A RESPONSE TO EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY IN A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY OF AN ACADEMIC MENTORING PROGRAMME

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A minithesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Educationis in the Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape
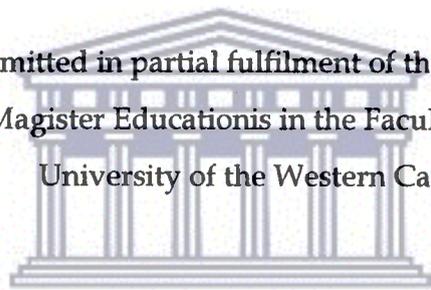
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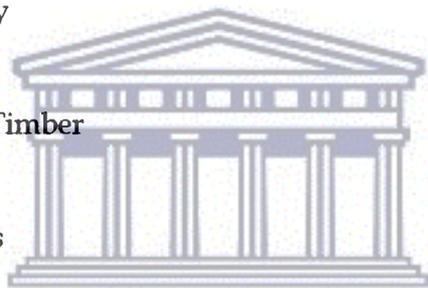
ABSTRACT

A RESPONSE TO EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY IN A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY OF AN ACADEMIC MENTORING PROGRAMME

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This study investigates the factors that conditioned the establishment of, and responses to, a centrally coordinated, institution wide change initiative aimed at promoting equity in the academic workplace in an historically white South African university. It is examined by presenting two kinds of analyses, firstly, an institutional analysis that explores the environmental and managerial conditionalities that influenced the reception, interpretation and responses to the national policy framework. Secondly, a bottom-up analysis that explores the distinctive disciplinary contexts that conditioned the responses of the participants. The study reveals that top-down approaches to managing change have limited capacity to influence the nature and pace of change on the ground, despite the best intentions of institutional managers. The study illustrates that the distinctive disciplinary context conditioned the responses to, and outcomes of the change initiative. In this study, the authority of the academic project powerfully trumps the legitimacy and credibility of the institutional transformation initiative.

November 2008

DECLARATION

I declare that *A Response to Employment Equity Policy in a South African University: A case study of an Academic Mentoring Programme* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Anthea Gail Metcalfe   November 2008

Signed: _Metcalfe_
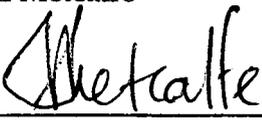
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the research

The motivation for the study comes from trying to understand ways in which historically white universities[1] (HWUs) have responded to pressures to change their academic staff profiles in post-apartheid South Africa in ways that begin to resemble the country's demography. The rapid upward mobility of black[2] people with postgraduate qualifications in many sectors of South African society since the early 1990s, such as those employed in the professions, government, corporate sector and public service, has not been matched by the higher education sector, where success for black people has remained largely elusive, particularly with respect to research and knowledge production[3].

The study is relevant in the current context of higher education in South Africa, as HWUs have had to respond to educational policy and labour legislation that aim to address past inequalities in many aspects of higher education, such as academic staffing. Increasing the number of black academics employed in the well-resourced HWUs is critical for the country's future in order that they may contribute to shaping the direction of intellectual enquiry and influence the approaches, definitions and solutions to local and national problems. The idea for the study was borne out of the researcher's experiences between October 2000 and mid 2004, as the external evaluator of an employment equity initiative at the University of the Witwatersrand that aimed to contribute to increase the number of black people entering academia. The Growing our own Timber: Dr T W Kambule Programme, (hereafter referred to as GooT), established in 2000, appointed black doctoral candidates at the university as Junior Lecturers on three-year contracts that would allow them to pursue their doctoral studies to completion while simultaneously introducing them to the academic profession. The notion of 'growing our own timber' implied that the university would nurture black people into academic

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[1] Historically White Universities (HWUs), such as Wits, refer to the English medium universities of Cape Town, Rhodes, KwaZulu Natal and Wits, historical sub-types of Cooper, D and Subotzky, G. (2001) *The Skewed Revolution: Trends in South African Higher Education*, 1988-1998, EPU UWC
[2] In this study, black refers to African, Coloured and Indian people as defined in the Employment Equity Act (no.55 of 1998).
[3] Buhlungu and Metcalfe (2001: 68)

https://etd.uwc.ac.za/

careers through the provision of institutional support, remuneration, training and mentoring. The GooT programme, well resourced and located at the senior levels of the institution, indicated that achieving equity in academic employment was a priority for the institution. However, evaluations of the GooT programme have suggested that the initiative was less transformative than anticipated and it is the goal of this study to explore the difficulties of implementing such a policy within the prevailing national context. This research hopes to contribute to debates on how elite, research-led universities, such as Wits, have responded to the pressure to change its academic staff profile. It attempts to highlight some of the key issues that this researcher considers paramount when trying to develop the next generation of black intellectuals at these universities.

1.2. Deriving the research topic from preliminary reading

An early reading of the history of South African higher education, and Wits University in particular, led this researcher to believe that historical inequalities had influenced the nature of national and institutional policy-making in higher education after 1994 and had conditioned the responses of the stakeholders involved in academic staff transformation programmes at HWUs.

1.2.1 Historical context of higher education in South Africa

Exclusion, discrimination, inequality and marginalisation had characterised the experiences of black people in research and knowledge production under colonialism and apartheid. These conditions were not conducive to the emergence of a critical mass of black intellectuals in South African universities (Buhlungu and Metcalfe, 2001). During the colonial era, black people received limited primary and secondary education from Christian missionaries that provided little scope for critical intellectual development. Instead, it encouraged an uncritical assimilation of western values and norms and was based on rote learning, mimicking and instrumental approaches to learning (*ibid*). In 1915, Scottish missionaries established a formal post-secondary college, later known as the University of Fort Hare, to train black people as pastors, teachers and for some industrial professions. It has been argued that the government of the time had agreed to its establishment as one way to gain the support of African people during World War 1 rather than as a sincere effort to provide university education (Ajayi et al, 1996). The missionaries

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maintained tight control over the curriculum and did not appoint Black teaching staff. Although many educated Africans rejected the notion of trusteeship in missionary education, students came from all over Africa to study at this college owing to the lack of post-secondary education elsewhere in Africa. Over the years, it developed strong academic traditions and included amongst its alumni future African political leaders like Nelson Mandela, Robert Sobukwe and Robert Mugabe (*ibid*).

By contrast, white people in South Africa had access to higher education from the 1850s, earning degrees and other qualifications from the University of London. In 1873, the colonial government established the University of the Cape of Good Hope (UCGH) in Cape Town, which was modelled on the University of London University with its own council, chancellor, vice-chancellor and registrar, all English born males. It awarded degrees and other qualifications to the university colleges in the English colonies and Boer Republics, where the teaching occurred (Cooper and Subotzky, 2001). However, the political, cultural and linguistic differences between the white English and Afrikaans communities, deepened by the effects of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), resulted in the provision of separate university education. In 1916, the government of the recently formed Union of South Africa passed the Higher Education Act, which brought all university colleges under the control of the Ministry of Education. The University of South Africa (UNISA), with its seat in Pretoria, replaced the UCGH. The university colleges remained affiliates of UNISA until they met the criteria for full university status, e.g. in 1918, the South African College became the University of Cape Town (English) and Victoria College became University of Stellenbosch (Afrikaans). These universities displayed distinctly different histories, staff and student profiles with marked variations in their institutional and intellectual cultures (Cooper & Subotzky, 2001: 2). In 1921, the South African School of Mines and Technology became the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (English) and the Transvaal University College became the University of Pretoria (Afrikaans) in 1930, the first full university in the former Boer Republics.

The increase in industrial production after World War 2 lead to the expansion of these universities in order to ensure a steady supply of trained personnel for white-

collar professions, mining and manufacturing industries and the public service. Soon after the National Party came to power in 1948, the other university colleges moved swiftly to become independent universities. In 1949, Natal University (English) was established in Pietermaritzburg and in 1950, Grey College became the University of the Orange Free State (Afrikaans). In 1951, Potchefstroom University, which started out as an Afrikaans religious seminary, was established and Rhodes College in Grahamstown became Rhodes University (English). The apartheid government generously subsidised these universities enabling them to develop strong disciplinary expertise while allowing them relative autonomy to shape their organisational, intellectual and research cultures. The English universities such as Cape Town, Natal, Rhodes and Witwatersrand (Wits), with their strong international links "operated within the context of Anglophile liberalism, primarily linking and responding to its institutional expressions as in the English schools, cultural organisations and importantly big business" (Gerwel, 1987, cited in Bunting, 2002). Known as the 'open' universities, they allowed a minute percentage of black students to study there while not employing black academics until much later. In contrast, the Afrikaans universities displayed a self-referential, almost incestuous academic culture that lacked strong international links. They served to produce technocrats, active in policy, to administer apartheid and later on, to provide academic staff for the historically black universities (HBUs) (Bunting, 2002: 66). The Afrikaans universities did not admit black students nor did they employ black academics. The English and Afrikaans universities developed and operated in parallel to each other, with minimal dialogue and cooperation between them.

