried out by professionals or practitioners whose preoccupation is to answer a question: "How do I improve my practice".

In my case, this approach helped me to also interrogate my own thinking when designing Advancement programs at various universities. As alluded to in the first chapter of this dissertation, I have held several portfolios within Advancement division. At times required to establish new operations. This study coincided with my tenure as Director Institutional Advancement and Internationalization, where my brief was to establish the Advancement unit from scratch.

The task required me to interrogate my own thinking of Advancement designs that I had previously led or have been part of. McNiff and Whitehead (2010) refers to this as a deconstruction process, which requires of one to deconstruct own ways of thinking. So, beyond the collection of data through interviews with my study participants, the action research approach enabled me to learn and apply some of the shared knowledge that would have been acquired out of collaborative effort with my study participants.

The idea of 'improving own practice' suggests an appreciation of the meaning of the word's 'action' and 'research'. Looked at separately, McNiff and Whitehead (2010) suggest that 'action' refers to what we do, which is to do with purposeful and intentional practice. And 'research' to be understood as 'how we find out about what we are doing and creating new knowledge about those thing'. They therefore concluding that:

“Action research therefore combines the ideas of taking purposeful action with educational intent, and testing the validity of any claims we make about the process. It becomes the grounds for other social and professional practices; professional development is understood as grounded in the capacity to offer explanation for our work.” (2010: 18)

Based, at least on McNiff's (2016); Bryman's (2012); and McNiff and Whitehead (2010) discourse, the action research methodological approach, as explained, resonated with my aim and study objective. In this case the aim to improve my own knowledge of the practice through empirical and collaborative involvement with fellow practitioners'. Also, to contribute to the quest towards a responsive higher education Advancement practice.

4.3.1 Study Participants

I selected my participants from colleagues in the Advancement community of practice under the auspices of the KIAI project. I particularly targeted practitioners who had the benefit of serving at the seven KIAI universities during the time of the projects. As explained in the first chapter of this dissertation, the rationale for selecting participants from this cohort was motivated by an assumption that the investment Kresge

foundation made into the participating Universities' Advancement programs between 2005 and 2017 privileged both the practitioners and programs at these organisations, in comparison to other practitioners.

I must also submit that at the time of my research some of the colleagues who participated in the study had moved to other universities but still within the Advancement sector. Which benefitted our conversation immensely, because they were able to share their Advancement understanding from a multiple organisational experience. Moreso that the study was not about any individual university Advancement programme but the shared learning on the practice from a South African higher education context. I will illustrate this multiple organisation experience later in this chapter when I present the profile of my study participants (see Table 4 below).

The institutions selected at different stages of the Kresge Challenge Grant are WITS University, Pretoria University and the Cape Peninsular University of Technology (referred to in the grant program as Lead institutions). The Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, the University of Free State and the University of Johannesburg (referred to in the program as the second cohort).

Below is a table that details the actual data collection plan. With the table my aim is to help: a) illustrate, as explained earlier, the conceptual link the researcher mended between the research questions and the VSM framework; and b) provide some form of rationale which guided the thought process on data collection and particular method choices.

At the top row of the table, I have my main research question. Underneath that I have listed the five sub-questions that informed my interview guide. These questions were crafted such that they mirror the 5 VSM sub-systems architecture. For the rest to the columns, I list the who, what, where, why and how question that helped elucidate the data collection plan.

Data Collection Matrix

Table 4: Data Collection Matrix

CRITERIA	Critical Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?				
	Question 1: What characterises the operational environment underpinning the Advancement function?	Question 2: How do institutions coordinate the Advancement activities?	Question 3: How do institutions manage performance of the Advancement operation?	Question 4: How does the Advancement operation contribute towards institutional viability?	Question 5: How responsive is the institutional policy-making programme to the Advancement strategies?
VSM	SYSTEM 1	SYSTEM 2	SYSTEM 3	SYSTEM 4	SYSTEM 5
1. Why was data collected?	To analyse the operational factors impacting Advancement within higher education institutions.	To determine the nature and extent at which the Advancement activities engages with its internal environment.	To ascertain how institutions monitor and evaluate the Advancement operation.	To ascertain Advancements' contribution towards institutional adaptability.	To ascertain the extent of institutional commitment towards Advancement.
2. What was the research strategy?	Semi - structured, in-depth interviews with open ended questions.	Semi - structured, in-depth interviews with open ended questions.	Semi - structured, in-depth interviews with open ended questions.	Semi - structured, in-depth interviews with open ended questions.	Semi - structured, in-depth interviews with open ended questions.
3. Who participated?	Directors or Senior Managers of Advancement at Universities. Practitioners at Universities that have a direct involvement with the Advancement operations.	Directors or Senior Managers of Advancement at Universities. Practitioners at Universities that have a direct involvement with the Advancement operations.	Directors or Senior Managers of Advancement at Universities. Practitioners at Universities that have a direct involvement with the Advancement operations.	Directors or Senior Managers of Advancement at Universities. Practitioners at Universities that have a direct involvement with the Advancement operations.	Directors or Senior Managers of Advancement at Universities.

<p>4. How many participants?</p>	<p>Twelve (12) participants employed at various higher education institution:</p> <p>Five (5) Senior Managers.</p> <p>Four (4) Middle Managers.</p> <p>Three (3) Lower management practitioners.</p>	<p>Twelve (12) participants employed at various higher education institution:</p> <p>Five (5) Senior Managers.</p> <p>Four (4) Middle Managers.</p> <p>Three (3) Lower management practitioners.</p>	<p>Twelve (12) participants employed at various higher education institution:</p> <p>Five (5) Senior Managers.</p> <p>Four (4) Middle Managers.</p> <p>Three (3) Lower management practitioners.</p>	<p>Twelve (12) participants employed at various higher education institution:</p> <p>Five (5) Senior Managers.</p> <p>Four (4) Middle Managers.</p> <p>Three (3) Lower management practitioners.</p>	<p>Twelve (12) participants employed at various higher education institution:</p> <p>Five (5) Senior Managers.</p> <p>Four (4) Middle Managers.</p> <p>Three (3) Lower management practitioners.</p>
<p>5. How were they engaged?</p>	<p>Virtual interviews with selected Advancement practitioners at different management levels.</p>	<p>Virtual interviews with selected Advancement practitioners at different management levels.</p>	<p>Virtual interviews with selected Advancement practitioners at different management levels.</p>	<p>Virtual interviews with selected Advancement practitioners at different management levels.</p>	<p>Virtual interviews with selected Advancement practitioners at different management levels.</p>
<p>6. What was the justification of the collection method?</p>	<p>Application of the method afforded the study a rich insight from senior managers, who had a sound conceptual understanding of the Advancement framework and principles that ought to inform a functional Advancement operation.</p> <p>It also provided a perspective from the middle and lower managers' vantage point.</p>	<p>Application of the method provided the necessary data to inform the practitioners perspective in relation to the Advancement and the environment that impacts its daily operation.</p> <p>It also provided a perspective from the senior managers' vantage point.</p>	<p>Application of the method afforded the study data on co-ordination, from different recursive levels.</p> <p>This conversation helped to establish the relationship between organisational commitment and resource allocation.</p>	<p>Application of the method met the study's intention of affording participants the will to speak on their terms, sharing insight into the envisaged operations' intelligence and knowledge management discourse of System 4.</p>	<p>Application of the method enabled the study to contextualise, with those with proximity to policy development, higher education organisational claim to commitment towards institutionalised Advancement practice.</p>

Source: Original work developed for this research

4.3.2 Study Sample

I applied purposive sampling because I was deliberate about the participants I needed. It was not a random exercise. As Bryman (2012) argued, purposive sampling is about being strategic about your sample, such that participants selected are chosen by virtue of their relevance to the research question.

Secondly, sampling was largely tied to the study's objective and informed by the theory-guided sampling strategy. Palys (2008) defines this strategy as "following a more deductive or theory-testing approach in the interest of finding individuals that embody the theoretical constructs" (2008:698). The idea behind this theory-guided sampling was to keep collecting data to the point of sufficient theoretic saturation.

I drew a list of all Advancement practitioners employed at various identified institutions during the KIAI project span. The task was not cumbersome because the cohort was not huge, given the fledgling state of the practice in the South African higher education context. It was also easy to identify them because I was intimately involved with the KIAI project.

I interviewed a total of twelve (12) research participants. These were Advancement practitioners employed in South African universities, at various management levels of the operations. Their job title listed Directors, Deputy Directors, Senior Managers, Managers, Specialists, Senior Officers and Officers. For profiling purposes, I classified participants according to years of experience on the job, rank, and the number of institutions where they have worked during or post the KIAI programme.

In terms of years of experience, I grouped them into three classifications. Those who have been in the Advancement environment for 3 – 5 years, 5 – 10 years, and those who are 10+ in the field. For rank, I used their job titles and levels of authority, as assigned to them by their various universities for further classification as senior, middle, or lower management.

The last classification had to do with the number of universities each participant had an opportunity to serve formally as an employee in the Advancement divisions during or post the KIAI programme. I broke this category according 1, 2 or more than 3 institutions served over the said period. The table below is the NVIVO extract of the case classification profile I developed during the analysis phase of the project.

Table 5: Case Classification Profiles

Case	Rank	Years of experience	Number of Institutions served
Cases\\Interview with SM-1	Senior Management	5-10	1
Cases\\Interview with SM-2	Senior Management	3-5	3
Cases\\Interview with SM-3	Senior Management	3-5	1
Cases\\Interview with SM-4	Senior Management	5-10	3
Cases\\Interview with SM-5	Senior Management	10	1
Cases\\Interview with MM-1	Middle Management	5-10	3
Cases\\Interview with MM-2	Middle Management	10	1
Cases\\Interview with MM-3	Middle Management	5-10	3
Cases\\Interview with LM-1	Low Management	3-5	1
Cases\\Interview with LM-2	Low Management	3-5	2
Cases\\Interview with LM-3	Low Management	5-10	1
Cases\\Interview with LM-4	Low Management	5-10	1

The objective behind this sample was to solicit different perspectives from various individuals engaged with Advancement activities in both context and organisational settings. Bryman (2012) posits that typically purposive sampling is employed "so that many different perspectives and ranges of activities are the focus of attention" (2012: 416).

4.3.3 Data Collection Method

Data was collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted virtually using the Microsoft Teams platform because this was convenient for the researcher and the participants. Virtual interviews provided me and the participants the latitude to 'meet' at each other's convenience. Participants were spread across Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Eastern Cape provinces.

The qualitative interview provided a flexible conversation with participants and allow their point of view to guide the interview. Although I had a pre-set list of open-ended questions to guide the interview, it was not to constrain the data being sought nor force participants to conform input to the list of questions as prepared. Also, my preference for open-ended questions was informed by a desire to generate richer data from much-relaxed participants.

The other advantage of conducting the interviews in a semi-structured manner also allow participants to put their experiences in random order without me (the interviewer) interrupting them. Harvey (2022) aptly posits that in semi-structured interviews:

"The intention is to get respondents to talk in their own terms, hence questions tend not to be too specific. If in the course of talking about one area, the respondent provides answers to another area then the interviewer checks this off. The questions do not need to be asked in any given order, rather they should be asked in a way that develops the conversation. It is much less rigid than a structured interview and permits the interviewer to provide information as well as receive it."

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I invited my participants to the interviews through a detailed individually personalised letters send via email. The brief of the letter was also to formally introduce the potential participants to the research project, outline the topic and the goal, and assure the potential participant of their rights. It also outlined my responsibilities as a researcher,

bound by the Research Ethics Committee of the Durban University of Technology. (See Appendix B attached)

I recorded all interviews, with permission from the participants on Microsoft Teams. At the end of each interview, I downloaded the individual recordings to my hard-drive. Each interview was saved with the interviewer's name on the computer to avoid mix-ups.

Transcripts were generated by a reputable private service provider which was emailed a file with all the audio for verbatim transcripts. Once the transcripts were produced, I reviewed the transcripts against the audio to crosscheck the quality of transcripts. I picked minor inaccuracies, particularly with the names of people and places. I corrected these against the audio before I started with the analysis.

4.3.4 Data Analysis

Grounded theory strategy informed the general principles that guided the data analysis for this qualitative study. In keeping with the VSM's framework as a master organising idea, I used the grounded theory strategy to assist me with categorising data and the deductive establishment of concepts. Although criticised for not living up to the actual development of theory, as the name suggests, grounded theory is hailed for aiding with creating concepts and categories.

Bryman (2012) endorses the idea. He aptly posits that:

"...as a qualitative data analysis strategy, grounded theory works better for generating categories than the theory. In part, this may be because studies purporting to use the approach often generate grounded concepts rather than theory as such. Concepts and categories are nonetheless at the heart of the approach, and key processes such as coding, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation are designed to guide their generation" (2012: 573).

The supposition resonated well with how data analysis unfolded in the case of this study. In that, the process, rooted in the research question that was embedded in

VSM's subsystems, upon collecting data from a theoretic sample (tied to the study objective), formulated the initial concepts and categories based on the codes and node generated. Following constant data comparison throughout the collection, a pattern of relationship between data pieces emerged, signalling the saturation of the categories.

Upon deciding on the categories, I thematically analysed the data using an adaptation of Braun and Clarke's (2016) six-step guide. It is perhaps essential to acknowledge at this stage that this process was computer-aided via the NVivo software. The steps applied as follows:

1. Familiarising myself with the data gathered meant a firm acquaintance with the data transcripts. More so, all transcripts were generated by a private party, although the interviews were conducted and recorded by me, as the researcher. Transcripts were then uploaded to the file function of the NVivo programme. Also, in this step, I embarked on demographic allocation for each participant. The range included rank, years of experience, and the number of institutions served.
2. Generating initial codes – the second step was to generate initial data categories with the VSM framework in mind. I developed the initial nodes and cases. After that, I assigned relevant data to cases and nodes. This included labelling the data based on the recurring views and opinions of my participants.
3. Generating initial theme – following the comparison of data and informed by recurring concepts, I then created initial themes out of the nodes and cases. I was also monitoring the pattern of relationships.
4. Reviewing themes – in this step I reviewed all nodes' pockets and cases categorised against initial themes. This included testing for saturation, creating new sub-themes or collapsing themes with similar data input.
5. Defining and naming themes – once the relations between what now were the themes and sub-themes were reviewed, I reviewed the naming with VSM informing the hypothesis.

6. Writing up the report – the final step was to make sense of everything by explaining the data. This also entailed grounding assertions by backing them up with the data from the literature review.

4.3.5 Research Rigour

To establish the quality of this study, I subjected the project to a trustworthiness means test, given the qualitative nature of the research. Bryman (2012) suggests that trustworthiness in a qualitative study can be assessed based on its credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

4.3.5.1 Credibility

To ensure the credibility, whose central idea is to ascertain evidence of multiple accounts of the social reality being tested, I applied a triangulation strategy "using more than one source of data in the study of a social phenomenon" (Bryman, 2012: 392). Triangulation is based on the convergence of multiple perspectives for mutual data confirmation (Knafl and Breitmeyer, 1989).

In the case of this study and as presented in the data collection matrix earlier, I ensured that data was drawn from 12 participants from different institutions located in different parts of the country and occupied varied positions in the respective institutional Advancement environment. The approach, therefore, enabled the study to draw from multiple experiences.

4.3.5.2 Transferability

This criterion tests whether findings arrived at in one context may still hold if undertaken in a different context at a different time. To respond to the challenge, I ensured that the data and its subsequent analysis are considered within the higher education boundaries. I also ensured that the theoretic sample was drawn from participants who shared relatively the same exposure to the Advancement framework and promise.

All participants were drawn from the KIAI programme and would have benefitted from the capacity development programme that shadowed the rollout programme. In some instances, I had participants that served at more than one beneficiary institution during the life cycle of the KIAI programme.