Before 1959, the liberal English universities made no attempt to recruit black academic staff. It has been argued that it was the institutions themselves, rather than legislation that prohibited access for black students and academic staff (Behr and Macmillan, 1966: 185; Peacock et al, 1993). Theoretically and legally, these universities had autonomous recruitment policies; they tended not to defy apartheid labour laws when dealing with academic staffing. Peacock (1999: 12) has argued that although they did not make direct reference to exclusion on the grounds of race, they used hidden exclusions to deny access to black students, thereby making it difficult for blacks to pursue careers in academia. A small minority of black people managed to gain access to selected degree programmes at these universities.

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However, when UNISA gained full university status in 1951, black people were allowed to register for degrees via correspondence. It was the first time in South Africa that black and white students were allowed to register at the same university, as distance learning did not bring them into contact with each other. Even though the curriculum conformed to the apartheid government's doctrine of Christian National Education, many black people enrolled at UNISA, as it was the only way for them to access university education. UNISA employed mostly white Afrikaans academics and administrative staff.

After 1948, University of Fort Hare remained the only access to tertiary education for black people. In 1951, it became an affiliate of Rhodes University, when Rhodes achieved full university status. Intent on implementing its Bantustan policy[4] of separate development, the apartheid government passed the Extension of Universities Act of 1959 that created separate universities for different ethnic groups in their 'homelands', e.g. Turfloop, near Pietersburg for Sotho, Tsonga and Venda people; Zululand, 140 kms from Durban for Zulu and Swazi people; Western Cape outside Cape Town for Coloured people and Westville in Durban for Indian people. The Fort Hare University Transfer Act of 1959 brought it under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Bantu Education and restricted admission to Xhosa and Sotho speaking people from Transkei in the Eastern Cape. During this period, Fort Hare lost the enormous academic ground it had gained in the 1920s and 1930s and there was a mass exodus of staff that opposed the control and interference of the state via the administration (Ajayi et al, 1996). Some joined liberation movements, inside and outside South Africa, while others left to pursue academic careers elsewhere in Africa and overseas. These historically black universities (HBUs) were created to meet the staffing needs of the Bantustans, the professional needs of the black population and to co-opt the emerging black elite into the apartheid ideological framework (EPU, 1997). The Minister of Bantu Education controlled the appointment and promotion of staff, employing mostly apartheid loyalists in management, academic and administrative positions. Referred to as 'bush colleges' because of their locations in impoverished rural areas, they were unable to attract quality academic staff, lacked social infrastructure and were isolated from academic networks (Cooper and Subotzky, 2001). These conditions limited their capacity to

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[4] Independent homelands for each ethnic group

produce new knowledge and independent research was not a feature of their academic agenda. During the 1980s, these universities became centres of struggle and unrest when students protested against apartheid education, financial exclusions, lack of infrastructure and facilities, amongst other things, openly challenging university authorities.

The Extension of the University Education Act (1959) allowed a limited number of black people to study at the 'open' universities on condition that they obtained written permission from the Minister of Education. Permission was only granted when the applicant's proposed programme of study was not offered at the institution designated for the race group to which he/she belonged (Bunting, 2002: 61). This meant that a disproportionate ratio of the small number of the black students registered for 'permit subjects' such as Industrial Sociology, African History and Comparative African Government and Law. In response to student boycotts, workers' strikes and the increased pressure from economic sanctions, the government passed the University Amendment Act (1983) that made it legal for HWUs to admit black students (Mabokela, 2000: 3). With respect to academic staff, the English HWUs appointed a few black individuals in departments such as African Literature, African Languages and Anthropology. Despite increasing numbers of black students attending the English HWUs from the 1970s, their academic staffing patterns remained unchanged.

The historical context of higher education in South Africa is a necessary point of departure to understand the ways in which colonialism and apartheid ideology shaped the character, development and provision of higher education for all South Africans, black and white. The way in which it has evolved suggests that the under-representation of black academics in the historically white universities was part of a deliberate strategy to ensure that whites retained control over knowledge production and dissemination and to stunt the emergence of a vibrant and independent intellectual community amongst black people (Buhlungu and Metcalfe, 2001). It has been argued that the functional differentiation, based on race, in the allocated roles of South African universities has constituted the key difference and the principal basis of inequality between them (Badat, 1998). One of the consequences of this functional differentiation is that black people remain

underrepresented at the senior academic and management positions (except at the highest levels) in the HWUs where the community of researchers and knowledge producers has remained predominantly white[5], and male. This is hardly surprising given the history of racial and class inequalities in South African society during the last three centuries. This racial division of labour in knowledge production had led Evans (1990: 27) to argue that,

> black academics effectively emerge into academia as the junior partners of their white counterparts. So far, the role of black academics has been to transmit knowledge gained from the research and publication of their white counterparts (international sources are not the issue here) but blacks themselves are not the originating source of that knowledge".

He argued further that for our democracy, it is essential that HWUs should not only increase the number of black academics but also urgently facilitate their development into independent academics that produce and publish research. This is because the question of "who shapes the direction of the intellectual enquiry?" greatly affects the outcome of that inquiry (*ibid*). Equally critical is that these measures do not take the form of white paternalism, tokenism and lowered standards, but should be an integral part of the university's transformation objectives (*ibid*).

The profile of permanent academic staff at Wits in 2004 in Table 1 reflects the continued predominance of white and male academic staff, particularly at the senior levels. It raises the question as of how long it will take for the academic staff profile to resemble the country's demographics.

Table 1: Permanent academic staff at Wits University: Percentages in 2004

	BLACK			WHITE		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Associate lecturer[6]	29.3	26.8	56.1	36.6	7.3	43.9
Lecturer	18.9	14.1	33.0	39.0	28.0	67.0
Senior Lecturer	7.2	11.1	18.3	41.3	40.4	81.7
Assistant Professor	1.4	13.8	15.2	20.7	64.1	84.8
Professor	0.0	10.5	10.5	16.0	73.5	89.5
Head of School	6.0	24.3	30.3	33.3	36.0	69.3

Figures derived from Wits University: EIS database, March 2004

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[5] Cooper and Subotzky (2001: 215). Whites comprised 92% of academic staff in HWUs in 1998. While their proportion has decreased, they remain a significant majority, particularly in senior positions.
[6] Previously, this position was Junior Lecturer

Wits University has made some progress in increasing the number of black academics at the entry and lecturer levels. It remains to be seen whether these junior academics will remain in academia to become the professors of the future. At the level of senior lecturer and above, black academics remain conspicuous by their absence, except in the newly created managerial positions of Heads of Schools. At professorial level, white males remain the overwhelming majority despite their numbers having declined from 88.2% in 1998, 76.3% in 2002 and 73.5% in 2004. White female professors exceed the number of black professors, none of whom are female. It is important that black people become professors as they chair and participate in the committees that formulate policy and make decisions on governance. The professoriate make up the bulk of the Senate and the selection committees for senior and permanent academic positions, exerting a commanding influence on the selection of post-graduate students from whom junior academics may be appointed. Professors occupy the positions of deans, heads of departments, schools and directors of research units and as such, they have to shoulder some of the responsibility in creating the conditions for a critical mass of black academics to emerge. The absence of black academics in most disciplines at the research-led HWUs might be problematic for the future of our country because it will limit their influence on nature, content and relevance for addressing the country's problems, educating students and building the next generation of intellectuals. In earlier work done at Wits University[7], the role of formal internship (or mentoring) programmes as a strategy to train and prepare talented black postgraduate students for careers in academia in HWUs was explored. In the next section, the historical context of Wits University is explored to understand the internal factors that gave rise to the need for a programme such as GooT and those factors that may have conditioned the responses of stakeholders to this initiative.

1.2.2. Historical context of Wits University

The origins of Wits University lie in the South African School of Mines and Technology in Johannesburg. It gained full university status in 1921 and served to provide education and professional training for the bourgeoning white urban population attracted to Johannesburg because of the wealth generated by the mining industry (Metrowich, 1929: 75; Shear, 1996: 276). It offered English-medium

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[7] Buhlungu and Metcalfe (2001)

degrees in Arts, Science, Medicine and Mining, Mechanical, Electrical, Civil and Chemical Engineering. It received a large proportion of its initial funding from the British mining companies, as reflected in the range of Engineering degrees it offered.

In the 1940s and 50s, Wits University admitted a minute number of black students only to certain faculties (Shear, 1996: 276).) It had a policy of 'academic non-segregation but social segregation', which meant that no 'mixed' sport was allowed. Black students had their own separate change rooms and equipment and were not allowed to play in league matches. They were also excluded from the annual student dinners where the Vice-Chancellor argued, "if non-Europeans were invited to dinners, the question of admission to dances and sporting activities must immediately be raised" (Murray, 1997: 49-50). Murray (1990: 56) has suggested that the university authorities curtailed any radical dissent and acquiesced in the application of the government's restrictions on black admissions, mostly due to its dependence on state subsidies, its traditions of observing the law of the land scrupulously and the lack of pressure for black graduates from the professions that the university serviced, such as Engineering, Science and Medicine.

With respect to academic staff, Murray (1997) has reported that Professor Clement Doke in the Department of Bantu Languages was the only black academic staff member until his retirement in 1953. He employed two black staff members, one of which was Robert Sobukwe, the first president of the Pan African Congress. He was employed as a language assistant from 1954 until March 1960 when security police arrested him in the office of his Head of Department for his role in the anti-pass campaign. Murray has suggested that Robert Sobukwe had resented Wits for "its continued failure to appoint a black as lecturer" (1997: 241). Although there was no law that prohibited the appointment of black staff at the time (Shear, 1996: 39), the government had threatened to introduce legislation to prohibit black academic appointments when UCT wanted to hire Mr Archie Mafeje as a senior lecturer in Social Anthropology in 1968. Despite student protests, UCT eventually withdrew its offer of employment. The division of labour at Wits during the 1960s and 70s reflected the racial prejudices of the society it served, i.e. black people were employed as language and laboratory assistants, clerical assistants and library

shelvers, as well as chefs, 'police boys', kitchen and cleaning staff in residences and general labourers elsewhere (Murray, 1997: 161). Despite these labour practices, the English HWUs referred to themselves as 'liberal' universities and 'not servants of the apartheid state' due to their expressed commitment to the universal values of academic freedom, for which they would protest when the apartheid state's policies and actions threatened these values (Bunting, 2001: 70). At that time, they were not prepared to go further to challenge apartheid policies.

It is important to point out that Wits University does have an alternative legacy of genuine non-racialism and commitment to the creation of a better society for all South Africans (Webster, 1998). This stems from the work and commitment of students such as Nelson Mandela, Ruth First, Joe Slovo, George Bizos, Harold Wolpe and a few individual academic staff members, such as David Webster. They were "in the vanguard of progressive political thought in the country" and through their student activism often forced the university to confront the apartheid authorities (Shear, 1996: 12). However, the increasing militarisation of the apartheid state after the Soweto student uprising in 1976, led senior university leaders to actively oppose state interference and protest the continued harassment, detention and torture of some of its students and staff (Johnson, 2005). During this time, there were internal tensions and debates about academic standards, the academic boycott, supporting student protests and the role of academics in the struggle for democracy (*ibid*). In the 1980s, the English HWUs became increasingly vocal in their opposition to the state and received considerable support from international donors to reduce their dependence on state subsidies (Bunting, 2002: 71). Acting on its liberal traditions, Wits University exploited the permit system to increase the numbers of black students and to employ a few black academics, albeit at the lower levels. Despite the legacy of genuine non-racialism, strong opposition to apartheid and the increasing number of black students during the 1980s, the under representation of black people in academia remained largely unchanged.

1.2.3. Wits University post-1990

After the unbanning of political parties and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, the higher education sector, as with many other white-dominated sectors, came under pressure to set transformation objectives that would meet the goals and needs

of the new democratic state. The English HWUs experienced a rapid increase in the enrolment of black students, mostly undergraduates registered in the Humanities, Education and Social Sciences. In response to student protests in 1990 around issues of access to higher education, Wits developed alternative admissions procedures, provided academic and social support to black students and reworked its exclusion procedures (Shear, 1996: 261). However, this change was not mirrored in the academic staff profile, a situation that Shear has described this situation as a "considerable bone of contention" (*ibid*: 277) without stating why he considered it as such. The university's approach to achieving equity in academic employment became evident in some developments that occurred after 1990.

In 1994, Wits adopted a mission statement that affirmed the university's commitment to the elimination of discrimination based on race and gender and to address inequalities through affirmative action and equal opportunity policies[8], but without lowering standards (Shear, 1996: 280). One way in which it hoped to achieve this was to produce more black postgraduates in order to increase its pool of potential academics. This approach set the scene for the conceptualisation of programmes, such as GooT, which appointed talented doctoral and masters students at the entry-level of academia, as junior lecturers.

Changing the academic staff profile at the senior levels seemed to be a challenging and complex task. This was evident in what became known as the 'Makgoba affair'. In October 1994, the university appointed Professor Malegapuru William Makgoba as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. He seemed to have all the qualities that the university required of that position: a PhD from Oxford; an international reputation as an immunologist; and had not been politically active while a student or overseas. The latter, it has been argued, found most favour with the university establishment (Webster, 1998). Not long after his appointment, Makgoba had publicly criticised the university about its slow pace of transformation. This drew the ire of certain sections of the university community. In October 1995, a group of 13 senior academics accused him of disloyalty to the institution, of embellishing his CV and administrative incompetence. After a bitter and acrimonious public dispute that

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[8]Towards the 21st Century: the University's Mission, (1994) Appendix 16 in Shear (1996).

involved counter-accusations from all sides, the university decided to suspend him. It has been argued that this incident had served to racially polarise the Wits university community around its pace of transformation (Webster, 1998; Johnson, 2005). Makgoba's supporters, mainly black staff and students, doubted the potential for black people to advance at Wits if a distinguished scholar was treated so badly in public. His detractors, mainly white staff and students, held the view that Wits had moved too fast with transformation and this had lowered its academic standards (Webster, 1998). However, it has been argued that the succession to the incumbent Vice-Chancellor, due to retire in 1997, had influenced senior management's response to Makgoba's criticisms (*ibid*). Johnson (2005) has argued that it was less about racial conflict, succession and Africanisation and more about management's uncertainty, even inability, to respond to the external and internal demands for changing the staff profile at the senior levels of the institution. As Webster (1998: 5) noted at the time, "institutions such as Wits remain deeply entrenched in the ways of the old South Africa and institutional change will take a long time", i.e. racial exclusivity persists as a feature of the academic workplace.

It was in this racially polarised environment that the university established the Forum for Further Accelerated Comprehensive Transformation (FFACT) 1995, a broadly representative forum concerned mostly with issues of institutional governance. One of the FFACT co-chairs argued at the time that "liberation cannot be complete while the intellectual domain, including knowledge production, skills development and application of knowledge, remains the monopoly or under the hegemony of a single racial group that was historically privileged by past state policies" (1999: 6). The FFACT approved the appointment of a Director of Transformation and Employment Equity (T&EE) to develop a new staffing policy that would address the critical challenge of increasing the number of black academics at all occupational levels. However, this was not an easy task owing to the shortage of suitably qualified black South Africans to take up academic positions while universities faced intense competition from the private and public sectors that have their own equity targets to achieve (Gibbon and Kibaki, 2002: 198). Another obstacle to changing the staff profile was the 'revolving' door phenomenon where promising and established black academics leave the HWUs soon after entering, having experienced their intellectual and social environments as hostile

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and alienating. However, between 1993 and 1999, the percentage of blacks in full-time academic employment in English HWUs increased from 15 to 21%, (*ibid*: 201), but mostly at the entry levels while black women remain noticeably scarce at all levels.

After the departure of Professor Makgoba, Professor Sam Nolutshungu was elected as the new Vice-Chancellor in 1997 but he withdrew because of ill health, before taking up the position. Sadly, he died some months later. Professor Colin Bundy, who had an established reputation as a progressive scholar, was appointed to the position. Johnson (2005) has described the period from 1997-1999 as one of visionary management, where the Vice-Chancellor and his Senior Executive Team (SET) built on previous institutional plans and processes to develop strategic plans that articulated a clear vision for the university, such as the Mission statement of 1998[9]. In terms of changing the academic staff profile, the university signalled that it would address it at all levels and acknowledged that appointments, without professional development and support, would limit the success of black academics at the university.