4.3.5.3 Dependability

The criterion has to do with the general audit of the entire research process, ensuring that all material documents are properly kept should the study findings be subjected to an empirical review by peers or other interested parties. I kept record of all critical documents produced throughout the project's life cycle. These include the pre-research documents like the founding research proposal approved by the University and various clearance documents granted by the University. The document trail also includes the interview guide, informed consent from participants and the interview recording with the transcripts. Also, I stored the analysis document on the NVivo programme.

4.3.5.4 Confirmability

As part of trustworthiness, the criterion test whether the study or the researcher acted in good faith as he/she carried out the project. Notwithstanding the challenges of remaining completely objective when conducting such studies, I endeavoured to keep a professional discipline during the project. To my credit, none of the participants are direct colleagues, so engagement with them was done without prejudice.

4.3.6 Ethical Considerations

The negotiated Consent Form guaranteed the participants' anonymity and confidentiality in the first instance. The consent form details the assurance of anonymity I committed to, as a requirement by the ethical clearance process of the University I am registered with. It also ensured that care would be taken to be as evasive as possible so far as the link between the participants and the University they work for in analysing and discussing data.

Secondly, I ensured that participants were not referred to by their names in the analysis and interpretation of the data. Thirdly, participation was of own volition and that should the need arise, participants were free to withdraw from the study. To attest to this, all participants signed the consent form, and none of the interviews prematurely ended out of discomfort on the part of the participants.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I outlined the methodological decision made in compliance with established practice governing research projects of such design. I also demonstrated how VSM supported the research methodology, particularly organising data and deductively influencing the thematic analysis.

In the next chapter, I will demonstrate the seamless use of both VSM and the NVivo software when organising data for coding. NVivo was very useful in initial data labelling and processing, such as Braun and Clarke's (2016) six-step guide to thematic analysis. The discussion is organised on themes drawn from NVivo, structured deductively to mirror VSM's five subsystems through contextualised Advancement as informed by the study respondents.

I also present the NVivo-generated output of case classification profiles and concept maps. The case classification profile table is presented again in that chapter for ease of reference. In terms of discussion presentation, I refer to the participants only in their coded cases, to live up to the anonymity promise I made.

CHAPTER 5

A CRITIQUE OF THE ADVANCEMENT PRACTICE THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF THE VIABLE SYSTEMS MODEL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I presented the methodological approach I used to enable an empirical discourse with fellow practitioners on how this research can contribute towards the improvement of the Advancement practice with South African universities. I also positioned VSM as a preferred tool to help diagnose the state of the practice.

In this chapter, my aim is to establish an understanding of the Advancement practice through the experiences of colleagues and study participants. I use the VSM framework to organise and theme my data. With its five sub-systems adapted to the context of this study.

The first theme I discuss is Advancement operations, subsystem 1, in terms of VSM language. In this section I discuss identity issues that bedevil the Advancement practice owing to its fledgling character in the South African higher education context. I also reflect on the units and the primary activities that characterise the practice. Furthermore, in this section, I test impactful contribution of Advancement to the viability of the meta system it is embedded in.

The second theme I present investigates the coordination issues that may impact the implementation of Advancement practice, subsystem 2 in terms of VSM. In the discussion I consider sources of disturbance that may disrupt the normal application of the Advancement practice. I also reflect on rules, regulations and protocols that may be explored, in aid of the Advancement programme.

The next theme is the management and control of the Advancement practice. I look at how the Advancement programme gets resourced within universities. In the section I also analyse how the practice approaches performance management. I draw attention

to how such performance gets to be monitored. Lastly, I analyse the control levers that inhibit or enable a successful implementation of the Advancement programme.

In the fourth theme, I discuss Development as a secondary function of university Advancement. Development in the context of VSM's subsystem 4 has to do with an intelligence role that an organisation must assign to keep the organisation relevant, responsive, and accurate to its purpose. I make a supposition that the intelligence function contemplated, is resident in the Advancement office. Therefore, the discussion in the section presents practitioner opinions and assumptions on this mandate.

In the theme I discuss policy and policy responsiveness, sub-system 5 of VSM. In that section I analyse the relationship between Advancement as a university function and Councils as governance structures. In the discussion I pay attention to how the two entities interact.

5.2 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

As will be noted, I use NVivo-generated mind map graphs to preface the themes of this section. The aim with the graphs is to enunciate the categories and concepts that characterise each theme. I am also bringing back, in this chapter, the case profile table, I presented in the previous chapter. The reason for bringing it back is to provide ease of reference to the case names I use to refer to my participants, throughout the chapter.

Table 6 : Case Profiles

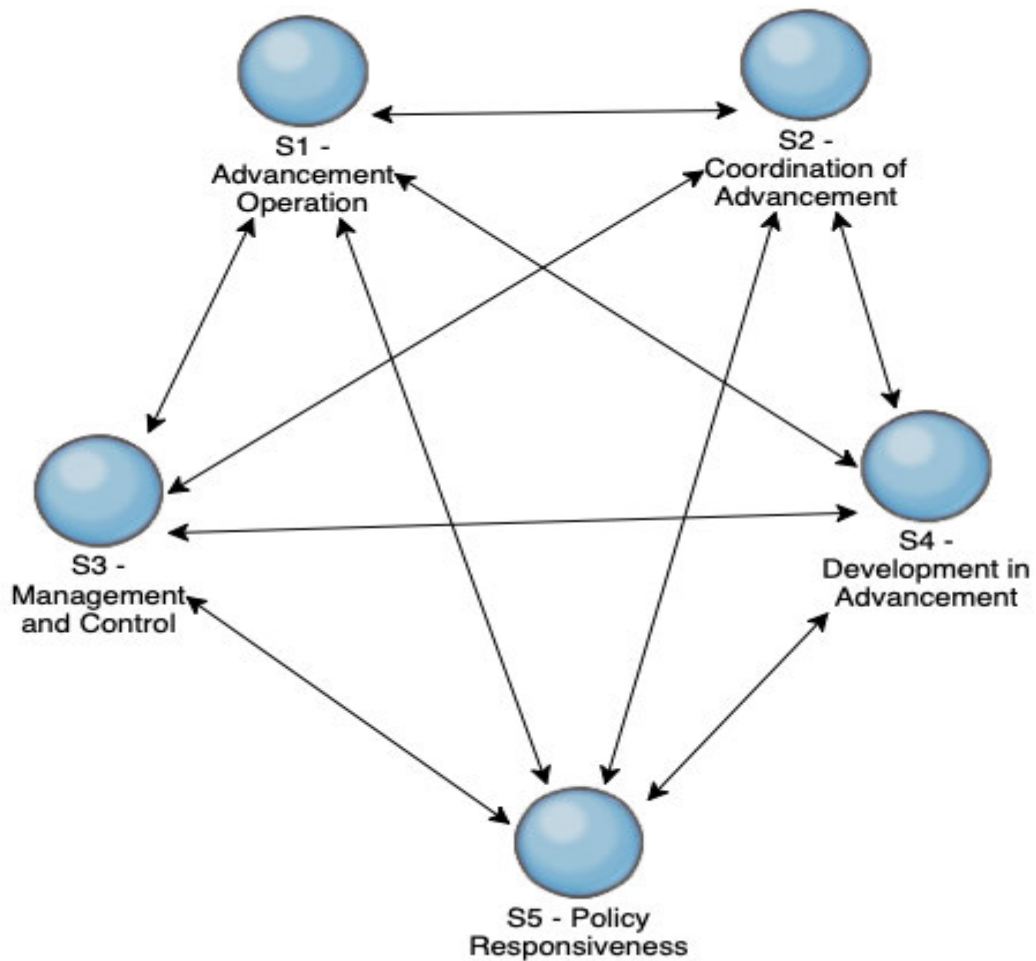
Case	Rank	Years of experience	Number of Institutions served
Cases\Interview with SM-1	Senior Management	5-10	1
Cases\Interview with SM-2	Senior Management	3-5	3
Cases\Interview with SM-3	Senior Management	3-5	1
Cases\Interview with SM-4	Senior Management	5-10	3

Cases\\Interview with SM-5	Senior Management	10	1
Cases\\Interview with MM-1	Middle Management	5-10	3
Cases\\Interview with MM-2	Middle Management	10	1
Cases\\Interview with MM-3	Middle Management	5-10	3
Cases\\Interview with LM-1	Low Management	3-5	1
Cases\\Interview with LM-2	Low Management	3-5	2
Cases\\Interview with LM-3	Low Management	5-10	1
Cases\\Interview with LM-4	Low Management	5-10	1

Informed by Braun and Clarke's (2016) six-step guide, I generated 14 nodes and cases from the analysis of data. Upon conducting a deeper analysis and test for saturation, I grouped my nodes and cases into five main themes, each with not more than three sub-themes that mimic VSM's subsystems. Figure 4 below is an NVivo generated concept map depicting the final themes. These were:

1. Advancement operation.
2. Coordination of Advancement within universities.
3. Management and control.
4. Development in Advancement.
5. Policy responsiveness.

Figure 5: Concept map depicting a systemic approach at analysis of Advancement.



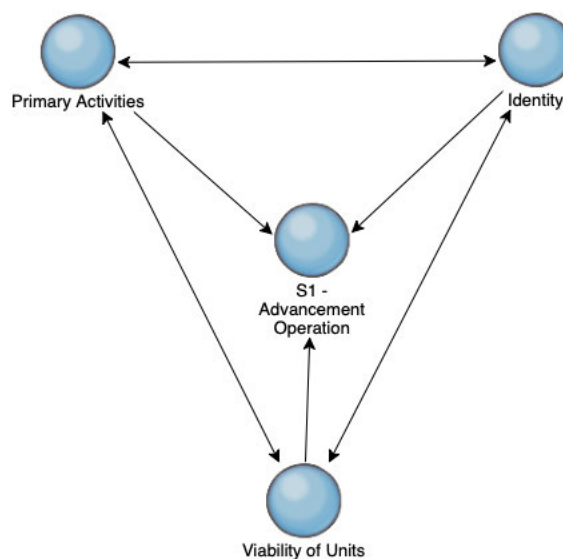
The imagery presents the themes with cross-cutting arrows between all themes. This is drawn to depict the interconnectedness between themes, also inscribing the systems principle of non-linearity. The arrows also affirm that to understand this phenomenon's output, its components must be analysed concerning each other instead of being viewed in isolation. This is fundamental to VSM.

In the next section I will discuss the analysis of Advancement practice through the lenses of practitioners who participated in the study. And continuing to apply VSM as a master organising idea.

5.3 THE ADVANCEMENT OPERATION

This discussion on the Advancement operations subsystem is based on three fundamental principles of VSM. These relate to the identity of the system, its primary activities and the quest for viability which ought to permeate throughout the subsystems. Figure 5 below is an NVivo-generated concept map plotting the principles to be discussed.

Figure 6: Advancement Operations concept map



5.3.1 Identity of the Advancement

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I presented literature on Advancement, as a phenomenon of this study. The objective was to develop a level of understanding of this phenomenon in a context specific to this study. The working definition I presented was “a systematic and integrated approach to building and managing the external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders thereby positioning an organisation to attract support (Inyathelo, 2015).”

I also established in that chapter that at the very least the output of Advancement is resource mobilisation. And that this is achieved systemically through sets of activities conducted by ‘external relations’ offices interacting with the stakeholders in the bespoke external environment. The stakeholders listed include alumni, donors, community partners, corporate and government (both local and national).

I also deliberated on the notion of a “system”, defining it as a set to/of? connected parts, organised as interdependent components or subsystems that together form a complex whole. I further established that salient to a system is the notion of non-linearity. Meaning systemicity can be best appreciated when observing the interconnectedness of parts as opposed to viewing the parts in isolation.

VSM assumes the basics of systems thinking and is a sophisticated application. It produces a systemic architecture to better understand the communication between the parts by introducing subsidiarity and recursion.

Learning from Espejo & Reyes (2011) suggests that systems are a mental construct grounded in our epistemological orientation. And that we name them arbitrarily so as observers, choosing its parts and their subsequent relations according to the purpose we ascribe, as observers. I understood this to mean observers of a system name it based on a) select social parts of interest, b) the relationship between the parts, and c) the inherent purpose of such parts when view wholistically.

To select organisational parts of interest germane to the Advancement operation, I asked participants to help identify structures that they felt best underpinned the Advancement operation in a university context. The parts whose purpose concomitantly contribute towards resource mobilisation.

Responding to the question, SM-4 who is employed as a Director and has 8 years’ experience in Advancement divisions from 3 different universities submits: “*My four basic divisions within Advancement would be Fundraising Department, Alumni Relations, Communications and Marketing*”. She further explained that Communication and Marketing’s role is to produce all content including for social media purposes.

The line of response became pretty much a dominant view particularly amongst managers, both senior and middle ranked (SM-1; SM-2; SM-3; SM-5; MM-1; and MM-2). This finding confirmed Chan (2016) assertions on organisational structures that

institutional structures in higher education tend to be similar in form and relations because they are susceptible to market forces and societal pressure.

In addition, Chan (2016) offers a notion he referred to as normative forces influencing on organisational structure. With this he pointed to professional bodies that pioneer the setting of norms and standards of practices. Reflective of this, in the context of this study is how the local MACE configures itself. Which institutional departments it mobilises as member institutions in their organisation.

Evidenced by the analysis of the data drawn on the specific questions, informed also by Chan (2016) concept of isomorphism, I set the boundaries of what could be named as 'Advancement system' in the higher education environment around the units of fundraising, development, alumni relations, communications, branding, marketing, and public relations.

The character of these units will be discussed later when exploring the primary activities of Advancement, where I also make a distinction between those that play a supporting role and those that provide value and identity to the system.

I however observed that institutions are not homogenous in how they organised the Advancement units. It did not necessarily follow that all the mentioned departments would all be housed under one directorship. The system straddled between divisions of Corporate or Public Affairs and Advancement.

Of the 7 universities that benefitted from the KIAI programme, only one university had all units of Advancement under one directorate. Common practice has marketing and communications function under the division of Corporate Affairs with Advancement directly accountable for fundraising and alumni relations functions.

SM-1, whose role is a Director in the Advancement office submitted that *"before the KIAI programme, we used to have one division responsible for both Marketing and Advancement. But now these are separated because it became difficult to focus attention of both given the expected deliverables"* SM-1 explained. The other variation

I observed is the location of Alumni Relations. Four of the universities have the function either as a stand-alone division or reporting to the University Registrar.

The other approach although not popular in the South African context was the establishment of independent university foundations as vehicles for resource mobilisation. From the cohort of institutions that I drew my sample from there were only two universities with the model. One had a functional foundation which operated independently from the beneficiary institution and other had just been established. In the second case, the university operated both an Advancement office and a University Foundation.

Notwithstanding the variations owing to individual organisational designs, it appears however that the systemicity of the Advancement operation hinges on the organisation's ability to leverage the relevant skills at its disposal. I arrived at this perception following an observation made by SM-2, also a Director in Advancement. He pointed out that: *"It is imperative that you have skills resident in the marketing and corporate communication departments supportive of Advancement activities"* even if they are not under one roof.

SM-3 supported the view arguing for a more synergistic approach to what he saw as the overlap between the work of Advancement and that undertaken by Corporate Affairs division. He viewed both as responsible for *"brand and reputation management"* whose end impacts on the organisational capability to attract and retain external partnerships.

The other dynamic that seems to bedevil the operation is the very name of 'Advancement' as an umbrella label for the operation. The concept was still seen by some practitioners as foreign in the South African context. Owing in part perhaps, to the fact that the practice in this country can be traced to as late as the late 80s to early 90s popularised by the KIAI programme. This point was established in the literature review chapter, when I was tracing the history of Advancement concept in South Africa.

SM-1 and SM-3 shared a concern on the confusion that this “broad term” brings about. They felt that the name was too general and did not necessarily assist with providing identity for the work being done. As a result, stakeholders were not quite sure of the exact role performed by Advancement offices. This is what SM-3 said arguing against the term:

“Yes, it is problematic because sometimes as human beings we want clearly defined borders to say, okay this is where I operate. This is my space. This is what I do. But you know, when you are referred to as an Advancement office, you get involved in any and everything.”