SET established numerous task groups to convert the Mission Statement into a strategic plan. This researcher assisted in formulating a submission on formal mentoring programmes within the university to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee [10]. This submission pointed out that formal mentoring programmes at Wits prior to 1998 had shared two common features: they had been directed mostly towards research training for black postgraduate students and they were funded by international donor money, e.g. the Mellon and Ford Foundations. These programmes focused more on supervision for degree completion and less on formal mentoring. They increased the number of black postgraduates but had limited impact on increasing the number of black academics. However, they created awareness amongst senior managers that to build a new generation of successful and independent black academics, the university needed formal policy, financial resources and had to provide sustained institutional and departmental support. It was within this context that the donor funded, Growing our own Timber

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[9] http://www.wits.ac.za/depts/wcs/mission.shtml
[10] Webster, E. and Metcalfe, A. (1998), Mentoring at Wits: Comment for Key Strategic Initiative 2.2 Task Group

programme, as an affirmative action measure[11], entered of the university in early 2000. At its launch in August 2000, the Vice-Chancellor named it the Dr TW Kambule Growing our own Timber Scholarship in honour of Dr Thamsanqa Wilkie Kambule, a respected Black mathematician, educator, scholar and Wits alumnus. With support from the highest levels of the university and generous donor funding, it affirmed the university's commitment to increasing the numbers of black academics that it employed. The historical overview of higher education in South Africa, and Wits University, in particular, has provided some insight into a context where the attainment of a critical mass of black academics had not been achieved. It has helped to clarify the research problem to achieve the aim of the study.

1.3.   Aim of the study

The aim of this research is to explore factors giving rise to, and the conditions shaping subsequent responses to, a policy of affirmative action to achieve employment equity in the higher education workplace, specifically the conceptualisation and implementation of a centrally coordinated, institution-wide mentoring programme for junior academics, the Growing Our Own Timber (GooT) programme at the University of the Witwatersrand.

1.3.1. Research problem and hypothesis

In this investigation, the study hopes to answer the following research sub-questions:

1. What external and internal factors gave rise to the need for GooT?

2. In which ways was the GooT policy received, interpreted and responded to by the various stakeholders across the different levels of the university?

3. What underlying factors may have conditioned the responses of stakeholders to the GooT mentoring programme as an initiative to promote equity in the academic workplace?

4. In particular, in what way can an account of the transitioning identities of the participants assist in providing insight into the outcomes of the initiative?

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[11] Affirmative action measures ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented across all levels and occupation categories (EEA, Section 13 (1).

This study rests on the hypothesis that policy to contribute to equity in academic employment seeks to intervene in highly complex social dynamics, and the results of policy initiatives are likely to vary according to the differing structural and contextual contingencies at work in the context under study. A review of the literature on organisational change in higher education has placed issues of identity (and the normative frameworks that attend particular identity positions) as key to understanding the complex effects produced by policy and its implementation. An exploration of the identity-related dispositions (and the positionality of individuals within socialising institutions) will help to account for the ways in which this policy found effect.

1.3.2. Delimitation of study area

This study is limited to the first group (Y2000) of GooT mentees (doctoral candidates and junior lecturers) and their mentors (the PhD supervisors) appointed on three-year contracts, from May 2000 to May 2003, across a range of academic disciplines. Although nine pairs were appointed in 2000, this study explores the participation of five pairs. It is fair to argue that the findings of this study are not generalisable to second and third cohorts that were appointed in May 2001 and 2002 respectively. The constraints of the mini-thesis format have limited the study and further research in this area is necessary in order to be able to suggest patterns that may be more widely applicable.

1.4. Research design and Methodology

The study assumes that responses to policy by different actors would be likely to be conditioned by differing perspectives and contingencies, working in specific contexts. We should expect that the effects of the policy would vary according to the way that it is interpreted. The research topic is investigated from a phenomenological perspective where the emphasis is on interpretive understanding and viewing the world from the perspective of the insiders to enable a deep understanding of their insights and behaviours. Drawing on the influential work of Yin (1994: 38), the structure of this study takes the form of a single-case holistic design that has a single unit of analysis, in this instance, the individual responses of the interviewees. The research design is consistent with exploratory studies and the

researcher has used semi-structured in-depth interviews to encourage the respondents to share their perspectives and experiences of their involvement in the GooT programme. The study draws on the implementation staircase model[12] to trace the trajectory of the GooT policy and to shed light on the way policy is conceived, interpreted, reformulated and implemented by the various stakeholders at the different levels of the institution. Therefore, the study provides analyses of not only the institutional context of policy implementation but also a bottom up analysis of implementation at the micro-level departmental context of each of the participants. The chapter considers the practical aspects and experiences of the researcher in conducting the research as well as some of the shortcomings and limitations of conducting this kind of research.

1.5.   Outline of the remainder of the report

Chapter 2 aims to locate the study within the existing literature on institutional responses to external and internal pressure for change. It reviews the literature on institutional change theories, the complex nature of policy, the nature and structure of elite, research-led universities and the academic workplace as factors that influence organisational change. The literature on formation of academic identities and disciplinary cultures in elite universities is reviewed, as the study has assumed that we should expect the interpretation of the policy by different actors to influence their responses within their specific contexts. The final section reviews the literature on the induction and organisational socialisation of entry-level academics into the profession as well as the provision of mentoring as a strategy to nurture them into academia. The chapter concludes with an overview of the main points that emerged from the literature review and their relevance for the study.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology of the study. It articulates the research hypothesis and the key concepts and qualitative research methods employed in the study. It discusses the sample and the criteria for its selection. It documents the fieldwork practice, data analysis methods and concludes with a discussion of the quality of the data. The chapter considers the practical aspects and

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[12] Trowler (2002: 4), adapted from Reynolds and Saunders (1997)

researcher's experiences of conducting the research. It concludes by pointing out the shortcomings and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 describes the specific external and internal contexts within which the GooT intervention occurred. It discusses the influences of global pressures on the national policy framework and traces the notion of equity within certain key policy documents. At the institutional level, it describes key aspects of the internal context of the university as they related to the purpose of the study, such as the student and staff profiles, its institutional culture, structures established to achieving equity in employment and the restructuring exercise that changed the way in which the university functioned and was managed.

Chapter 5 discusses the research findings. Through an exploration of how the GooT programme had unfolded, the study provides an institutional analysis that explores the environmental and managerial conditionalities that had influenced the reception, interpretation and responses to the implementation of the GooT policy. It also provides a bottom-up analysis that explores the distinctive conditions in the different disciplinary fields that constructed the experiences that the mentors and mentees had of their participation in the GooT programme. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the outcomes of the programme for each of the mentees.

Chapter 6 is a discussion of the salient points that have emerged from the findings in the previous chapters and locates them within the reviewed literature. It discusses some of the gaps in the data. It concludes with possible implications of the study for policy or practice and recommendations for further research.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The discussion on the historical context of higher education in South Africa shed light on the reasons for the persistent pattern of under representation of black academics at elite, research-led historically white universities. In spite of the dramatic changes in the student populations of these universities since the early 1990s, which some scholars[1] have likened to a revolution, there have been minimal changes in the composition of the academic staff. To address the issue of achieving equity in academic employment, the literature review is demarcated into several areas. Firstly, it considers the complex nature and different meanings attached to policy and draws on the implementation staircase model[2] to trace the trajectory of policy and to shed light on the reception, interpretation and responses by the various stakeholders across the different contexts of the university. Theories of institutional change have been identified as they may explain some of the factors that conditioned responses to government policy and institutional initiatives to contribute to achieving equity.

Secondly, the nature and structure of elite universities as factors in organisational change are explored as they may shed light on the normative match (or otherwise) between the values, identity and practices of the GooT policy with those of the institution and the individual academic departments. The nature of the academic workplace is reviewed, as South Africa has followed global trends. Thirdly, theories of academic identities and disciplinary cultures in elite universities are reviewed because the study has assumed responses to policy by different actors are likely to be conditioned by differing perspectives and contingencies working in specific contexts. Fourthly, the chapter reviews literature on the induction and organisational socialisation of new entrants to academia, with a focus on the provision of formal mentoring at the entry-level. The chapter concludes with an overview of the main points that have emerged from the literature review.

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[1] Cooper and Subotzky (2001), Cloete et al (2002), Jansen (2000)
[2] Trowler (2002: 4), adapted from Reynolds and Saunders (1997)

2.2. The complex nature of policy

Policy may be understood (in one reading) as a medium through which regulative agents attempt to achieve transformation objectives within particular political, social and economic contexts. It is a complex and multi-faceted concept that is not easy to define because "we are attempting to capture and pin down something that is continually in process" (Taylor et al, 1997: 35). Some scholars[3] have attributed various meanings to the concept of policy to shed light on the intricacy of policy and its processes, such as policy as political strategies, processes and outcomes, texts and discourses, which may be understood as a complex combination of these definitions at different phases of the policy cycle. As a political strategy, the state formulates policy as an attempt to accommodate different values and varied access to power of competing groups in society (Taylor et al, 1997; Ball, 1990). After 1994, ANC policy reflected not only the interests of its supporters but also competing interests as expressed by the dominant interests of capitalism and globalisation. The implication for educational policy is that social democratic reforms may be diluted as the state prioritises economic agendas. Trowler (2002: 5) has suggested that at the national and institutional levels, policy results more from "negotiation, compromise and conflict than of rational decisions and technical solutions". This rings true for Cloete's observation that "you can't take the politics out of policy" (2001: 28). As a political strategy, policy has tended to prioritise statements of purpose ahead of changing practices, as was evident in the consultative policy-making and implementation phase in the higher education sector after 1994 (discussed in Chapter 4).

As texts and discourses, both implicit within each other, polices are written interventions into practices (Ball, 1990: 17). Policies as texts enter, rather than alter, existing patterns of inequality and power relations. They allow for agency and readers will adopt diverse interpretations depending on their contexts and histories Policy as discourse points to the salience of power relations in formulating elucidations of policy text. Ball has contended that policy is "not only about what can or cannot be said and thought but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (*ibid*: 21). It has the effect of redistributing voice and the

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[3] Ball (1990), Taylor, Henry, Lingard, Rizvi (1997 and 1997b), Maasen and Gornitzka (1999), Trowler (2002), Jansen (2002) and Cloete (2003)

wording often reflects the political compromises during the formulation of that text (Taylor et al (1997). The policy process is inherently political and is consequently fraught with tension. In all sectors of South African society, including higher education, many contradictory and discordant discourses exist that have resulted in diverse interpretations of policy and contestation throughout the policy process that may have resulted in unintended outcomes in the local context. It would be reasonable to agree with these scholars that policy should be defined as the processes before the text was articulated, its production, the text itself and its post-text processes. The policy process often involves compromises, trade-offs and settlements, reflecting their inherently political nature and is consequently fraught with contestation.

Trowler (2002: 2) has argued that in higher education institutions, policy is made through recurrent practices, attitudes, assumptions and the values of practitioners in the specific context at different levels in the policy hierarchy. This suggests that policy outcomes are contextually contingent and they are rearticulated as they are recontextualised across the policy cycle. Policy analysis must consider the local context of the intended beneficiaries, who is consulted, who formulates and who implements the policy. These various ways of understanding policy each assist in providing an account of how one particular policy endeavour came about and found effect as a complex combination of political strategy, texts, discourse and a process where the outcomes have remained contested. It is not easy to provide a definitive meaning of policy owing to the competing interests, different value systems, diverse policy community, divergent access to power and the range of local contexts into which the policy has to enter. The intricate combination of these factors may lead to unintended consequences in practice, where what was envisaged is not what is achieved.

2.3. The Implementation Staircase

In an effort to trace the trajectory of the GooT initiative, the study utilises the notion of the implementation staircase model to shed light on how policy is reinterpreted as it is received, and reformulated (albeit in unintended ways) as it is implemented across the various levels of the institution. The staircase captures the importance of the "location of individuals and groups in the hierarchy of the policy process in

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shaping their interests and perceptions about the nature and relevance of particular policies" (Trowler, 2002: 3). This suggests that divergent factors will influence the different locations on the staircase and contextually contingent factors will drive the reception and responses to the policy. The staircase model helps to explain what Trowler (2002) has referred to as the implementation gap, i.e. the distance between the original aims of the policy and the actual outcomes as it is refracted during its trajectory down and up the staircase. It is suited to the aims of the study because it enables the researcher to provide an account of the way the GooT policy was conceived, received, interpreted and responded to by the various stakeholders across the different levels of the university.

Figure 1. Implementation Staircase Model, adapted for the GooT programme

After broad consultation, government legislates labour and higher education policy that impacts on academic staffing in universities

Institutional leaders interpret policy according to local pressures. Transformation & Employment Equity (T&EE) office is established. Donor funding to turn GooT vision into reality

GooT office is established as the implementation agency. Staff report directly to T&EE Director. After 18 months, GooT is moved to Centre for Learning, Teaching & Development (CLTD)

Deans, Heads of Schools/ Departments receive, interpret and respond (or not) according to local cultures and contexts.

GooT mentors interpret, adapt and apply policy, as they deem appropriate for their local disciplinary cultures & contexts

GooT mentees interpret and respond to policy according to their newly acquired staff identities while retaining their identities as doctoral students

National

Institutional Executive

Institutional Managerial

Academic Managerial

Individuals in academic departments

(Adapted from Trowler, 2002: 4)

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The focus of the study is on the institutional and individual responses to employment equity policy, implemented as the GooT programme. Bleiklie (2000), cited in Trowler (2002: 12), has noted that in social situations, agency and structure are both present and therefore, the pattern of influence should be seen as being both down and up; if structural forces predominated then the influence would be in one direction only. The study follows the implementation staircase, moving from the national level down to the academic departments where the participants are located. The researcher is clear however that policy is seldom implemented in this linear fashion owing to the complex dynamics of policy formulation, implementation and outcomes.

2.4. Institutional change theories

This study has drawn on resource and neo-institutional theories to provide the theoretical framework "to explore why and how universities change, and how and why policies fail or are implemented successfully" (Maasen and Gornitzka, 1999: 303). Resource dependency theory seeks to explain the relationship between institutions and the external agencies they depend on for essential resources, such as the state, donors and private industry. It proposes that when external pressures threaten the normal flow of resources, institutions will adopt strategies to ensure that their resource flows are not disrupted. It has been argued that the greater the power of external stakeholders in an institution, the less capacity that institution has for voluntary choices, and vice versa (Maasen and Gornitzka, 1999). The reduction in public expenditure and changes in the funding framework in South African higher education after 1994 threatened the flow of resources to universities. Cassim (2005) has suggested that resource dependency theory may explain why institutions may want to implement staffing equity initiatives. Employing people from designated groups would have human resource benefits and may attract funding from some international donors that want to be associated with facilitating transformation initiatives in higher education institutions.

Scholars[4] have concurred that we have to look beyond resources to understand institutional change. They have suggested that intra-organisational factors need to be considered, such as perceptions of their environments; how they act to control

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[4] Maasen and Gornitzka (1999: 298), Cloete and Maasen (2002: 466), Cassim (2005: 656)

and avoid dependencies; the role of leadership and impact of external dependencies on the distribution of internal power. Neo-institutional theory attempts to explain change by examining the norms, values and beliefs that exist within institutions. Where a normative match exists between the values and beliefs underlying the proposed policy and the existing identity, behaviours and procedures of the institution, the institution may more easily change in response to external pressure (Maasen and Gornitzka, 1999: 299). Therefore, change initiatives that are not congruent with the institution's identity and values should expect more resistance during implementation. These theories help to understand the relationship between government policies and institutional responses as well as the internal dynamics of the university that might condition responses to policy initiatives for change within academic departments.

2.5. Approaches to managing change

Many studies have been conducted on approaches to managing change in higher education that may explain how change happens (or not) within universities. Knight and Trowler (2001) have proposed the technical-rationalist, collegial, conflict and bargaining, bureaucratic and social practice approaches. The technical-rationalist approach, favoured by the state and institutional managers to achieve transformation objectives, requires a stable environment because it assumes that implementing change is a top-down activity. It is characterised by goal directed processes and assumes shared values among those involved (*ibid*; Trowler, 2003). This approach does not consider the role of agency in internal institutional dynamics that may be influenced by power relations, divergent values, disciplinary differences, academic identities and the discretionary nature of academic work (Trowler, 2003). The potential for a wide implementation gap is apparent due to the loosely coupled structure of the autonomous academic departments (Knight and Trowler, 2001: 17). This approach has limited capacity to affect change, as it needs the support of constituents on the ground.

In the collegial approach, change results from reaching consensus in decision-making, at least amongst senior managers and senior academics. This approach may disguise inequalities in power relations (Knight and Trowler, 2001: 10), particularly in institutions where concerns are raised about exclusionary cultures (Scholtz, 2003).