In testament to this image deficit, SM-1 cited an example of external donors who support them with student bursaries. He complained that most of such donor companies were more acquainted with Financial Aid offices than themselves despite all the cultivation efforts undertaken by their offices. The following was his view:

“...first and foremost, even Advancement for me is a broad term which come from the US. It is not a South Africa-coined term. It is also relatively new here, you know. So, people know of more Financial Aid which often resides with other Finance units of the University.”

In the same vein, I observed that this limited knowledge of Advancement was not only peculiar to external stakeholders. LM-1, LM-2, LM-3 and LM-4 who function in the coalface of the universities shopfloor also lamented the poor understanding they observed with internal stakeholders, especially in relation to the scope and magnitude of the work they perform. They argued that the university community might at best, know of the department but hardly appreciated the effort put in daily to achieve departmental targets.

To remedy the image deficit challenge given the unfamiliarity of ‘Advancement’, SM-1, SM-3 and LM-1 suggested that the entire operation must default to the name ‘Fundraising’ division. They felt that such a name best described what they did, notwithstanding the nuance’s literature bring about. *“Why don’t we call a spade a spade? And just call us fundraisers”* suggested SM-3.

The view however did not go uncontested. SM-2 argued that referring to the division simply as 'fundraising' would underscore the function the operation undertakes. He believes that the function performed multiple roles. This is how he explained himself:

"...I think the function goes beyond that [fundraising]. You are an Advancement professional; you don't just fundraise. You establish relationships. You become a marketer of your institution. Sometimes you might not get monetary returns on the marketing, but you would have invested time promoting the image and brand of your university".

Asked to postulate on what she thought was general perception internal stakeholders held on Advancement, LM-1 who is a Fundraising Officer responded:

"The perception is that it [Advancement] is cut and dry, very copy and paste, black and white. You go ask for funds and you get funds. There is little to no understanding of the work before you go and approach someone. There is no sense of appreciating the full cycle".

She further posed a challenge to academics and colleagues in other department to try to inform themselves of other roles and responsibilities of other division within the university. However, SM-5 and MM-1, while in agreement on the lack of knowledge on Advancement, they placed the advocacy responsibility squarely in their offices. They encouraged practitioners of Advancement to lead advocacy programme within their organisation.

MM-1 and LM-3 proposed periodic roadshows conducted by managers of Advancement. Because of the misunderstanding, he thought *"it is important to engage on roadshow in order to say: this is who we are, this is how we can assist you and then this where we can collaborate"* remarked MM1. LM-3 added that he was once part of such an initiative in his institution albeit as a once off. He believed *"it helped to a certain extent. It needs to be reactivated as an ongoing departmental activity"* he concluded.

Despite his misgiving on the name 'Advancement' SM-3 supports the idea of advocacy initiatives that will heighten awareness of the practice. To this end his input was:

"All considered, let us make sure that people know what we do, how we do it and what kind of support we need from them. Also share how we can assist them...enlighten them on the contribution we make in assisting them meet their departmental objectives." SM-3

SM-4's view on the matter was different from the rest of the colleagues. Her opinion was that if Advancement was excellent at what it was doing to bring considerable resources to the benefit of the university, it will certainly be viewed in good light. This she argued illustrating a comparison of her experience from the three universities she served. The following was her response:

"In this one institution that I am at, fundraising office brings in a lot of money, enough to make a statement. So, because of that you get heard and it gives you a voice at a high level...for instance, the alumni are giving a lot of money, so if the University wants to make a big decision like renaming a building, they need to take into account what the alumni says. So, your office gets to be consulted, your donors get consulted."

She further submitted that the experience with her office in previous universities was not necessarily the same. And she attributed the attitude to the value that an Advancement operation brought to the table.

This debate on naming as a contributory factor to the identity of the system is not new. Goettler Associates (2006) suggested that a distinction be made between 'Fundraising', 'Development' and 'Advancement'. Their view, supported by Inyathelo's conceptual framework was to position Advancement as a broad concept of development that incorporates fundraising and related functions.

5.3.2 Primary Activities of Advancement

For Advancement to contribute to the holistic viability of the institution it seeks to serve; attention must be paid to how it manages and implements its primary activities – the S1 subsystem. In VSM terms, a diagnostic exercise must be undertaken to identify activities that can be said to be at the core of the system being observed.

Concerning S1, I first sought to establish the activities that aid Advancement to provide value to the system it serves. And then analyse the functioning of these activities, looking out for operational and environmental factors impacting their output.

From the literature, I established that Advancement manifests as an externally facing operation charged with building and maintaining relations with key constituencies to secure support for the organisation (Gastrow, 2014; Weerts, 2007; Leonard, 2005; Inyathelo, 2014; and Goettler Associates, 2006). But what, from an operational level constitutes critical activities to be undertaken in a quest for institutional Advancement, I asked?

All participants agreed that the value that Advancement brings to the organisation is the mobilisation of resources. Quoting one on this bottom line, SM-3 posited that what should be understood was that *"that Advancement is about ensuring that the organisation rely less on government funding, especially in our South African context"*.

To lead a discovery on viability, I engaged my participants to first help identify the primary activities that best characterise Advancement practice, at an operational level. The aim was to drill deeper, investigating the units of Advancement to understand what they do.

When conducting this exercise, I observed the following rules of VSM, peculiar to the S1, that:

- a) the activities in question should be providing value to the subsystems' external environment.
- b) a distinction is made between support and primary function of activities, and lastly.

- c) the activities may not necessarily represent people or teams in an organisation. But instead reflect different types of activities that are connected purposefully.

According to SM-5, the complete cycle of Advancement starts with prospect researching, then the actual fundraising, and ends with donor stewardship. *"I think to be a successful operation; you must have done all those activities. Otherwise, if you take shortcuts and skip one or two steps, you might not be as successful as you could have been,"* he argued.

SM-1 supported the view, putting emphasis on prospect researching, offering it as the most critical activity in the Advancement operation. He advocated for the 'old school' sending out inquiry letters before putting together funding proposals. *"We should not be writing proposals to people we have not met or done sufficient research on their funding interests",* he argued.

He also suggests that those responsible for the stewardship programme should mandatorily invite donors to visit university campuses. *"Donors must come and observe the project they are funding. They must also have an opportunity to meet with the Executives and students. This will help them make sense of the report we write to them on projects,"* he concludes.

Notwithstanding the senior managers' opinions, I gave to a degree bias to the lower-ranking official's views on the discussion of primary activities. Justification for this is that compared to senior managers, they have closer proximity to the day-to-day operation of Advancement and may therefore be best placed to identify the list of activities embedding the operation.

The following are relevant extract responses on activities as seen by the targeted participants, concerning the character of their roles at their various institutions.

MM-1: *"...I service the Alumni and Fundraising division. My actual role is heading the fundraising team as well as being responsible for database. Just to make sure that we maintain data for alumni in support of the entire Advancement team."*

MM-2: "...so my role is to co-ordinate Advancement team in terms of fundraising activities. I am also responsible for alumni relations activities, keeping them involved in the life of the university. So, essentially as part of a broader team, we work towards identifying prospective donors to try and assist the university to reach its Advancement goals...."

MM-3: "My role is to manage relations with donors. Given our specific make up, I focus solely on fundraising...Ensuring that we recruit all the philanthropic support for the university, for all its facets other than core research projects. But role also including maintain relations with existing donor...implementing our stewardship interventions."

LM-1: "...my role obviously is to aid the university in its goals to secure third stream income for students or whatever initiative that the university is running with. So, the advantage or what I am adding to the Advancement sphere of the university is advising on alternative revenue streams as opposed to only relying on student tuition and government aid... I am also responsible for the stewardship protocols."

LM-2: "...I suppose my role is really to connect the university with outside stakeholders that want to contribute or that want to form any sort of partnership or collaboration. Fundraising is obviously a big part of it... I basically see my role as a middle [person] that connects the university to its outside world."

LM-3: "I am responsible for the database unit. This includes oversight on data software system that manages alumni and donor records. I also lead the teams to prospect researching activities. My stakeholders include alumni, university council, local and international donors, and embassies...."

LM-4: "...I am responsible for corporate fundraising. That includes raising funds specifically from foundation, trusts and government agencies. The role also entails managing external relations with different university stakeholders..."

Based on their responses, I identified four key activity clusters. The first is the function of database management, which is responsible for collating accurate records for engagement purposes (MM-1 and LM-3). The second was the actual fundraising, reaching out to donors to either ask for support and partnership (MM-2; MM-3; LM-1; LM-2; and LM-4).

The third activity deduced from the responses relates to researching the prospective donors. Although attached at times to database management (LM-3), it appears some functionality includes sourcing new information to enrich the fundraising chances (MM-1 and MM-2).

The fourth was managing relations with the university alumni. Alums are offered as a critical external stakeholder community with a pivotal role of being ambassadors to the University. The function concerning this activity is centred around meaningful engagement with alums, keeping them informed of development at their *Alma Mater* (MM-1, MM-2, and LM-3). The centrality of alums in the Advancement operation was also affirmed by SM-1. He posited that active alums become a great asset to the University because they open doors for fundraising.

Analysis of all the responses, including the views of senior managers, led me to a finding of five activities primary to an Advancement operation: **prospect researching, fundraising; stewardship, database management; and alumni relations**. I also noted that these activities are defined in specific terms within the Advancement of the community of practice.

I also observed that these activities do not take this simplistic and linear form. Gastrow (2014) alluded to the work requiring substantial strategic thinking, planning ability, hard research, writing, financial expertise, and meticulous data mining and management. Its units comprise "*individuals that must invest time and effort to resource mobilisation through identifying strategic partnership that can be leveraged for mutual benefit*", adds SM-3.

Participants also opined on marketing and communication activities' proximity to the core activities. Those functions include content development for media relations

purposes and social media management, production of branding and other marketing collaterals, and event planning and coordination. The views shared here were that the activities were crucial but were seen more as a support function and not necessarily at the core of the Advancement office.

SM-5's particular input on communications was that:

"Communication is very important, I think, especially internally. If you want to embed the Advancement practice within your bigger institution. And obviously, if the Advancement office does not have its own communication person, they must be able to utilise the university's specific department meant for that purpose".

Alternative to engaging the university-wide communication department, SM-1 and MM1 suggested that the function should be part of the stewardship activity.

5.3.3 Viability of Advancement

The other equally important element defining VSM is the principle of viability, a demand that a system must have the capacity to exist and thrive on its own regardless of the turbulence of its external environment. Application of VSM also holds that this viability needs to permeate throughout the sub-systems.

This suggests that operations of Advancement (S1 sub-system) must be organised such that its primary activities are viable on their own right, thereby contributing to the viability quest of the entire system. These activities must also enjoy autonomy to be adaptive to their external environment.

I analysed data for evidence that could assist me to make some findings on the autonomy that those responsible for operational activities enjoyed, in the cause of executing the functions assigned. The questions posed to practitioners related to their qualitative authority with decisions germane to their respective operations.

Although not homogenous, I found that most practitioners, particularly at the lower levels of recursivity, had the latitude to exercise their authority. However, this latitude did not extend beyond administrative function responsibility and had little to no influence on the overall strategic pursuit of Advancement within organisations. Authority and decision-making remained hierarchical, with those higher up in systems' management making most of the decisions that impact the operations.

Asked whether she had any latitude in decision-making and, if so, what type of decision did she get to make, LM-1 responded that although their department was run democratically, its hierarchy derailed the agility of the operation. She lamented the fact that matters in her purview at times got escalated without offering her an opportunity to address them.

She gave a practical example of a prospective lead she felt should not be pursued owing to the reputation risk that engulfed the donor. Although she did the prospect research, which led her to a potential risk to the organisational brand, a call on this decision was taken elsewhere. *"I did not have the authority to say let us not use this donor for this purpose given the controversy embroiling them. All I could do was to make a recommendation and hope for it to stick..."* she elaborated.

LM-2's view took LM-1's argument further, submitting that given the nature of their activities which exposes them to the outside world, they have a better understanding and, therefore, should be trusted with helping universities to be responsive to its external environment. Her motivation was that: *"Because we understand what is going on in the outside world, we see the trends, we see the situation out there. And then we now are trying to get ourselves [our universities] to be part of that change happening in the world"*.

LM-2 desired that they should be given leeway to take decisions beyond the *"often restrictive framework"* decided upon by leadership. She took issue with how fundraising projects got conceptualised. Her observation was that: *"many times, projects do not get conceptualised with the involvement of our office. Leading to such projects not going any far. Because they often lack the necessary alignment with the donor markets interest"*.

LM-4 also presented evidence on the type of decisions practitioners participate in versus the ones they need to influence. He submitted that although he had the latitude in deciding on his engagement activities for cultivation and solicitation purposes, he could not influence the operation at a greater strategic level. *"I operate where I have a great deal of latitude in terms of who I want to engage, when I want to engage them and how I structure the engagements. I take such decisions. I also decide how I prioritise such,"* he explained.

However, when asked about organisational challenges that impacted daily operations, LM-4 pointed to poor organisational coordination that adversely affected his contribution to the broader strategy. He lamented that he could not influence authority on how other stakeholders engage with the same donors he cultivates. *"You have everybody in the university engaging the same donors on everything else, outside the institutional strategic priorities",* he explained.

This pattern of evidence presented itself even at the higher management level. Authority and decision-making are limited to presiding over management issues relating to human and financial resources. They, however, did not have the requisite autonomy contemplated in terms of VSM application. The resource management role was mainly for compliance and was not empowered to ensure alignment with operational strategy.

SM-1 shared that although by his designation, he had the authority to take certain decisions in the interest of the operational strategy, sometimes implementation of such decisions got hamstrung by organisation bureaucracy. He argued that fundraising sometimes require quick, decisive actions responsive to the external environment. *"We fail at our jobs at times because the internal organisation arrangement does not empower us to be responsive",* he argued.

However, SM-2 viewed the matter differently. He argued that what contributed to the constraints on units was not necessarily the organisational design but the management styles that prevailed in universities. He believed *"most units have the*

autonomy to function as almost independent unit". He challenged senior managers to refrain from micro-management. The following was SM-2's detailed submission:

"To ensure accountability, each unit manager must be presented with the annual fundraising plan to know exactly what projects are lined up. They then must be given room to exercise their skills and creative without being micro-managed or being controlled. So that they have the autonomy to explore different avenues and opportunities that will ultimately contribute towards the departmental goals."

MM-1 shared the sentiment. He argued that the management culture at the institution he is currently employed differs from his two previous universities. His observation was that Advancement at the current employer involves developing an organisational strategy. As such, he felt empowered to decide on the direction data management and alumni strategies took, informed by the trends he was monitoring in the outside environment.

5.4 COORDINATION OF ADVANCEMENT WITHIN UNIVERSITIES

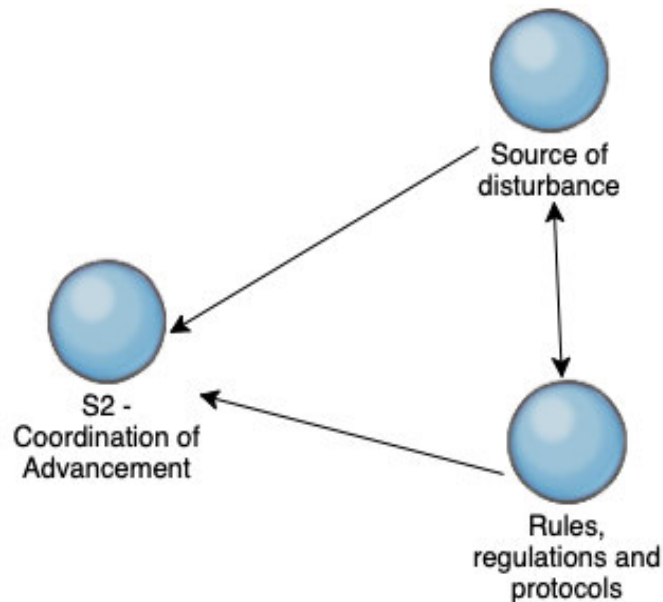
While VSM application requires that operational activities that define and give identity to the system be autonomous to enhance the viability of the whole, this quest for autonomy should not go unchecked. Lest it undermines and potentially disrupts the cohesion of the entire system (Espejo and Gill, 2011; Hilbrand and Bodhanya, 2015). To mitigate against that VSM offers S2, whose function is to soften the oscillation of operations.

The Advancement operations run the risk of having a disruptive effect unless mechanisms are put in place to manage the interface of its activities between its units and its interaction with the organisation it is embedded in. The need is even greater for the Advancement programme in universities, which literature categorises as complex systems.

To explore the S2 I analyse the environment with which Advancement practice interfaces. With particular attention to potential sources of disturbance. I also reflect

on the coordination mechanism that offer tools to aid the coordination of Advancement activities. Figure 6 below illustrates the concept map applicable to S2 issues, informed by data.

Figure 7: Coordination of Advancement concept map



5.4.1 Source of disturbance

To appropriately diagnose the coordination issues of Advancement in a university context, I had to appreciate the scope that Advancement activities had to service within a given organisation. In other words, I had to acknowledge the reach of services that the Advancement program catered for within universities.

Inherently, and if its definition is anything to go by, the function of Advancement in any organisation is to contribute towards mobilising resources to support its vision and mission. I argue therefore that Advancement's output is as important as the lifeblood that keeps the organisation going. Its touchpoints can be traced through the entire system.

MM-3 extends the reach beyond universities' boundaries, saying that Advancement enables the universities' plight towards social justice. He posited that "*within the South*

African context, Advancement is about playing a role in ensuring that our universities get resources that enable them to contribute towards the transformation objectives of our society in line with the national priorities".

I pointed to the US-based Ohio State University Advancement framework (2012) that described Advancement's reach as a university-wide integrated approach that found expression through all stakeholders (internal and external). This view found resonance with most participants, even for our local context.

The stakeholders at play were categorised as the donor community listing corporates, trusts, foundations, government agencies, embassies, alums, high net-worth individuals, and friends of the university (LM-1, LM-2, LM-3, LM-4, LM-5, MM-1, and MM-2). University stakeholders enlisted academic staff, support departments, management, university council and student leadership (SM-1, SM-2, SM-3 and SM-4). The last category included other universities and research agencies (SM-1 and MM-3).

No doubt that given the diverse character of these stakeholders, they would bring to the table a variety of needs and challenges. Therefore, navigating relations with such a stakeholder community would require the capacity to anticipate turbulence and unpredictability, nothing shy of complexity management.

Application of VSM charges that the Advancement system must strive for a balanced variety equation. This means that the system must organise itself with sufficient mechanisms and strategies enabling it to either adapt to its chosen environment or adapt to itself.

Several factors were raised by participants as sources of turbulence that required Advancement operation to design itself to maintain the requisite variety to maintain functionality. One systematic issue that was repeatedly mentioned was the siloed configuration of the Advancement operation. As was established earlier, most Advancement divisions did not have direct authority over other important support functions like communication and marketing or alumni relations, for that matter.

The challenge was pronounced in organisational models that operated Advancement through independent foundations. The approach in such organisations was to function only with fundraisers, entrusting them with the complete cycle of the operation. MM-3, who functioned in such a model, said their frustration was that all other activities that are supposed to support his programme resided with the Corporate Affairs division, which he had no direct relationship with.

He singled out the lack of access to the university alums as prime among his challenges. He argued that "*without access to alumni database you are not able to give impetus to your individual giving programme*". His issue was that the cultivation of alums as prospects for individual giving may only materialise at the mercy of those managing the database within the University.

The importance of alignment with alumni relations was supported by MM-1. To his credit, he has a direct experience of saving three different university that had a different setting where Alumni Relations is concerned. The first university he served had Advancement comprising both Fundraising and Alumni Relations, the second had Alumni Relations organised totally independent from other Advancement functions. And now he has the 'pleasure' serving all functions are under one roof.

With that background, his opinion was that cultivation works best if the alumni relations programme is embedded in the fundraising strategy of the university. Alumni relations offices' role, he said, was "*to warm up prospects so that when you go as fundraiser, there is a relation already cultivated*". He added that the benefit of communications and marketing in centralised planning was to ensure that "*the is messaging is accurate from the get-go*".

He was also sceptical of operations that cloned communication and marketing functions where such were not built-in, owing to organisational design. In this instance, he referred to Advancement offices that were appointing their communication and marketing personnel in 'duplication' to the main ones deployed elsewhere in the university.

His view was that the approach brings about a new set of coordination challenges in that *"whoever that marketing [or communication] person is, would have a duty to constantly liaise with Marketing [department] to ensure that messaging is in sync"*. The point resonates with Espejo and Reyes's (2011) argument that the quest for balance or requisite variety should not necessarily translate to increasing complexity to match the chosen environment.

MM-3 advocated for a Case for Support as university fundraising tool to counter the siloed operational arrangement within institutions. Case for Support is a high-quality storybook (hard or soft copy) detailing all priority projects of the university requiring funding. It creatively tells the story of an organisation, starting with its history, mission, and vision. It is also used to market the university, making a case for its uniqueness and value-add. It uses narratives of the organisation's success stories as a leverage or vantage point to negotiate new partnerships and support.

MM-3 cautioned that putting together such material is not a simple exercise. *"It is challenging to lead a university to develop a Case for Support, especially when you are responsible only for the fundraising side."* He referred to the foundation-based Advancement operation he is involved with.

The other source of disturbance to be anticipated, as mentioned by MM-2, is the reluctance, at best or resistance at worst, on the part of another university department to share important information relating to Advancement projects. The example she shared was that:

"...as we are trying to streamline fundraising at [university name] to try and ensure that funds come through our department, so that they are properly receipted, and donors are properly stewarded. There are pockets of resistance. Probably people think that we are trying to take up their hard work. When this is not the case."

SM-5 and MM-2 related to this poor information management, calling out academic staff. According to SM-5, the tendency could be attributed to a lack of appreciation of the broad Advancement operation and its centrality to resource mobilisation. MM-2

concluded, complaining that "*academics do not prioritise the needs of Advancement*". His specific example concerned academic and project leaders who failed to honour negotiated deadlines for projects or share relevant information needed to compile fundraising proposals.

The bureaucratic processes that characterise most Finance departments were also on the list of sources of disturbance. The challenges in this regard revolved around the lack of agility of the departments supporting Advancement. For example, MM-2 pointed to poor turnaround time in allocating donations received. "*You receive a donation; it gets into your account, and you take a while to transfer it. Whereas the school or the college or project leader needs that funding immediately...*" he explained, blaming that on organisational culture.

5.4.2 Language, Rules, Regulation and Protocols

The other S2 function in the system is to put together rules, regulations and protocols that must enable a smoother implementation of primary activities. The function also extends to standardising the language in use so that the meta system appreciates the activities in the proper context they are meant to be received.

In the case of Advancement, which is relatively unknown to most in higher education institutions, care should be taken not to assume that concepts used by the practitioners will be understood in the manner they are meant to be. This was also evidenced by the discussion on the system's identity, where I reflected on the perceptions of Advancement by university stakeholders including practitioners themselves.

Some of the interventions I noted were references to policy frameworks that govern the functionality of Advancement activities in institutions. The purpose of these policies is also to help define Advancement concepts. Senior managers acknowledged, that the definition of some concepts in the context of Advancement has a more nuanced meaning than it would otherwise obtain from commonly spoken language (SM-1 and SM-2).

An example was made of the concept of prospect researching, which in Advancement terms is defined as a process of identifying potential support from sources that share the same values and objectives with the organisation being served. It is characterised by cultivation to the end that relations are mapped out with potential partners or donors. The function includes researching external organisational relations with corporates, alums, government, and international agencies (SM-2).

LM-3, whose primary job is prospect researching, concurred, adding that the job calls for making a deliberate effort to build relations with targeted individuals, corporates, trust, and foundations (local and international). A deliberate effort is made through prospect researching to match organisational values with potential external support.

The concept also makes a distinction between a donor and a prospect. The former refers to a person giving to an organisation. Whereas the latter refers to any person or entity identified as having the potential to give to the organisation (SM-4 and SM-5). Such clarifications they submitted, must be provided through policy statements and regulations. One such policy is a fundraising policy or Advancement policy as would apply in different organisation settings.

Fundraising is securing money or support for your organisation's quest to fulfil its mission. The activity includes developing specific engagement campaigns to solicit the much-sought philanthropic funds towards specific projects and campaigns. It also involves making a strategic decision on appropriate fundraising vehicles for a particular audience (SM-1 and SM-4).

SM-5 made examples of an Annual Fund, a vehicle used to target individuals, or Capital Campaigns targeting corporate foundations and high-net-worth individuals. Then potential donors are solicited using several methods. These include face-to-face, direct mail, telephone calls, online platforms etc.

Another pronouncement that policies should guide on is the ethics question, in relation to donations. According to SM-4, not all donations should be accepted "*sources must be legitimate; you don't just accept money that lends in your account.*" She advocated

for pronounced provisions in the policy that empower them not to process donations whose tracking is suspicious or suggested illegitimate sources.

University donations should also comply with the audit requirement as per the South African Revenue Services (SARS). SM-5 submitted that the Advancement division, in aid of this compliance, should find ways of educating the university community about such laws. He further suggested that as part of the regulation, the division must assist the university *"in communicating SARS set standard of what qualifies as a donation and what benefit can be accrued out of such a gesture,"* e.g., Section 18A tax benefit certificate.

The other unusual concept is stewardship. This refers to the carefully crafted mechanism of thanking and recognising the donors for the support they would have given to an organisation. It also includes efficient donation recording and appropriate donor recognition. The function requires of practitioners in the benefitting programme to demonstrate appreciation and value for the support (SM-5, MM-3 and LM-2).

Concerning stewardship, LM-1 added that beyond defining the concept in a policy, this function must be backed by protocols that map out its functionality. She explained that such protocols provide a blueprint that guides all levels of giving and the recommended authority to issue 'thank-you' letters in recognition of various donation amounts. She insisted that *"it is important to have such protocols in place because it also provides you with a record of the history for each of your donors"*.

SM-4 also shared the stewardship protocol as a policy matter. She emphasised that such protocols need to be known across the university. She elaborated that *"different amounts need signatures from different levels. If the donation is a million rands and above, contracts to that effect must draw attention of higher-level authority"*. She also added that some donors prefer to remain anonymous, and the policies must be responsive.

Database management was hailed as the axis enabling Advancement activities to revolve. The function was described as a meticulous exercise of recording and updating data as accurately and as user-friendly as possible. Such records include

relevant alumni information and donors register, which must enlist their history with university (MM-1, MM-2 and SM-5).

MM-1, whose responsibility at his institution is database management, credited his programme for enabling the university to better co-ordinate its relations with internal and external stakeholders. LM-4, a Fundraising officer with another university, also pointed to good database management as critical to his stakeholder engagement strategies.

Alumni relations function was explained as an engagement effort in which the university invests time to maintain lifelong relations with its graduates (MM-1 and MM-2). According to SM-5, the definition of alumni seemed to have evolved with time. He recollected that the title 'alumni' was initially accorded to only graduates who had completed a degree qualification with a university.

MM-2 attested to that background, arguing that graduates who qualify with a one-year certificate were not accorded the right and privilege that comes with being an alumnus of an institution as a matter of 'tradition'. Both participants argued for a need in the alumni relations space to re-evaluate the tradition and include certificated graduates so that they feel recognised enough to consider giving. The advantage of expanding the definition to include certificated graduates is that university get to increase its pool of alumni. Impacting positively its brand reach and potential increase to their individual giving donor prospects.

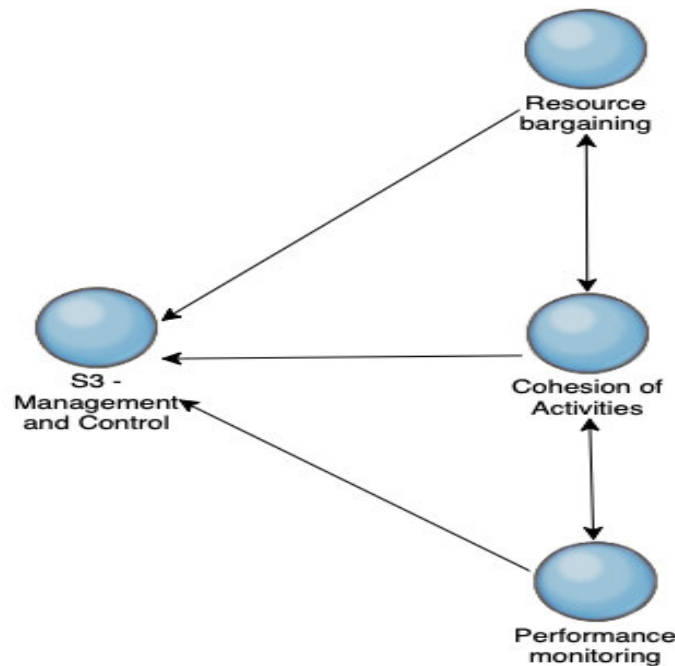
There are at least three challenges in coordination. The first concerns differentiating Advancement from other aspects of fundraising in the universities. The second concern was resourcing various Advancement projects that might be competing in the same resource pools. Third, would be the actual coordination of the function within the complexities of the universities.

5.5 MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

The next aspect of the system that requires equal attention is the function of the overall management and control of the system. In VSM this is S3. The function is responsible

for resourcing, accountability, and policy implementation. The S3 also comes with a performance monitoring and audit function called S3*. In this section, I reflect on resource allocation, performance monitoring, and the quest for control or cohesion of Advancement activities. Figure 7 below plots the concept map with the three points of discussion.

Figure 8: Management and Control concept map



5.5.1 Resourcing of Advancement

The predominant sentiment on resource allocation across participants at all levels of management was that Advancement is poorly resourced, relative to other university operations in terms of human and budgetary considerations. The pattern was also observed in Inyathelo's reports on philanthropy in the South African higher education environment.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Inyathelo, at service to participating universities, set out to investigate, amongst other things, how universities resourced the Advancement offices. In particular, they were interested in establishing the value proposition concerning the investment universities make in terms of Advancement personnel and the return on such an investment.

Consistently, over the six years (2014 - 2020) that the surveys were conducted, there was indeed a correlation between the number of staff members a university deploys with the number of donations it records. The finding of that survey has not tilted the debate in favour of us, practitioners in the sector despite the report being shared widely in universities. SM-1 attested to that.

SM-3, for his part, pointed to a benchmarking exercise he conducted with other South African universities to make a case with his seniors for the appointment of more staff in their office. He discovered that one local university outside his province *"had a staff complement of 36 people that operated the Advancement department. Compared to only 3 permanent staff members that our division started with"*.

He argued that staffing disparity called for managing expectations with senior executives. He raised this against a tendency he pointed to, of senior executive unfairly comparing the output of Advancement departments across universities, without appreciating the investment that respective institutions make towards programmes. The view resonated well with SM-2.

He (SM-2) suggested that while accepting that resources will always be an issue and that Advancement *"will not be priority number one when universities allocate resources,"* he advised leaders in the sector to be realistic when designing their programmes. *"Do not be over-ambitious. Do not put yourself in a situation where you over-commit and then do not deliver. You will only earn yourself criticism, although undue,"* he concluded.

The impact of inadequate staff, according to LM-1, was that it severely compromises the quality performance of the offices. She recounted how she had to depend on interns to keep up with her activities. The complaint she raised with relying on interns was that, given the transient nature, she spent more time on their training at the expense of her core activities.