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The conflict and bargaining perspective recognises that various interests groups want to gain maximum advantage from change processes. It assumes that change is based on consensus due to shared values and common interests, at least at the local level. Scholtz (2003) has noted that in the South African context of social divisions of race, class and gender, levels of conflict in change processes are likely to be greater. In the bureaucratic approach, staff have the discretion of 'street level bureaucrats' during policy implementation where they may comply, reconstruct, resist or ignore the policy for their own benefit, i.e. they formulate policy during implementation. Even though it has been suggested that allegiance to the discipline may lead to less self-interest (Trowler, 2003: 39), it would be reasonable to argue that it has applicability to the academy when disciplinary interests are prioritised ahead of institutional objectives. Social practice theory recognizes that policies formed at the top are subject to local interpretation by cultures rooted in diverse disciplinary and departmental communities that results in varied outcomes in the different locales (Knight and Trowler, 2001: 67). However, it was suggested that it might have limited applicability to explain change because it does not highlight issues of conflict and the diversity within social groups (*ibid*). These approaches to change may emerge in varying degrees at different levels of the implementation staircase because they are the results of the varied actions of numerous actors with their own perception of the matter at hand. Trowler and Knight (2001: 19) have cautioned, "no one perspective is accurate for all situations or all interpretations of any one situation". In other words, used on their own, these theories may not adequately explain how change occurs (or not) across the different levels of the university because they do not give sufficient attention to the nature and structure of the university as a factor in organisational change.

2.6. The nature and structure of elite universities

The nature and structure of universities particularly elite, research led universities are key factors in understanding organisational change[5]. The primary function of the university is the handling of knowledge[6]. It has a knowledge-based structure of loosely joined autonomous work units at the operating level, "each department is a world in itself", with minimal dependence on other autonomous units (Clark, 1983:

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[5] Clark (1983), Becher (1989), Maasen and Gornitzka (1999), Becher and Trowler (2001), Moore (2003)
[6] Moore (2003) citing Van Vught (1991)

302, Gornitzka, 1999: 12). In an elite academic system, legitimate authority that influences the kinds of changes that occur resides in three distinct levels: superstructure, understructure, middle-structure (Clark, 1983: 131). In the superstructure, the state and regulatory authorities use policy and finance to steer the higher education system in the direction of national goals (*ibid*: 208). The understructure consists of the basic operating units (department, unit, institute, school or faculty) and is prone to fragmentation. Academics in the understructure derive considerable authority and autonomy from their professional expertise in handling specialist knowledge. Clarke (1983) has argued that personal rulership and collegial authority predominate in their governance structures and influence the pace and kinds of changes that occur. In the former, professors have considerable authority and autonomy and in the latter, there is collective authority by the professors. Aspects of the personal are present in the collegial (and vice versa), e.g. in postgraduate teaching and research where individual professors supervise the work of students and often, that of junior faculty as well (*ibid*: 113).

The individual institution is the middle structure and has to mediate between the other two levels, usually at odds with each other, by supporting one or the other, depending on the relevant power and resilience of each one (*ibid*). With disciplinary authority rooted in the understructure, organisational fragmentation may limit the capacity of the centre to steer coordinated change[7]. Some analysts[8] (citing early theorists, Cohen and March, 1974) have likened the relationship between the understructure and middle structure to 'organised anarchies', with multiple cultures, problematic goals (ambiguous and contested), unclear technology (trial and error operational procedures) and fluid participation (transient boundaries). These features influence the interpretation and implementation of policy at the different levels of the staircase and result in a loosely coupled relationship between the goals of policy initiatives and the outcomes on the ground. What was intended may not be what is implemented, adding to the complexity of the policy process. Exploring the nature and structure of the university may shed light on the normative match between the values, identity and practices of the GooT policy with those of the basic operating units and the institution.

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[7] Trowler(2003), Maasen and Gornitzka (1999)
[8] Clark (1983: 23), Becher and Kogan (1992), Trowler (2002: 4)

2.7. The changing academic workplace

Following international trends of the last twenty years, the nature of the academic workplace in South Africa has altered considerably, changing universities and those who work in them. Altbach (2002: 3) has attributed the following features to the current higher education workplace globally: worsened working conditions; increased demands for public accountability and efficiency; emphasis on performativity and assessment; declining traditional autonomy; expanded and greater diversification of staff and students; marketisation, privatisation and internationalisation; changing funding norms; fewer permanent positions available; explicit vocationalism in the curriculum to meet the needs of the changing academic labour market. Scholars[9] have concurred that these features have emerged in response to the challenges of globalisation and are intricately linked to the emergence of the 'market' university as a response to a rapidly changing external environment, characterised by fiscal constraint and reduced public expenditure.

A common response to meeting the challenges of the changing role of HEIs in a globalised environment has been the emergence of what some have called 'managerialism' as an approach to managing change in universities. Although not a distinctive phenomenon, in this approach, private sector discourse, principles, values and practices are seen to have permeated the academic workplace (Deem: 2001: 7), e.g. restructuring, strategic planning, performance indicators, quality assurance, accountability, mergers, clients, goods, services, etc. Some scholars[10] have identified the following as features of managerialism: a strengthened corporate style executive management team with strategic power and strategic planning located at the centre; devolved authority to decentralised units (executive deans with budgetary discretion); increased partnerships with industry in order to increase resource flows and outsourced service provision to cut costs. Different forms of managerialism have been identified. Hard managerialism focuses attention on the power of the executive team to change structures, procedures and sometimes cultures and soft managerialism, practises 'steering at a distance', devolving responsibility to the decentralised units, within strict boundaries and fostering competition between the units (Becher and Trowler, 2001: 13; Trowler, 2003: 22).

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[9] Orr (1999), Currie and Subotzky (2000), Deem (2001), Altbach (2002), Cloete et al (2002)
[10] Cooper (1997), Bundy (1999), Currie and Subotzky (2000), Becher and Trowler (2001), Deem (2001), Webster and Mosoetsa (2001), Johnson (2005)

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Within the South African context, managerialism has emerged as a response to policy pressure from the state to transform the sector and market pressure to become competitive in the face of the state's withdrawal as the primary funder of higher education. The latter translated into demands for efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in HEIs post-1994 that were seen to be in tension with the goals of the national reform agenda, viz. equity and redress.

Given the legacy of apartheid in higher education, South Africa's universities have not responded uniformly, as local factors such as national culture, the structure of the higher education system and the mission of each individual institution have conditioned institutional responses to demands for change (Currie and Subotzky, 2000: 123). Within this contradictory external policy context, different forms of managerial practices have entered elite universities in order to manage external demands for change, e.g. the Vice-Chancellor in the role of Chief Executive Officer (Webster and Mosoetsa, 2001; Kulati and Moja, 2002: 238), which has seen the emergence of different leadership styles within institutions (Trowler, 2002: 144; 2003: 22). Kulati and Moja (2002) have proposed three broad leadership styles that have emerged in higher education institutions in South Africa post-1994, viz. transformative, managerial and crisis leadership. Transformative leadership is akin to soft managerialism as it is characterised by negotiated transformation processes, clearly defined governance roles and structures and engagement in critical self-reflection. Power tends to be centralised, de-centralised and re-centralised by expanding the senior management team to include Deans, and senior professionals (HR and Finance) (ibid). Although Deans have budgetary discretion, financial controls and employment equity targets are set centrally, leaving them in the unenviable position of having to persuade academics to implement managerialist policies[11]. In this approach, management drives transformation from the centre, either to attempt to transform the institutional culture or to manage academics to meet policy goals.

Managerial leadership is analogous to hard managerialism. It may appear as strategic managerialism through the application of management principles to run the university like a business while not upsetting academic norms and values

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[11] Becher and Kogan (1992); Kulati and Moja (2002); Johnson (2005)

(Kulati and Moja, 2002: 247). Transformative and managerial leadership styles are more common in the well-resourced HWUs that have financial and human resources to implement managerialist approaches to the management of organisational change. Crisis leadership emerges in universities that have neither the capacity nor the resources to respond to the challenges of globalisation (Kulati and Moja, 2002: 50). These styles of leadership operate along a shifting continuum and tend to be conditioned by the institutional history, culture, research capacity, internal power distribution and personal styles of senior leaders. Irrespective of the style of leadership that emerged in higher education post-1994, it may be argued that in some cases, strengthened management and proactive steering may have assisted in speeding up institutional transformation while in other cases, management initiatives had created more problems than they solved, and some may even be seen as failures (Moore, 2003).