SM-4 viewed the resourcing question differently. Her view was that it is not always a matter of insufficient resources, particularly where staffing is concerned. She questioned the skills balance within departments. Her point was that majority of staff

in Advancement offices should be more fundraiser than support staff. *"I think fundraisers should be 60% or 70, at least, and then others... We can't have it the other way around. Especially that some of the duties can be automated"* she added.

She also scrutinised the qualification credential of practitioners occupying various roles in our universities. *"Who has a degree in fundraising? Who has studied to become a fundraiser?"* she questioned. She further argued that in most offices, you get people with Ph.D. in all other fields but not in Advancement speciality. But because they have been with the university for many years, they get assigned roles in Advancement.

The staff competency question was raised by SM-1, referring to high staff turnover in the sector. According to him, the challenge was more significant with colleagues that benefitted from the flagship capacity building programme previously co-ordinated through Inyathelo at the inception of the KIAI project. He argued that given the comparatively small pool of that practitioner relative to the number of institutions, staff turnover rate is high amongst qualified candidates.

I therefore form an opinion that one area that undermines the viability of the system is under resourcing of the Advancement programme, both in terms of human and financial resourcing. This challenges practitioners in the field to be strategic and seek meaningful participation in the resource allocation conversations of their organisations.

5.5.2 Performance Monitoring

In terms of performance monitoring and audit, although no formal Advancement performance management programme was identified, the practice's performance was monitored as part of general institutional performance management activities. Furthermore, the responsibility to manage such appeared to be upon all levels of management, either through individual self-regulation or through departmental coordination.

The general attitude of participants was of the principle that performance had to be managed and monitored regardless of an established system. The view also was that the approach should not be punitive but rather developmental. MM-3 suggested the following in terms of process:

"You have to set goals from the strategy and then you get your targets. In a healthy environment you would come up with your own strategies and present them for implementation. You get your targets, you go raise your funds...But then you must come back and have performance reviewed either per term or mid-yearly" submitted MM-3.

LM-4 submitted that more often than not, there is little room in the system for managers to monitor performance adequately. In that regard, he urged practitioners to manage their performance.

SM-4, on the other hand, was insistent, challenging leaders in Advancement to make performance monitoring a priority role for managers. She sought to dismiss the argument that people are overloaded and, therefore, overworked. According to her, *"people complain over their workload because they do not work smart"*. She argued that when monitored closely, you realise that *"one person takes two hours to do something that another can do in half an hour"*.

To enhance the performance monitoring role, she challenged managers to develop a good understanding of the scope of work expected to be monitored. *"People are not working smart"*, she insisted. She also called on the manager to monitor technological trends and innovations in other similar organisations.

The standard approach to performance monitoring was aligning the Advancement strategy with the broader university strategic plan. And the use of the organisational goals and objectives as performance targets. SM-2 explained the process as follows:

"...so the University has a strategic plan and vision for the next five to ten years, what we obviously do is, when we draft our Advancement strategy, it needs to be in line with the overall strategy of the university and speak to each other"

[sic]. To ensure at an operational level that this get to be implemented, it is critical that as departmental head we communicate this plan, and we break it down to the people that work with us at ground level."

SM-3 also alluded to the same approach. He submitted that the university's strategy guides them in the absence of a formal system. *"And then we try to align and see how best we can contribute to the overall strategy..."* he concluded.

5.5.3 Control or Cohesion of Activities

The consensus on most of the coordination challenges amongst senior managers was that without total buy-in and support from senior management, the Advancement programme would not materialise. *"It should be the top management of the university, like the Vice Chancellor's office and that level of seniority that should be the authority taking full account of Advancement"*, argued SM-4.

This confirmed the argument made by Inyathelo and Groettler Associates concerning the location of Advancement responsibility. However, there was a nuanced difference of view between the two regarding the ultimate arbiter of the function. Inyathelo placed this responsibility solely in the hands of the Vice Chancellor, whilst the Groettler Associates held that it suffices to entrust this responsibility to the collective account of the senior executives provided that the Advancement office is given direct access to this authority.

To test the two views, I asked the participant to share their experience. The popular view with South African universities supported the Inyathelo approach, at least according to the sample in this study. SM-5 believed that the Advancement division must report directly to the Vice-Chancellor for efficiency purposes. He was supported by SM-4, who argued that unless the programme is driven personally by the Vice Chancellor, the plight of Advancement falls on deaf ears.

"You need the Vice Chancellor to promote it. Please take it to the Deans and each faculty. You need executive heads and research professors to be involved. You need ICT departments to support you in a big way. And it is

expensive to have some of the systems. Unless the Vice Chancellor drives the programme, you will not be prioritised even in the budgeting process," SM-4 suggested.

SM-1 concurred, emphasising the role of the Vice Chancellor. His plea was for the office of the Vice Chancellor to be unequivocal in its support for the Advancement programme. To the extent of making public pronouncements on how the Advancement office should be supported.

"As the Vice Chancellor and CEO of this university, I need to keep sight of all the funding income made to the university. Therefore, I am putting control measures in place. I ask that all donations be logged in the [name of the software] software programme run by the Advancement team. I need all contracts that come to the university that has to do with funding to be given to this person. And then from this person it goes for vetting in that office. I have also taken a strategic decision to task the Advancement department as the university secretariate on all third-stream income activities" SM-1 suggested.

He argued that unless their role is affirmed in such strong terms, we will always battle to assert our service in aid of the university. Beyond providing an enabling environment to work, he believes such a statement will also go a long way towards institutionalising the Advancement agenda in universities.

This view resonates with Groettler Associates' approach of having the responsibility shared between the Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor, particularly the deputy responsible for academic matters (LM-4). His motivation was that the much-sought buy-in from faculty would only materialise if the Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Academic strongly drives it within faculties.

"If the message does not come from that top [DVC Academic], to say Advancement is a key aspect of our existence as a university. And it requires academics to take part, nothing will happen. It will remain viewed as extra unnecessary work," he added.

Regardless of which executive office is ultimately responsible for coordinating the programme, the common strategy in use by universities is establishing some high-level advisory committee on Advancement.

The committee was explained as a strategy to centralise the function of Advancement. Its composition included the senior executive, Vice Chancellor and his deputies, Executive Deans, and senior directors for various portfolios in the university (SM-1, SM-3, and SM5). The participants also agreed that such a committee becomes effective when chaired by the Vice Chancellor. The role of the Advancement director in such a committee is to prepare reports and updates on third-stream income activities (SM-1).

Their primary purpose could arguably be what Espejo and Reyes (2011) would refer to as an amplification strategy whereby Advancement assigns one function to respond to several organisational complexities.

SM-3 highlighted that the committee also served as a platform to negotiate priority projects for the university. He argued that, most often than not, universities have long lists of programmes that require fundraising, yet the Advancement office operates with limited resources. *"Meeting with senior executives in such committee present an opportunity for Advance to put its plight across for indulgence"*, he explained.

Beyond the co-ordination role, SM-2 mentioned that the committee also present an excellent opportunity for direct engagement with project leaders.

"We establish an Advancement Committee, at a high level. Which is where this kind of information is exchanged and shared. With the expectation that different leaders of different department go back and filter the information down. We manage relationships in the platforms for the benefit of the Advancement agenda." He suggested.

SM-5 added capacity building for leaders as an inherent role of the Advancement committees. He saw the platform as an excellent opportunity to advocate for their work. His submission was:

"...it [the committee] helps us remind them that we are not a charity operation. We don't go around begging for our own sake. As Advancement professionals we offer return on investments. We sell the university as a potential partner for the benefit their projects. Because they [heads of departments] do not have fundraising in their KPAs (key performance areas), they neglect the role but expect the university to bear the cost of such projects."

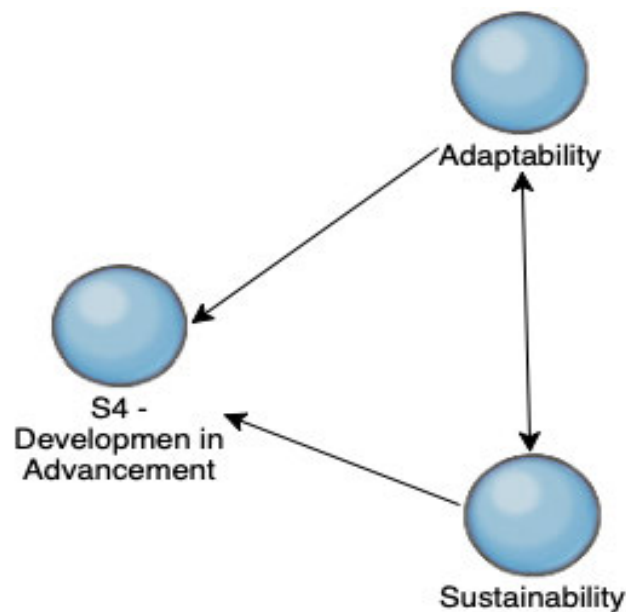
Without such committees, I learned that the Advancement division would be challenged to depend only on departmental visits for engagement with the university. Which is an approach that does not work too well, according to MM-3. Without a central platform, *"we have to go and present at the beginning of the year and call for submission of projects, which never arise."* He complained.

5.6 DEVELOPMENT IN ADVANCEMENT

One of the critical functions' universities ascribe to Advancement offices besides resource mobilisation is the duty to provide the university with the relevant information it needs to navigate its external environment. This office is expected to monitor and inform the organisation on trends and other external factors for adaptability purposes.

For the task to be satisfactorily executed, the Advancement operation must be organised so that it can operate responsively on the 'edge of chaos'. In VSM terms, this role is the S4 function, also called Development. Literature has it as a two-way intelligence function between an organisation and its chosen environment, shown in figure 8 below as a quest for adaptability while striving for sustainability.

Figure 9: Development concept map



In this section, I analyse how Advancement operations in support of their universities help to manage adaptability challenges. I also share what the participant thought the practice should consider as long-term strategies.

5.6.1 Quest for Adaptability

Although practitioners appreciate that adaptability is a direct output of Advancement and that its attainment rest squarely in their effort, it is shown that the function is not performed to satisfaction owing to either lack of institutionalisation of Advancement programme or the under resourcing of personnel to fully execute the task entirely.

Evidence that pointed to the lack of institutionalisation of Advancement and the inadequate numbers of staff was not different from what was observed in the previous section on coordination, particularly the resourcing challenges and the dynamics that impacted the cohesion of Advancement activities. The effect of the anomalies was that the Advancement programme defaulted to focusing its attention on resource mobilisation as a bottom line.

In instances where the secondary function is undertaken, participants hailed effort and investment (both time and material) in innovative thinking, access to software technologies; collaborations and partnerships; and responsive alumni engagement strategies as key to adapting to the external environment or adapting the environment to suit them. SM-4's remarks set the tone. She recounted that:

"...even though Kresge [programme] did such a good work to establish processes and systems, there is still a gap between where we are and where we should be, to keep up with the fourth industrial revolution. We should be doing more automated staff, more social media, more online offerings like crowdfunding... I don't think that the importance of Advancement is fully established, but the office in itself, needs to grow to become more professional".

SM-2 said that most institutions lag behind the digital demands of the 4IR. He believed that some of the basic financial systems with universities are not up to standard with the latest technologies. In that regard, he echoed SM-4's view that for Advancement to remain relevant. They needed to *"take extra steps to ensure that we go out there and investigate what the latest practices are. What are the latest technologies out there that can improve or enhance our Advancement activities?"* he submitted.

SM-5 also acknowledged the evolution in terms of strategies in use. He shared a memory of how they monitored the external environment in the early days of the profession.

"Every morning, the then Director would make cutting from newspaper articles and then the Secretaries would paste those on an A4 pink or blue charts that will get circulated amongst all fundraisers in the office. You had to read at least 10 articles posted, each day. You would then be expected to sign at the bottom of each chart as proof that you have read the articles," he fondly recalled.

Whilst the trait may have moved considerably from the newspaper-cuttings based research, there is still resistance in some quarters to fully exploit the innovations. MM-3's experience is a case in point. He shared that given the synergy challenges his

operation faced due to the inaccessibility of the alumni database, he looked to partner with crowdfunding service providers to circumvent the challenge.

However, given that the services are relatively uncharted with most universities, he needed to test a few for compatibility. He says he couldn't because his organisation was not flexible enough to allow the learning experience. *"There is always resistance to try new things even when there is evidence that it may change our fortunes"*, he added. He was lamenting the fact that the practice is resistant to change.

SM-1 related to this challenge by adding that the system's inflexibility constrained them from breaking new ground to increase their pool of donors. *"Hence, we are mostly raising what would have been raised the previous year. We don't go beyond,"* he explained. He called on executives to support them to lift the bar. *"Challenge us to raise more money but also improve our resource base"*, he argued.

The clarion call from participants was that the sector should embrace digital transformation and move from archaic ways of doing things. Data management was cited as another example. MM-1 pointed to the disparities in approach between the institutions he has worked for. He encouraged practitioners to monitor improvements and updates on database software programmes that get introduced in the market.

Using such programmes appear to have improved efficiency and enabled accurate capturing of data instead of the old way of collecting data at events, for example, through filling physical pledge forms, which is not as effective, according to SM-2. With the new technology, the software can be uploaded onto tablets and used at registration to capture data in real time and more accurately. (SM-2 and SM-4).

MM-2 supported the view of leveraging new software to support engagement strategies. She gave an example of two such programmes that they use. One described as a data management programme *"for record keeping and targeted communications like SMSes, event notification, invitations to functions and distribution of online publications"*. The other, she says, is used for alumni engagement activities like *"sharing job advertisements, sign-ups for programmes like mentorship or facilitating interaction between alumni."*

Social media platforms were also raised as a cost-effective avenue to assist Advancement operations in navigating the external environment. MM-2 suggested LinkedIn and Facebook as valuable tools for mining 'lost' alumni data. She observed that such a platform offered more convenience to alumni to update their records than to their offices. She advocated for leveraging such platforms to their benefit by designing their material to be compatible with multimedia applications. This would include moving away from volumes of hard paper-based magazines, for instance, to soft copy (SM-4 and MM-2).

Such transformation is not a given for some institutions and, as such, may require difficult conversations with senior executives, particularly the old generation that still believed in the old order. An example cited by SM-4 was astonishment at the fact that *"you will still find some Vice Chancellors or Deans that are insisting on putting a high gloss colourful publication. To go where?"* she asked. She added that *"it is only after production do people realise that we do not have adequate means of distributing such"*.

The advent of COVID-19 also appears to have pushed for a shift in engagement approaches. For example, large contact gatherings for alumni cultivation had to be reviewed. MM-3 shared that they have had to resort to external virtual platforms to conduct some of their programmes. She cited the flagship mentorship programme. Given the experience, she advocated for monitoring trends with international universities, which she credits for her exposure to many other platforms not commonly used in the South African higher education setting.

5.6.2 Sustainability of Advancement

The other factor that enables the adaptability of a system is its capacity to craft long-term strategies to sustain its purpose of existence. In other words, the Development function needs to scan the external environment for potential future changes in order to mitigate against possible strategic risks. Advancement must make the same consideration in line with the S4 function.

Several factors were identified by participants that threaten the sustainability of Advancement. I reflect on them in this section, in no order. One issue is the contemporary debate within the sector on whether to operate Advancement through independent foundations or as an in-house component with full-time staff employed directly by the university.

The potential risk associated with a move towards an independent foundation is, firstly, the threat to job security for those currently employed as in-house operations (MM-2). Secondly, it is the threat to the holistic development of the practice in that its orientation is critiqued for inadvertently perpetuating a fragmented silo approach at delivery of the Advancement programme (MM-3).

On the other hand, maintaining the status quo (running in-house operations) also comes with its challenges in terms of the overall salary bill for universities. Moreover, according to LM-1, the fact that most senior executives who are decision-makers in this regard do not fully appreciate the contribution that Advancement makes to the system does not help either. "*We always run the risk of being the first in line for the chopping block,*" she remarked.

The other risk posed was the perceived decline in philanthropic giving, particularly from the private sector. SM-1, SM-3, and SM-5 attested to the decline they observed annually. According to SM-5, the trajectory spelt the beginning of the end for corporate philanthropy in South Africa. He believed that giving from this donor sector was mainly driven by the companies' motives to draw advantage from the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) points scorecard and not out of compassion to do good.

SM-1 was even critical of the very B-BBEE framework as a legislative requirement. He argued that corporates exploited loopholes for their nefarious ends. His complaint is that according to the requirement, in the interest of corporates' responsiveness to their social responsibility, companies are only required to commit 1% of their wealth to the public good. He observed that "*they then use that [percental requirement] as a ceiling for their donation*", which is way less than what they should be committing.

MM-3 and, to an extent, LM-4 had a different account for the decline of giving by the corporate sector as compared to SM-5 et al. The conversation for them is on the quality of projects that universities were putting out for support from the corporates. LM-4's view is that most projects do not appeal to corporate funding. The same came up from MM-3, who challenged universities to shift their order of business by being more innovative in their approach to knowledge production.

On the flip side of the risks presented above were suggestions on how the Advancement operations could position itself such that it was more responsive to its external environment. The insight shared prompted me to further probe on how planning occurred in their office. I also invited colleagues to share their strategy for long term sustainability besides 'thickening of the skin and rolling with the blows'.

Most practitioners believed the answer lay in partnership and collaboration. One such partnership is the FEENIX crowdfunding platform powered by one of South Africa's prominent banking companies. FEENIX operates an online fundraising campaign to assist a student with historic debts. It is a user driven programme targeting students with university debts, assisting them in leading their crowd fundraising projects.

The suggestion is for Advancement departments across the institution to embrace the FEENIX programme by offering to host their project as a partner for individual giving programmes to lessen the burden of running parallel fundraising campaigns for the same beneficiary group. Instead of looking at them as competition, LM-1 remarked that they should be formally invited for collaboration. There was a challenge to this suggestion though. MM-3 felt that such providers pose a threat, particularly for in-house operations.

The other strategy suggested was SM-2's idea of inter-university collaboration. His view was that unless individual university departments make a deliberate effort at collaboration and shared learning, the Advancement community of practice risks the anxiety of always being vulnerable to organisational restructuring programmes. He encouraged practitioners to engage with local professional bodies such as MACE, the Higher Education Funding Forum (HEFF) and USAF's Advancement task team for advocacy purposes in the sector.

SM-4 appreciated the idea of collaboration and paid complement to the professional bodies that organise the sector. She also called on them to pioneer a process of formalising academic qualifications in Advancement. She submitted that *"unless thought is given to such qualification, the sector will continue to struggle with finding matching candidates for the jobs required"*.

With Weerts' Engagement Model of Institutional Advancement ethos in mind, I invited participants to share their views and experiences on the susceptibility of the Advancement operation to external influence, when conceptualising and implementing their activities. My aim was to determine whether it was feasible to involve external parties when planning for operations, as Weerts envisaged in his model.

The general impression was that planning, in most instances, was managed as an internal exercise. In some cases, 'internal' translates to only individuals with direct responsibility for the activities in question. As classically submitted by LM-4, *"in some years you will have different units having their own session"* without input from other primary activities. He maintained that for the years he has been with his organisation, planning has always been conducted without any external input or influence.

In MM-1's case, the invitation gets extended to a few other persons within the university that have working proximity to their operations. *"I do invite one or two people outside my division. Especially the ones that we work closely with, like bursaries guys in Financial aid,"* he explained. The observation was that such participation served only as oscillation rather than strategic input for long-term sustainability.

SM-5, who also admitted that he had not engaged external participants, reflected in hindsight that alumni should be their first port of call that can provide insight and the much-sought external voices. MM-2 concurred, also suggesting that the university underscored the role alumni could play in the life of universities. She explained that her view was informed by the feedback they received at various alumni and convocation events.

In the same vein, SM-5 challenged alumni relations practitioners to advocate for investment in research projects that can provide them with insight into alumni behaviour, to the end that universities cultivate mutually responsive relations with their alumni. He cited an example of his department's partnership with one international employer branding agency that has a presence in South Africa.

According to SM-5, this agency conducts an annual survey with alumni on behalf of their corporate clients. The aim of such surveys is to monitor South African alumni employment preferences across all universities. He encouraged other Advancement offices to partner with such initiatives *"but ensure that such surveys ask the pertinent question that can produce relevant data that can better inform the Advancement programme where alumni are concerned"*.

SM-5 also argued that the growth point for fundraising was with the individual giving programme. Therefore, Advancement should immerse itself in building alumni affinity with universities.

5.7 POLICY RESPONSIVENESS

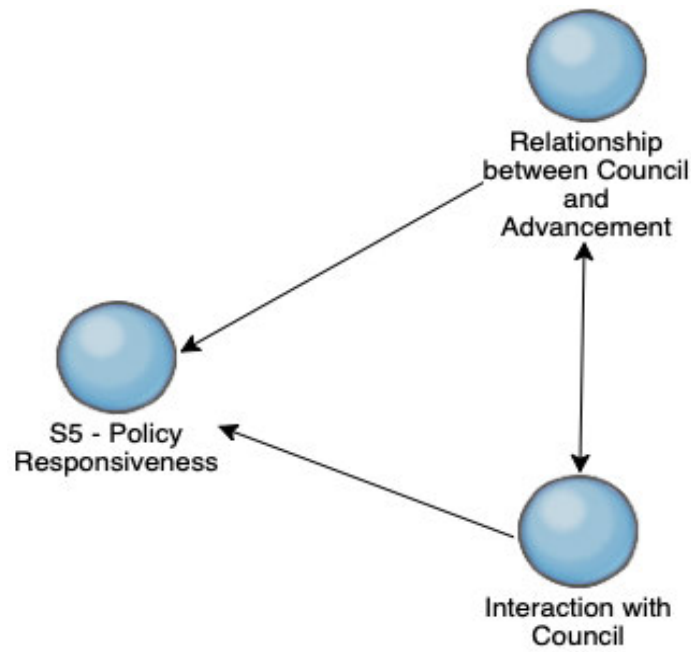
The VSM application appreciates that for an organisation to be functional, it must develop and canvass a shared vision, mission and strategic objective that would inform its organisational values and culture. Applied in a university context, the higher education legislative framework gives authority for establishing University Councils as governance structures to fulfil that role on behalf of universities – S5 role, as VSM framework would have.

These Councils, in terms of VSM, rely on S4 (Development) input to help manage organisational complexities in terms of internal order and long-term viability. In this section, I will reflect on the nature of relations between Advancement as a university function and Council as a governance structure.

I make a distinction between the relationship between Councils and Advancement, on the one hand; and the interaction of the two, on the other. According to the dictionary, the difference is that interaction refers to the reciprocal action or influence, whereas

relationship refers to the way things connect. Figure 9 below depicts the conceptual map of S5.

Figure 10: Policy responsiveness concept map



5.7.1 Relationship between Advancement and Council

All interview responses on the relationship with Council pointed to no direct relationship with Advancement. However, participants submitted that they related either through the management reporting lines or through structural membership appointed with the assistance of the Advancement office. None of the participants knew of or had been in organisations where Advancement shared a direct relationship with Council.

One case of relationship through management reporting line was offered by SM-1, who explained that his "*proximity to Council is through the Vice-Chancellor*" as his line manager. Similar cases were presented by MM-1 and SM-5, who said they reported

to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, respectively. As part of an operational function, the line managers would provide updates on the Advancement programme as part of their portfolio reports to the Council.

The other way Advancement connected with Council was through member representation. Two cases were presented. One was through a donor representative, and the other was through alumni status. SM-1, SM-2, SM-3, and SM-5 shared that by virtue of statutory requirements, Councils are expected to make provision for representation from the two stakeholder communities. The number of seats for these stakeholders appeared to vary from one university to another.

However, the responsibility of providing the university authorities with these representatives was bestowed upon the Advancement offices. With donor representatives, SM-1 submits that: *"Every five years when the time comes, the university Registrar approaches the Advancement office asking us to recommend possible candidates for consideration"*.

SM-2 concurred, adding that their recommendation follows careful consideration of potential candidates that they would draw from the general public with proximity to the university. And that once such a selection is made, they prepare a motivation letter to *"the Institutional Management Committee justifying their recommendation"* for the committee to take the final decision.

To catch the eye of the Advancement directors for the donor representative position on Council, candidates need to be prominent members of society, preferably with solid business acumen (SM-1, SM-2, and SM-5). And in some instances, although not ubiquitous, particularly in the South African context, a candidate's donation record to the university was also a consideration. In this study, only SM-3 has experience with that practice. She shared that *"an individual donor must have given at least R5000 to qualify to be nominated or be voted for"*.

For the Alumni representative seat, the Advancement office selected those through an open election with the alumni body. Such elections are conducted online or in

contact sessions during the University Convocation annual general meetings. The process followed, with the online election was explained by SM-3 as follows:

"...the office sends out a call for nominations. People nominated are invited to send their CVs to be put on the university website. Then we ballot electronically. Our office manages that process every four years congruent with the term of all other Council members".

The other practice involved running such elections as part of the governance management of the Convocation. The annual general meeting nominates and directly elects alumni representatives to Council. Advancement in such cases participates either as part of university representative to Convocation or as an administrator with oversight responsibility of alumni relations.

5.7.2 Advancement interaction with Council

As I presented earlier, the proximity between Council and Advancement operations was explained by participants as impactful on the nature of influence and reciprocity the two entities have on each other. The impression I got was of structures that had little influence on each other, with the result being more detrimental to Advancement's viability than Council itself.

To which SM-1's views was that:

"...honestly speaking, I don't think there is any appreciation of what Advancement is doing. I wouldn't be surprised if they (Council) don't know about us. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised also that in your (reference to me, as the researcher and colleague) working experience in universities all these years, you have never been invited once to go and make a presentation to Council".

In his opinion, Councils get consumed by their politics of governance with little room to attend to other things, the Advancement programme included. *"Whatever it maybe that they discuss, there has nothing to do with fundraising or marketing the university",*

SM-5 added. He also complained that even the donor representatives they introduce to the university, do not find room to advocate for the Advancement activities.

MM-3, for his part, submitted that he has previously requested their directorate to meet with Council. What triggered the necessity, he argued, was a concern about a Council that functioned on a different wavelength from them, where resource mobilisation was concerned. He believed that an opportunity to make representation would assist in aligning the programmes. Nevertheless, the opportunity did not arise because of "*the hectic agenda of council*" at the time.

However, SM-2 viewed the consequent interrelation challenges differently. According to him, the constraint was not owing to the structural arrangements of the Council but had to do with the actual personalities and characters involved. He submitted that he has better interaction with his current Council, all credit to the new chairperson.

"In our case we have a vibrant chairperson of Council who is quite involved particularly with funding opportunities of the institution. With a person of that kind of influence on the rest of Council, automatically the other members do become involved in terms of their roles. This could be just opening doors for us or using their networks of influence in our favour," he explained.

The concluding remarks of S5 concerning university Councils is that an effort needs to be made to cultivate better interaction. The advice shared by SM-2 was a call to leaders in Advancement to go the extra mile reaching out to individuals at Council, particularly the chairpersons, even if it means going beyond the boundaries and call of duty.

5.8 CONCLUSION

My deconstructive journey through this research, in this chapter leads me to at least four critical findings. The first is for the purposes of identity, the following units best define the select parts of an Advancement system, in a university context units of Fundraising or Development, Alumni Relations, Communications, Branding,

Marketing and Public Relations. Although autonomous to each other, their impact may be best felt if they function in a cohesive manner.

The second point is that following a diagnostic analysis of this system using VSM's five sub-systems which ought to contribute to the viability of the metasystem it is embedded in, I identified the following as five primary activities that provide identity to the Advancement system. These are prospect researching, database management, fundraising, donor stewardship and alumni relations.

Thirdly, I found that the operations of the component units of this Advancement system should have individual capacity to be viable on their own. Those who are responsible for its activities must have an appreciation of the environment with which each of the primary activities' interfaces. They must also understand what characterises their operational make. And how these operations are managed locally.

The last finding is the challenge that the Advancement operation with regards to fully embracing the Development (S4) function, according to VSM. The call to go beyond the primary objective of resource mobilisation and undertake the two-way intelligence role of ensuring the adaptability and sustainability of the metasystem (the university) it seeks to support. The shared view with colleagues is that unless our operations are properly resourced, we will always fall shy of fully embracing the S4 function.

Furthermore, for Advancement to effectively undertake the secondary intelligence role to the system, there must be a deliberate effort to cultivate mutually responsive relations between itself and the University Councils as governance structures entrusted by the law to provide identity and long-term sustainability of the university.

In the next chapter, I present the study's recommendations. I present them in two parts. The first is answering the research questions of the study. I expand on the notion of establishing a conceptual link between Advancement and the VS model. In the second part I will present a proposed Advancement model based on VSM as a contribution to organisational learning and self-knowledge.

CHAPTER 6

LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Through this research I observed that different universities construct their Advancement architecture in different ways. This is partly because Advancement is conceptualised differently, with voices of differing power holding solid perspectives. In other words, there is no one size fits all model present.

The identity of Advancement as a university feature is contested or misunderstood. In the context examined it is not clearly defined as separate from a generic understanding of third-stream funding. If it is fancy word for fundraising, dropping the name would be beneficial. If, however, it is distinctive, this distinction must be manifested and proclaimed. To the end that it is defined as strategic partnerships for seeding new initiatives. It is akin to venture capital in economic activity.

As a complex phenomenon, I identified the few simple rules necessary to influence it in the required direction. These include strategic leadership from the top, a clear definition of what Advancement is and what it is not, the building of the appropriate institutional base for its location, a strategy to market it appropriately to the right partners and management from innovation to the application.

My focus in this chapter is to answer the research questions underpinning the study's problem statement. The approach to answering the questions is grounded in establishing a conceptual link between the Advancement framework and the salient principle of the VSM.

After presenting the responses to the questions, I will plot the input from the discussion on a VSM structure presented as a model with a focus on an Advancement system. With the presentation of the structure, I will also outline the VSM communication channels and how they ought to support the interlink between the five subsystems.

6.2 CONCEPTUAL LINK BETWEEN THE VSM AND ADVANCEMENT

My aim with this study was to explore the application of the Viable System Model as a diagnostic tool to advance the contribution of the Advancement Practice in the South African higher education system. The research positions the Advancement function as central to the broader viability strategy of universities. To this end, a research question was set to analyse the responsiveness of a specific set of South African universities to the Advancement practice.

To answer the broader research question, I established a conceptual link between VSM principles and the Advancement framework as deduced from the literature on the phenomenon. Based on the analyses, I further located the Advancement role within the S4 function of VSM – the Development function. The link where Advancement is concerned is informed by the functional responsibility of the phenomenon, which has to do with: a) strategically position the organisations so that it is adaptive to its external environment; and b) leveraging that positioning in the environment in order to attract support.

On the other end, in VSM terms, organisational design needs to ensure that there is a subsystem entrusted with the role of monitoring the external environment to the end that it assists the organisation in maintaining its adaptability to the said environment. The synergy between the two is in the compulsion to invest time and effort to be in tune with the external environment. Other Advancement activities then exploit such adaptability for resource mobilisation purposes.

Table 5 below further teases this link between VSM and Advancement framework. The matrix in the table is organised to provide answers to the research sub-questions deliberately crafted to theme the VSM sub-systems. The actual sub-questions are presented in shaded rows aligned to the correlating VSM theme. The rest of this section will be my attempt at answering the sub-questions based on my reconstructive learning.