Managerialist practices have impacted on the working lives of academics in much the way that Altbach (2002) has described. One South African study that investigated academic responses to the effects of managerialism has suggested that some academics felt alienated from decision-making, experienced a loss of shared identity and sense of community and believed that increased control and monitoring of their work had comprised their professionally autonomy (Webster and Mosoetsa, 2001). Expected to work longer hours and on a wide range of tasks with fewer resources, some academics have experienced an intensification of academic work, less time for research and the deterioration of their working conditions[12]. Managerialist approaches to governance have led to tensions with traditional collegial approaches. Institutional leaders have had to persuade the professoriate that managerialism does not necessarily threaten academic values, norms and practices but instead serve to "fuse managerial imperatives with academic priorities" (Bundy, 1999:11). Building on the work of Webster and Mosoetsa, Johnson (2006: 59-62) has pointed out the need to distinguish between 'pessimists and innovators', where "the former are distressed and the latter energised, by change". She has suggested that 'contrived collegial managerialism' more accurately captures the changing conditions of collegial practice such as increasing student enrolments, more time spent on private work to supplement

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[12] Becher and Trowler (2001: 13), Webster and Mosoetsa (2001), Subotzky (2001)

salaries, less access to information and limited consultation about the changing work environment and changing relationships with senior management and their peers leading to an 'us and them' syndrome. These features have conditioned the responses of academics to changes in the academic workplace and their impact on the nature of academic work. It is the aim of this study to explore the responses of individual academics to a centrally driven transformation initiative to promote equity within the specific context of the changing academic workplace at the University of the Witwatersrand.

2.8.   Approaches to employment equity

The national legislative framework has compelled HEIs to find creative and sustainable ways to achieve equity in academic employment. Subotzky (2001) has identified two ways in which universities have responded to employment equity policy, viz. assimilationist and transformative. The assimilationist approach emphasises formal equality of access to jobs and attaining academic success while conforming to prevailing standards. Rather than achieving success in the equity in outcomes, this approach is deemed successful when the numbers of people employed from designated groups increases (*ibid: 56*). The tension between the goals of equity and excellence is evident as this approach suggests that increased participation of people from designated groups, without the concomitant resources, will compromise excellence. This approach does not consider differences of background and experience nor does it address structural and institutional barriers that may inhibit the academic progress of people from designated groups and in some instances, might cause them to suppress perceived differences to fit into the status quo (*ibid: 63*).

The transformative approach is one that recognises and accommodates academic and social differences (Subotzky, 2001). In this approach, equity (in the form of increased staff diversity) complements excellence because it introduces diverse teaching and research strategies, management styles, life experiences and role models for students. This approach is captured in Chapter 3 of the Employment Equity Act which instructs designated employers[13] to implement affirmative action

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[13] "An employer who employs 50 or more employees, or has a total turnover as reflected in Schedule 4 of the Act, municipalities and organs of state.

measures that "ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunity and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels of the workforce" (1998: 18). The Act defines affirmative action measures as those that promote diversity, identify and eradicate barriers, make reasonable accommodation for the employment, development and retention of people from designated groups and sets numerical goals for staff profiles. Section 20 of the Act compels higher education institutions to report on their affirmative action measures as well as their internal monitoring and evaluation procedures[14].

Although not a new phenomenon in South Africa[15], affirmative action is a contentious issue in South Africa and responses to it have been mixed. Some scholars[16] have argued that as a corrective tool, it has limited capacity for transform the workplace because it does not interrogate the organisational cultures (values and belief systems) of the environments in which designated groups are employed. Some people see it as a necessary mechanism to ensure that people from designated groups have equal access to opportunities not previously available to them, but with minimal change to existing social relations and within defined parameters, such as academic standards and merit that may appear to transcend race and gender. This perspective is akin to Subotzky's assimilationist approach. Others have pointed to the potential bias in the application of the merit principle in recruitment and promotion practices, where even though formal criteria exist (qualifications, publications, teaching competency, etc), merit is frequently linked to subjective and culturally defined criteria that may exclude people from certain positions or from being promoted (Peacock, 1993: 22; Qunta, 1995: 23). To identify barriers and discursive practices which constrain progress in the academy, Morley (1999) has proposed an investigation of the micropolitics of institutional cultures to create conducive conditions for a transformative approach to achieving equity.

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[14] Higher education institutions have to submit an annual report on progress towards employment equity to the Department of Labour every year on the first working day of October (Section 21).
[15] Under colonialism and apartheid, job reservation policies had favoured the white population in all sectors of society, notably the public and higher education sectors (Mabokela, 2000; Ramphele, 1995).
[16] Mabokela (2000), Nzimande and Sikhosana (1996), Ramphele (1995), Qunta (1995), Peacock (1993).

2.9. Institutional cultures and the retention of black academics

Given the racialised history of higher education in South Africa, the HWUs have developed and distinctive institutional cultures[17] that reflect the values and beliefs of the dominant groups. Wits University has acknowledged that its institutional culture is a major obstacle in recruiting and retaining black employees, exacerbating the 'revolving-door syndrome' and not increasing the pool of qualified black academics (Wits, 2003)[18]. In a survey of staff experiences of Wits' institutional culture in 2006, there was little consensus as to whether race and gender had led to differential treatment being accorded to staff but it was noted that the daily interactions of participants with their colleagues and the institutional processes had shaped their perceptions of the institutional culture (2007: 37). In one study, alienating institutional cultures were identified as one of the main reasons that some black academics had moved between institutions or left academia altogether (Potgieter, 2002). Participants in this study reported experiences of institutional racism (attitudes, practices and beliefs), racism in expectations and evaluations (unrealistic goals and levels of performance), black essentialism (homogenisation of the black experience) and liberalism, in the form of tokenism. In addition to these experiences, some said that they left due to poor management or leadership, differences about the university's core functions and the nature of institutional responses to transformation imperatives. To a lesser extent, personal reasons had influenced their decisions to leave universities, viz. family commitments, better remuneration and being headhunted for positions outside academia (ibid: 27). Khotseng (2004: 1) has concurred that some black people experienced marginalisation due to discrimination, stereotyping, exclusionary cultures, limited research and teaching networks and a lack of opportunities to serve on the most powerful academic bodies such as the Faculty Boards, Senate and in the positions of Deans or Deputy Deans, thereby limiting their progress within the academy.

It is important to point out that as an elite university in South Africa, Wits comprises many cultures even if the dominant culture tends to reflect its tradition of whiteness and patriarchy (Wits, 2003). The researcher acknowledges that there may be several

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[17] In this study, institutional culture is defined as the deep-rooted sets of norms, assumptions and values that predominate and pervade most of the environment on a day-to-day basis (Wits University Institutional Culture Survey Report, 2003).

[18] The institutional culture of Wits is discussed further in Chapter 4.

frames of reference towards institutional cultures that may need to be disentangled to connect to different ways of thinking about them within different parts of the university. The traditionalist mode of thought tends to predominate in elite universities where knowledge is the primary function and determines whether one is a powerful player in the system or not, exacerbating the potential for exclusion. Another, almost post-modern frame of reference, believes that all knowledge systems should be judged as equally important, including for example what some have called indigenous knowledge. Other frames of reference seek to understand the hegemonic systems and why they are so powerful whereas others see knowledge as a colonial construct, inherently exclusionary and oppressive. Each of these positions has different implications in terms of how new recruits are socialised into the knowledge traditions of the academy. As an intervention to increase the number of new black recruits into the academy, the GooT programme was conceptualised and reported on by the university as an affirmative action measure in its equity plans and reports to the Department of Labour (Wits, 2003a).

2.10. Equity initiatives in academic employment

A study on initiatives to recruit black people into the academy at the entry level in some universities, referred to as Equity Development Programmes (EDPs), has painted a gloomy picture of attrition instead of retention (Mkhwanazi and Baijnath, 2003). Despite poor retention rates, they have argued the EDPs have helped to increase the pool of qualified black people in the country. In a three-year tracking study of four internationally donor funded EDPs at HWUs including the GooT programme, Smith (2005) reported that although most participants enjoyed the experience of academia, they believed that the normative match between the institution's vision of equity and the goals of the academic departments, particularly with respect to non-racialism, was lacking. Some of the key challenges were identified as: unclear and unsystematic coordination and financial administration from the centre; unreasonable teaching workloads for first time teachers and a lack of career planning that limited retention prospects. The strength of Smith's report is that it has highlighted components of EDPs that are critical for success, clear objectives within a well-formulated programme plan; professional development plans for participants to clarify expectations and responsibilities; a dedicated coordinator reporting directly to senior management and facilitating clear

communication channels; a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy; an orientation programme for new recruits and a formative evaluation to make immediate adjustments. The literature[19] on the implementation of formal mentoring programmes concurs but includes organisational readiness, senior champions, shared meaning of mentoring, flexible programme design, training for mentors and mentees and the monitoring of mentoring relationships. A shortcoming of this study is that it did not reflect on issues of race, gender and class nor did it consider the institutional and disciplinary contexts into which these programmes entered as factors that may have conditioned the receipt, interpretation and responses of the stakeholders.