System 1: Operations	VSM Principle	Advancement Imperative
What characterises the operational environment underpinning the Advancement function?		
	<p>Responsible for implementation and management, S1 comprises of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary activities that provide value to the external environment. • Provides the organisation with own distinct identity. • Bare the value exchange between the organisation and its environment. • Must be autonomous and adaptive to the external environment. 	<p>Advancement is an outward looking function whose purpose is to strategically position the organisation to the end that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) adapts the metasystem it serves with its external environment; and b) enable the metasystem to leverage its position for resource mobilisation purposes. <p>Operationally, it meets its mandate through a systemic co-ordination of the following primary activities which provide value to the system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prospect Researching 2. Database Management 3. Fundraising 4. Donor Stewardship 5. Alumni Relations
System 2: Coordination	How do institutions coordinate the Advancement activities?	
	<p>The function of S2 is to soften the oscillation of operations between operational units. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the balance between operational activities. 	<p>The Advancement office must have a direct reporting line to the Executive authority of the organisation, preferable the Vice Chancellor of the University.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the sought autonomy between activities is not attained at the expense of other units. • Responsibility of outlining rules, regulations and protocols aimed at ensuring coherence between units and activities. • Being responsive to the changes both internal and external that affect the organisation. 	<p>The function must also be supported by a high-level panel comprising of the senior academics, project leaders and strategic selected high-profile members of society.</p> <p>Managers at local level of operations must have the autonomy to influence policy and protocols that impact on their operations.</p>
System 3: Management and Control	How do institutions manage performance of the Advancement operation?	
	<p>The function is responsible for resource allocation, accountability, and implementation of policies in order to ensure cohesion amongst primary activities. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation. • Audit function. • Performance management. • Resource bargaining. 	<p>Advancement function must be strengthened and empowered to pursue continuous improvement in the organisation's fundraising capacity. Special attention must be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing: the office must be provided with adequate resource. This includes budget and personnel. • Human Capacity: organisations must appoint suitable qualified candidates for various roles in the division. • Technology: practitioners must keep track of trends in practice include the technology that is available in market internationally. • Performance Management: The Advancement community of practice must invest knowledge in designing bespoke performance management programme that would help enhance performance beyond receipted donations as an output. • Auditing: the mooted high-level Advancement panel must undertake an

		annual role of auditing the Advancement programme.
System 4: Development	How does the Advancement operation contribute towards institutional viability?	
	<p>The key function of S4 is to ensure a two-way intelligence role between the organisation and its external environment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring requisite adaptability between the organisation and its chosen environment. • Research and development function. 	<p>Given its inherent outward looking orientation, Advancement must fully embrace Development as its secondary duty.</p> <p>The office must be conscious of the organisation's brand within its chosen environment. And therefore, ensure duty to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, analyse, and assess the organisational performance against its external environment. • Position the organisation to clearly articulate its vision, mission and competencies. • Ensure organisational visibility. • Maintain a coherent and clear organisational voice in all messaging to all stakeholders.
System 5: Policy	How responsive is the institutional policy-making programme to the Advancement strategies?	
	<p>S5 is responsible for defining the overall vision, mission, goals, and objective of the organisation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing the role assigned to Boards or University Councils 	<p>Advancement is reliant on strong leadership aimed at organisational sustainability which is a responsibility of policy makers. Therefore managers:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing clarity in terms of organisation culture and values. • Managing organisational complexities. • Ensure good governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a conscious effort at building mutually responsive relations with the University Council. • Build mechanism for routine engagement with Council both formal and informal. • Encourage dialogue with member representative that are appointed from the 'Advancement ranks' i.e Alumni or Donor representatives. • Must help the university to scout to talented and well-placed members of society that can fill other vacancies as they occur at Council.
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Table 7: Conceptual link between VSM and Advancement framework

6.2.1 What characterises the operational environment underpinning the Advancement function?

This study has shown that years since the establishment of the first Advancement offices in South African universities, the practice remains unknown to most in the sector. The image deficit amongst academic leaders and senior managers within universities are worrisome.

The first challenge that the local Advancement community of practice: here, I am referring to organised, professional bodies such as the MACE, HEFF and the Southern African Higher Education Alumni Consortium (SAHEAC), must collaborate in efforts to consolidate and preserve the professional standards of the practice.

This effort should lead to an established consensus on norms and standards guiding the practice across the higher education sector. Such standards must also be informed by benchmarking exercises from established international bodies such as the CASE but customised to meet the material conditions of our local context.

The community of practice must also collaborate and speak in unison to lobby USAF for an advocacy programme in the sector on the significance of Advancement in the South African higher education system. Vice-Chancellors, as chief fundraising officers of their institutions, should lead in establishing and sustaining Advancement operations in their universities.

I would also argue that Advancement units should be consolidated under one division to ensure coherence and efficiency. I observed that a fragmented approach brings about unnecessary constraints and, in some instances, duplication of effort. The centralised division should rally around the support function of communications, marketing, branding and related services and the primary activities of prospect researching, fundraising, database management, donor stewardship and alumni relations.

In cases where universities choose to establish private foundations, whether stand-alone or existing alongside an Advancement division, effort should be made to establish communication channels between the entity and the university operations the foundation seeks to support. The symbiotic relationship should be adequately communicated within and outside the university. If they have separate brands, the messaging from both ends must reflect each other's ethos.

From a design point of view, Advancement operations should also strive to comply with the VSM principle of viability throughout the system. At a basic level, practitioners responsible for support and primary activities must constantly conduct the intelligence role of monitoring developments in their immediate external environment at their recursive level.

Alumni relations practitioners, for instance, must be conscious of changes concerning engagement strategies elsewhere in the world. And so should fundraising, campaigns and solicitations practitioners. They must be cognisant of not only funding trends but also the strategies used to roll out campaigns. The principle must permeate all activities through to other sub-systems of Advancement as a system of focus.

When configuring the operational activities of Advancement, such exercise must be compassionate of the needs of those on the shopfloor, especially when making policy and management considerations. Their proximity to the tasks that comprise the activities should be considered when making certain strategic decisions. A decision to switch from one software to other should not only be informed by cost effectiveness but should also reflect the lived experience of those who will be operating the system.

6.2.2 How do institutions coordinate the Advancement activities?

Given the hierarchical order that characterises the organisational design of South African universities and the broad spread of internal stakeholders Advancement needs to service, it is my view that the Advancement function as a KPA, be assigned to the Vice-Chancellor and supported by a high-level advisory committee comprising of other executives and some external representative selecting the corporate and industrial sector.

Two reasons to justify assigning the KPA to the Vice-Chancellor: the first is that as a CEO of the organisation, the incumbent is entrusted with driving the mission and strategic objectives of the university. The person is considered most capable of selling the vision to both the internal and external environment. So, in a quest for investment in the university's vision, surely the Vice Chancellor must be first in line to canvass such support.

Often seen as the face of the university, the Vice Chancellor is expected to network with the institutions in search of mutually beneficial partnerships. He or she gets exposed to external activities and programmes with good partnerships and fundraising prospects. Proximity to such an office can go a long way in support of the resource mobilisation programme of Advancement.

Secondly, the Vice Chancellor's office is best placed to provide the Advancement function with the required agility to navigate the university bureaucracy. I observed how fluid the external environment tends to be and how the pace, if not matched, may adversely impact the implementation of some activities. Whether this has to do with responding to external calls for funding or instant allocation of donations for project implementation, the exercise requires access to an authority that has some discretion to override protocol.

It follows that when the relevant authorities are entrusted with recruiting and appointing Vice Chancellors' such a selection must be mindful of the dynamics the incumbent must fulfil. The personal force of the candidates concerning traits, attitudes, values and beliefs, together with political standing in society, needs to be considered.

The other lesson I learned with the coordination of Advancement function outside the directive of a dynamic and well-connected Vice Chancellor, is how to manage and coordinate input from other university sectors. I recommend as mandatory, establishment of Advancement fora or committees with a brief to serve as a high-level advisory panel to the Vice Chancellors and the university communities.

Its composition should be modelled around what Weerts' (2007) preferred to call 'discovery teams' in his Engagement model of Advancement. What was most appealing about the design was the interdisciplinary cross-stakeholder representation. In our case, this advisory committee should include senior executives, academic deans, project leaders, and representation from the student leadership.

Externally, the universities should invite representation from the alumni community; SETAs; cooperate and industries; local government (with jurisdiction over the university), and representation from the University Council. The value add from these external members should ensure that the university and its Advancement strategies are responsive to the external changes likely to affect the university through its trajectory.

The overall function of the committee must be to provide oversight of the Advancement programme. In this role, the committee must assist the university in identifying institutional priorities (aligned to the university strategic plan) around which projects for resource mobilisation may be conceptualised. The committee must then support the Advancement team to systematically coordinate the organisation's effort towards achieving the goal.

6.2.3 How do institutions manage performance of the Advancement operation?

This study has shown that before we talk about the management of performance in our universities, the issue to be addressed first is the chronic under-resourcing of most Advancement offices in the country, both in terms of human capacity and appropriate tools of the trade. The research has shown that the Advancement function must be strengthened and empowered to pursue continuous improvement in the organisation's fundraising capacity.

Given the lessons learned from the survey on philanthropy in South African higher education, particularly concerning staffing, the Advancement community of practice must at least have a minimum number of six suitable qualified staff members per Advancement operation in universities. The six persons can at least lead each of the

five Advancement primary activities identified in this study, with the sixth person responsible for the oversight and management of the operation.

I submit that without this minimum personnel base, the output of Advancement performance will always be compromised. Once the resource question is addressed, the Advancement community of practice must be challenged to invest knowledge in designing a bespoke performance management programme that would enhance overall performance over and above monitoring donation income as an output.

The idea behind a bespoke performance management system is to respond to practitioners call to have them assessed on the overall effort they put into the performance of tasks at hand. It is inaccurate to assess performance on Advancement only on the donations received, overlooking the entire fundraising cycle. There is more to Advancement than that. In some instances, fundraising solicitations may not lead to a donation in line with 'the ask' made but may open doors of partnerships for other projects or ideas.

The other challenge with conventional approaches to performance management is that the overall Advancement output may not be defined in tangible terms as would obtain in other activities in other sectors. Its output is not linear and deterministic, due to the influence of its external environment, which is neither static nor predictable. Therefore, performance management measures in such an environment need to be as responsive.

The universities must also be encouraged to use their stakeholder representation-based Advancement fora or committees to conduct the audit function contemplated in VSM as S3*. As was observed in the study that the management and control function of Advancement was not supported by the any audit principles as VSM would have. Therefore, a recommendation must be made is to assign this important function to the Advancement committee. The modality thereof may be left for individual institutions to define.

6.2.4 How does the Advancement operation contribute towards institutional viability?

The Advancement function must fully embrace the S4 Development role as its dual responsibility alongside resource mobilisation. I argue that a correctly structured and well-coordinated Advancement division is the best-placed office to ensure a two-way intelligence role between the organisation and its external environment, as it relates to adaptability together with research and development.

The study characterised the higher education environment as complex and transient. A high level PESTEL analysis of the situation points to a political landscape that is unpredictable due to the supra-system being embedded in public service, in the South African local context. Universities are part of a public service regulated by the government's higher education and training department. This department is a supra system with powers to determine the direction of universities.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation went to some length painting a picture of the state of higher education in this country. The narrative also shared some of the government and civil society's expectations for higher education. For universities to be responsive to the needs of the supra- system it is embedded in, the Advancement office must keep a constant eye on the environment and guide universities on the correct path of social justice.

Regarding the core mandate of resource mobilisation, the Advancement office must guide the strategic positioning of the universities in society such that it can attract support. This includes amplifying the voice and visibility of the university in the outside world by clearly and constantly articulating its vision, mission and competencies.

The office must be innovative in telling the success stories of the university. Such narratives must be grounded in research and constant assessment of the university's performance in the chosen environment. This narrative must be expressed in all university fundraising tools, including the Case for Support and fundraising proposals.

The office must also ensure that all solicitations made on behalf of the university are signed off by the Director or most senior official in the department. This is done in

keeping with an apt fundraising mantra, advocated for by the Indiana-based Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, to ensure that:

The right person is asking
the right prospective donor
for the right gift
for the right programme
at the right time
in the right way

There is a challenge to prospect researchers. This function must constantly check economic markets and funding trends in the donor world, local and abroad. This may require subscribing to as many private prospecting search engines dealing with big data in the market.

6.2.5 How responsive is the institutional policy-making programme to the Advancement strategies?

The irony with this question, based at least on the observation made during the study is that the Advancement office is one of the few offices in universities in which Councils, as a governance structure, call upon to assist with the sourcing of two stakeholder positions, i.e., donor and alumni representatives. However, evidence pointed to relations devoid of mutually cohesive interrelations between the Advancement and Council's policymaking programme.

If the above picture is anything to go by, then it means Advancement is doing a disservice to Councils of universities, unbeknown to Councils. A VSM-based Advancement requires the Advancement to provide the Council with the necessary intelligence (informed by environmental adaptability strategies) guide as it undertakes its responsibility of defining the overall vision, mission, goals, and objective of the organisation.

The challenge demands that Advancement leaders immerse themselves in the so-called 'governance politics' of the Council. They must be prepared to soil their hands in a quest for stable and strong leadership at the helm of universities. Senior managers of Advancement must be prepared to influence the shape and character of their Councils. This could also mean attracting well-placed competent external individuals to fill vacancies on Councils as they occur, beyond the two stakeholders' seats they are 'responsible' for.

Beyond helping to set up Council, senior managers must make a conscious effort to build mutually responsive relations with the University Council. Practitioner should consider keeping open communication channels with the members they have helped bring on board and gradually cultivating their relations with other Council members.

A practical approach to nurturing such relations may be adding all members to the donor stewardship programme. However, care should be taken in terms of content and frequency in messaging, lest you 'spam' the members. Typical messaging may include birthday SMSs or emails depending on your software. You may also want to include project success stories that may otherwise not reach them via formal Vice Chancellor reporting to Council.

The other approach may be to formally approach Council on a request to profile individual members to showcase excellence in governance and separation of authority within the university. Such profiles, with permission, may carry brief on their illustrious careers outside of the role in Council.

In the next section of this chapter, I conclude this dissertation by plotting the Advancement systems' deficiencies as discussed above in the VSM model. I will also make recommendations on how the VSM channels may be used to facilitate linkages to enhance communication between the subsystems in the context of Advancement.

6.3 THE VIABLE SYSTEM MODEL BASED ON AN ADVANCEMENT SYSTEM

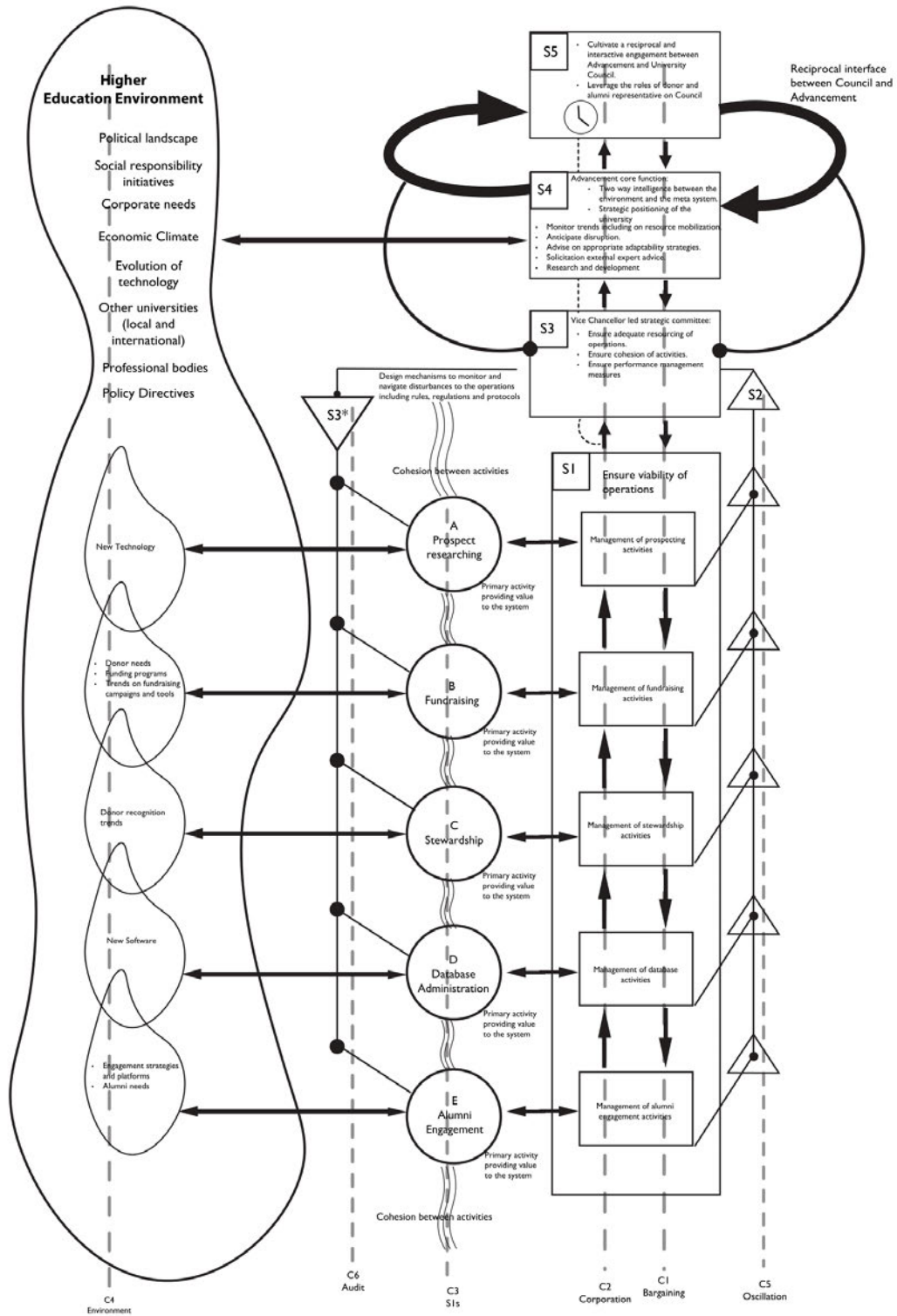


Figure 11: Advancement System based on VSM.

The VSM structure is made of five subsystems and six vertical channels. With the latter being responsible for facilitating communication between the sub-systems. In the previous section I led a discussion on the sub-systems, contextualised to this study. In this section, I share some of the learnings on how communication could be facilitated within the Advancement system based on the conceptual understanding of the VSM framework.

Figure 10 above is a graphic representation of what a VSM focusing on the Advancement system could look like. To contextualise the communication discussion, I offer the following paragraphs to help label the diagram.

Subsystem 1 is the operations of Advancement, which comprises the five primary activities that give identity to Advancement. The activities are drawn as a circle in the middle of the structure and labelled as follows:

1. Prospect Researching
2. Fundraising
3. Stewardship
4. Database
5. Alumni Engagement

The activities in circles, together with their local management, complete the parts of the S1 operation of the Advancement system. The coordination sub-system (S2) is presented as upward-facing triangles on the extreme right of the diagram.

Management and control are in the S3 box with its audit (S3*) function as a downside-facing triangle next to it. Above the management and control is the home of Advancement with its Development role. It is seen in the diagram as S4. The policy function is placed above Development and is marked S5.

The feature on the extreme right-hand side of the diagram represents the higher education environment as a supra system that impacts the universities, which is the metasystem in which our system of focus is embedded.

The diagram reflects the six communication channels in this Advancement system shown as the vertical broken lines running from top to bottom of the graph. These are labelled at the bottom of the picture as C1 to C6. I now offer the ensuing discussion to share with fellow Advancement practitioners on how to exploit the embedded VSM communication channels to the benefit of the Advancement programme.

Channel 1, referred to in the literature as the corporative channel, is submitted to ensure that it facilitates communication filtering from the policy function of this system through the Development function and the management of the system. With Advancement system, the practitioners may exploit this line of communication through their influence in Council to 'legislate' policy and regulatory standards that enable the institutionalisation of the Advancement practice.

One such example may be to engrave the Advancement advisory forum in the DNA of the institution by negotiating its promulgation through the University Council. If its role and purpose could also be advocated for through the Council's rhetoric, the messaging stands even greater chances of being embraced by most in the university. With such a condition, half the job of institutionalising Advancement would be cultivated.

Channel 2 of communication which runs from the operations sub-system 'upwards' through management to the Council's policy development function, may be exploited particularly for resource bargaining purposes. The principle here is that if the Advancement strategy is designed solely to give impetus to the overall university strategy, as the case should be, a conversation on resourcing needs to be considered. The VSM application advocates for such a conversation to occur mutually respectfully between the shopfloor and the managers in charge.

Channel 3, which distinguishes itself in the diagram as a squiggly line running between the primary activities of the system, should be utilised to harmonise the functional life activities during operations. Practitioner should exploit it to ensure that all activities act and pull in the same direction. An example can be made with data capturing in database management. Unlike a siloed mentality, database management must consider the other Advancement activities that depend on the service. Alumni

engagement, for instance, must not be done only for the sake of it but must be structured to open opportunities for donor prospecting, fundraising and stewardship activities.

Channel 4, whose focus is on the external environment, must enable the practitioners to share useful information they individually encounter, that may impact Advancement wholistically. The channel enables collective learning between practitioners who serve the same system. Typically, this can be conducted through external engagement with members of the community of practice based in other institutions. Sharing of good practices may go a long way in improving how individuals perform comparable tasks, though in different organisational settings.

Channel 5, which runs through the co-ordination subsystem, is another communication avenue that can be exploited to build coherence between units from a co-ordination point of view. This channel may be useful for programming activities, including influencing the university calendar to benefit the overall Advancement strategy and programme.

Channel 6 can be embraced by the Advancement Advisory Committee or any other structure with a built-in function of auditing the Advancement programme. Data from such an exercise would do the practice well, expanding on the survey projects like the Annual Survey on Philanthropy in Higher Education or stimulating other research project like this study.

The concluding recommendation on communications is that a VSM-based Advancement system also provides horizontal learning between the operations and the external environment of choice. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all practitioners to self-direct their learning by constantly observing and sharing experiences in fulfilling their respective duty to the universities they are employed in and the supra system of higher education, they ultimately serve.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Broad Interview Guide

SYSTEM 1

<p>Critical Research Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?</p>		
<p>Sub Question: What characterises the operational environment underpinning the Advancement function?</p>		
Diagnosis Issues (Jackson, 2003: 97)	Possible Interview Questions	Respondents
<p>For each part of System 1 detail its environment, operations and localized management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your understanding of the configuration of a basic Advancement operation? • What activities characterised such an operation? • Who are the internal stakeholder that you serve and how do we manage relations with them? • Who are the external stakeholders and how do we manage relations with them? 	<p>Directors</p> <p>Directors</p> <p>Practitioners</p>
<p>Ensure that each part of the System 1 has the capacity to be viable in its own right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think these operations should be managed at a 'shop-floor' level? • Do units have decision-making powers? If so, what types of decisions get to be taken at this level? 	<p>Practitioners</p> <p>Practitioners</p>
<p>Study what constraints are imposed upon the parts of System 1 by higher management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the typical organisational challenges facing units in their daily operations? • What is management's expectation from these units? 	<p>Practitioners</p> <p>Practitioners</p>

Ask how accountability is exercised for each part and what indicators of performance are used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is performance of units managed? • What are the key outputs that spell the success factors for the units 	Directors Practitioners
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SYSTEM 2

Critical Research Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?		
Sub Question: How do institutions co-ordinate the Advancement activities?		
Diagnosis Issues (Jackson, 2003: 97)	Possible Interview Questions	Respondent
List possible sources of disturbance or conflict in the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key organisational factors that inhibit the implementation of a successful Advancement programme? • 	Directors
Identify the various System 2 elements that are needed to ensure harmonisation and co-ordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you suppose the factors mentioned could be addressed? • Who are the key organisational stakeholder we could enlist for the possible implementation of such solutions? 	Directors Directors
Ask how System 2 is perceived in the organisation – as a threatening or facilitating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancement operation is relatively new in the higher education sector. What is your experience of its perception in the institutions? 	Directors

SYSTEM 3

Critical Research Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?		
Sub Question: How do institutions manage the performance of the Advancement operation?		

Diagnosis Issues (Jackson, 2003: 97)	Possible Interview Questions	Respondent
List the System 3 activities of the system in focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key management and control challenges impacting on the operational activities of the units? 	Director
Ask how System 3 exercises authority – is this seen as autocratic or democratic in System 1 and how much freedom do System 1 elements possess?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should authority be exercised over the operational units? • What is your experience over the exercise of authority by the management? • Do units have the liberty to challenge management decision? If so how? 	Practitioners Practitioners Practitioners
How good is System 3 at translating overall policy into operational plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does policy find expression in the operational plans of the units? 	Directors
How is the 'resource bargain' with the parts of System 1 carried out?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do operational resources get allocated to units? • Does the allocation decision take into account the views of 'shop floor'? How? • 	Directors Practitioners
Who oversees the performance of the parts of System 1?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who manages the performance of operational units? 	Practitioners
What audit, or System 3*, enquiries into aspect of System 1 does System 3 conduct and are these appropriate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What monitoring and evaluation mechanism do you have in the performance management programme? • Do they work well? If not what can be done to improve the output? 	Directors Directors
Are overall activities clearly facilitating the achievement of purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you ensure that all the operational activities of units contribute to the overall strategic objective of institutional advancement? 	Directors

How is the performance of System 3 elements in enabling achievement of purpose measured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure that all the operational activities of units contribute to the overall strategic objective of institutional advancement? 	Directors
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SYSTEM 4

Critical Research Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?		
Sub Question: How does the Advancement operation contribute towards institutional viability?		
Diagnosis Issues (Jackson, 2003: 97)	Possible Interview Questions	Respondent
How far ahead do these activities consider?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the long-term strategies for institutional advancement? How far ahead do you plan? 	Directors Directors
Do these activities guarantee adaptation to the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure your programme's responsiveness to both your internal and external environment? 	Directors
Is System 4 monitoring what is happening in the environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure your programme's responsiveness to both your internal and external environment? 	Directors
Is System 4 open to novelty?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How innovative are you in your programme design? 	Directors
Does System 4 provide a management centre/operations room,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you conduct your planning sessions? 	Directors Directors

bringing together external and internal information and providing an 'environment for decision making'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you invite any external parties to the planning session? If so why? 	
Does System 4 adequately process, filter and distribute relevant information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does your advancement programme share or disseminate information through to relevant sectors of your organisation? 	Directors
Are all development activities clearly facilitating the achievement of purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure that the overall advancement operational activities contribute to the overall strategic objectives of the organisation? 	Directors
How is the performance of System 4 elements in enabling achievement of purpose measured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure that the overall advancement operational activities contribute to the overall strategic objectives of the organisation? 	Directors

SYSTEM 5

Critical Research Question: How responsive are South African Universities to Advancement practice, as a viability strategy?		
Sub Question: How responsive is the institutional policy-making programme to the Advancement strategies?		
Diagnosis Issues (Jackson, 2003: 97)	Possible Interview Questions	Respondent
Who is responsible for policy and how do they act?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is the final authority for policy formulation and how do such policies get communicated to the university community? 	Directors
Does System 5 provide a suitable identity and convey clear purposes for the system in focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the University council contribute to the overall strategy of Advancement? How? 	Directors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does Council provide an enabling environment for 	Directors

How does the 'ethos' set by System 5 affect the perception of System 4?	advancement operations? How?	
How does the 'ethos' set by System 5 affect the relationship between System 3 and System 4 – is stability or change emphasised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does Council provide an enabling environment for advancement operations? How? 	Directors
Is System 5 organised to behave creatively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What role if any does Advancement play in the appointment of Council members? 	Directors
Does System 5 share identity with System 1 or claim to be something different?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How engaged are your Council members on the operational activities of your Advancement units? 	Directors

Appendix B



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study:

Embedding Advancement Practice at South African Universities – Lessons from the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher:

Mosimanegape David Sedumedi, MEd in Higher Education

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s:

Dr Stan Hardman, Doctoral in Business Administration (DBA)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

Welcome to my study, the purpose of this study is to explore a viable advancement model for South African higher education system. Advancement in this instance refers to a systematic and integrated approach to building and managing the external relationships with key constituencies and stakeholders thereby positioning an organisation to attract support (Inyathelo, 2015).

Outline of the Procedures:

1. The 10 key Advancement elements as conceptualised by Inyathelo (Cape Town) will be used to map out the boundaries for literature review on the phenomenon.
2. The research will look at Advancement from a Systems Thinking perspective. The intention is to use the Viable System Model (VSM) to inform the improvement of Advancement as a practice in South Africa. A conceptual link is to be made between Advancement and the VSM, as attributed to Stafford Beer.
3. Interviews will be conducted with Advancement practitioners from 8 Universities that participated and benefitted from the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative.
4. Data will be collected mainly through interviews, supported by document analysis.
5. All participants will be requested to sign the consent, following an invitation through an Information letter to be circulated to participants prior to the commencement of the project.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:

There will be no risk and discomfort to you.

Benefits:

Researcher: qualification and publication

Participant: The findings of this study will assist practitioners in improving their Advancement practice.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Participation in the study is voluntary and withdrawal will have no negative consequences to you.

Remuneration:

There will be no form of remuneration to you.

Costs of the Study:

Travel to conduct interviews.

Confidentiality:

At no stage of the study will you be required to disclose your name, student number, identity document number or any form of information that will reveal your identity.

Research-related Injury:

There will be no compensation to you as a result of the research- related injury or adverse reaction.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

If you have any queries concerning this research study, Please contact the researcher on 082 882 9584 / 082 900 1900 or the supervisor on the following details:

Supervisor

Name : Dr Stan Hardman

Telephone number: 082 553 2176

Residential address: 8 St Mary's Road, Kloof, 3610

Postal address : P.O Box 750, Kloof, 3640

The Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Engagement, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2576 or moyos@dut.ac.za.

Appendix C



CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mosimanegape D Sedumedi, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: __/18FREC_____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant **Date** **Time** **Signature / Right**

I, Mosimanegape D Sedumedi herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**

Embedding the Advancement practice in South African Universities - Lessons from the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative (KIAI)

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Dr Stan Hardman: Supervisor : 2023/07/25



MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (FREC)

8 November 2018

Student No: 19551423

FREC No: /18FREC

Dear Mr MD Sedumedi

PHD MANAGEMENT SCIENCES (LEADERSHIP AND COMPLEXITY)

TITLE: EMBEDDING THE ADVANCEMENT PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES-LESSONS FROM THE KRESGE INYATHELO ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE (KIAI)

Please be advised that the FREC Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: **Ethical Level 2**

Date of FRC Approval: 10 October 2018

Approval has been granted for a period of two years, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's.

Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely

Prof JP Govender

Deputy Chairperson: FREC

The Dissertation Design Master



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This is to confirm that the thesis entitled

Embedding the Advancement Practice in South African Universities – Lessons from the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative (KIAI).

Authored by

MOSIMANEGAPE DAVID SEDUMEDI
Student number 19551423

was edited according to Durban University of Technology's specifications. The student received a detailed report with suggested changes. The thesis will be fit for submission when the student attends to all suggested changes (to be reviewed by the supervisor) and obtains permission to submit from the supervisor.

Report prepared by:

Elizabeth Mnyandu



Signature over printed name

Date: 24 July 2023



Certificate in Copy-editing

Qualification

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Supervisor: Dr Stan Hardman
2023/07/25