In a comprehensive sociological study that investigated the nature and extent of academic staff transformation at the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town (UCT), Lewins (2006) has explored the salience of race, class and gender within the academic workplace as factors that shaped differential access to social, cultural and symbolic capital. This study drew on Bourdieu's concept of capital to illustrate the different experiences of white and black, and male and female academics. It highlighted the primary importance of social and cultural capital in determining progress in the academy by arguing that "social capital is important in determining one's own position (access and support) in relation to dominant networks, whilst cultural capital is crucial in terms of credentials (degrees, titles and publications) that one needs to move up the hierarchy and in terms of one's position relative to the institutional culture" (*ibid*: 174). The study also pointed to the importance of symbolic capital within the academic setting where the work and contribution of women and black people have not received the same recognition and prestige as their white male counterparts, 'despite having equal academic cultural capital' (*ibid*: 190). In applying Bourdieu's notion of capital and its interrelationship to identity politics within elite universities, Lewins has illustrated the ways in which alienation and marginalisation reinforced the differential access of the different types of capital by women and black academics.

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[19] Lacey (2000), Clutterbuck (2004)

The strength of this study is its typology of the range of transformation responses[20]: active change, passive response, passive resistance and active resistance. Active change is akin to the transformative approach while active resistance manifests as non-compliance with transformation policy. Passive resistance is policy compliance without taking responsibility for transformation and passive response is one that has transformative goals, is managed but is unable to challenge the status quo. She has argued that these responses to academic staff transformation demonstrates that the historical legacy of apartheid is still felt in academic workplaces, such as the staff profile where white males are dominant in senior positions and an institutional culture that seems reluctant to foster the acquisition of social and cultural capital by black academics. Lewins has described the GooT programme as a passive response that "lacked drive and "often operated from a deficiency or technocratic management of a diversity paradigm" where women and black academics are assumed to require further training to ensure that standards are maintained (*ibid*: 178). The study also revealed that Wits had made more progress with gender transformation programmes in part, due to champions of gender transformation. These same champions (mostly white women) had less success in dealing with issues of race and racialised experiences within the institution (2006: 125). It may be reasonable to suggest that it may be prudent to have black people involved in managing an equity initiative, such as GooT.

The existence of a varied range of equity initiatives (albeit mostly funded by international donors and assimilationist in intent) has demonstrated some commitment to changing staff profiles but less willingness to address issues of institutional culture and structural barriers that make it difficult for black and women academics to progress within the academy. This study aims to explore not only the managerial and environmental conditionalities that may have influenced responses and outcomes of the GooT programme, but also to provide accounts of the distinctive disciplinary conditionalities and the transitioning identities of the participants in order to gain insight into the outcomes of the initiative.

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[20] Lewins (2006: 177)

2.11. Theories of academic identities in elite universities

The work of Clark (1983), Becher and Trowler (2001), Henkel (2000) and Moore (2003) is useful to understand the nature and formation of academic identities in elite universities. Henkel, drawing on Macintyre (1981), has defined identity as the dynamic between the individual and the collective where the academic is a distinctive individual, with a unique history, located in a chosen moral and conceptual framework and identified by the goods he or she achieved (2000: 16). The distinctive individual is at the same time an embedded individual within defined communities and institutions that have their own languages, conceptual structures, histories, traditions, myths, values, practices and achieved goods *(ibid)*. As the product of the interaction between structure and agency, identities are fluid and may change from one context to another. It would follow that identity formation is the result of extended socialisation and if its not viable, it will not be sustained. Clarke (1983) has distinguished four sources of identity for academics in elite universities: the discipline, the enterprise (individual institution), the academic profession and the national system. The study is concerned mainly with the construction of academic identities in the discipline and the institution as these produce "the more specific sets of beliefs that academics live by" *(ibid*: 75) and it is here that academics "construct their identities, their values, the knowledge base of their work, their modes of working and their self-esteem" (Henkel, 2000: 22). Although the discipline serves as the primary source of academic enculturation for the new recruit, the institution is a powerful source of identity in institutional initiatives such as GooT.

2.11.1. Disciplinary identities

Disciplinary cultures are distinctive features of universities that influence the nature of change within them. Scholars[21] have concurred that the knowledge structures of academic disciplines are the primary sources of enculturation in the working lives of academics, particularly in well-established disciplines in elite, research-led universities. For Clark (1983: 78), new academic entrants are socialised to "enter different cultural houses" that have their own knowledge traditions, distinctive views, jargon and ways of doing things that only insiders have knowledge of and sets them apart from those not in the field. Knowledge structures are interwoven

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[21] Clark (1983), Henkel (2000), Becher and Trowler (2001), Moore (2003)

with disciplinary cultures because of "the ways in which academics engage with their subject matter, and the narratives that they develop about this," are important factors in the formation of the culture of the discipline (Becher and Trowler (2001: 23). This points to the primacy of the discipline, its knowledge structures and culture, in conditioning academic identities, particularly for new academic entrants.

Clark (9831) made the distinction between faculties and departments that have explicit knowledge structures, such as natural sciences, engineering and medicine and those that have ambiguous and conflicting bodies of thought, such as the humanities, education and social work. This distinction will influence the nature of academic work, decisions about recruitment and retention, lead to differentiated access and influence the way that the department operates (*ibid*: 40). To understand the how differing conceptions of academic identity conditioned the responses to the GooT initiative[22], I have drawn on Becher and Trowler's (2001: 36) account of four disciplinary groupings to define the nature of knowledge within each:

- **Hard Pure:** Pure science, e.g. Physics, Chemistry. Knowledge is cumulative and perceived to be relatively value free. Explicit criteria for knowledge verification and obsolescence. Outcomes are discovery and explanation.
- **Soft pure:** Humanities, e.g. English, Sociology. Knowledge is reiterative and value-laden. Disputed criteria for knowledge verification. Outcomes are understanding and interpretation.
- **Hard applied:** Professions, e.g. Law, Engineering, Accounting. Knowledge is purposive and pragmatic. Criteria for judgement are purposive, functional. Outcomes are products and techniques.
- **Soft applied:** Education, Social Work. Knowledge is functional, utilitarian and concerned with enhancement of (semi) professional practice. Disputed criteria. Outcomes are protocols, policy and procedures.

Becher and Trowler (2001: 37) have cautioned that although these disciplinary groupings may be useful to describe variations amongst disciplines, they do not do justice to the complexity of some disciplines. Clark has argued that fragmentation of well-established disciplinary cultures within elite universities happens frequently through specialisation and niche areas within their knowledge structures,

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[22] The participants in this study are represented in each group

particularly in those that have "a low consensus on paradigms, e.g. history, political science" (*ibid*: 219). As long as the sub-group has legitimacy as an academic field, it would develop its own organisational culture that may be sustained by leadership or precedent.

These disciplinary groupings do not only influence the dispositions of academics but also the nature of doctoral supervisory relationships within them. Delamont has likened the supervisor relationship to a marriage as it is "private, intense, central to a happy life, and hard to study" (2003: 109). Her theoretical framework draws on Bernstein's (1977) contrasting ideal types of personal and positional families as sources of academic identities for doctoral students. (*ibid*). In the positional family, social roles and status are ascribed; identity is fixed and explicit, with hierarchy evident. In the personal family, social roles and status are achieved; identity is negotiated rather than based on hierarchy. The nature of knowledge in Becher and Trowler's 'hard' disciplinary groupings may tend to favour positional relations while the 'soft' disciplines may be more disposed to personal relations, particularly in doctoral supervisory relationships.

Doctoral students in the natural science subjects tend to be socialised into a research team with a clearly defined role and a PhD topic usually derived and funded from a team-based project, which provides intellectual and practical support to the PhD project (Delamont, 1997 in Deem and Brehony, 2000: 149). Team publications are common (Delamont, 2003: 115). In the non-natural science subjects, doctoral students are lone researchers with a strong sense of individualism in their own academic socialisation[23]. They tend to publish independently because the emphasis is on achieved roles and statuses. With their role and status more akin to the personal family, they have more leeway to negotiate an identity These students may feel isolated and marginalized by actual or perceived exclusion from seminars, research projects, social and disciplinary networks (*ibid*). Apart from disciplinary and student identities, participation in the GooT programme located the mentees at the intersection of multiple identity dispositions, each of which may be on a trajectory of adjustment, e.g. race (including its ethnic sub-groups), gender, class,

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[23] Deem and Brehony (2000: 149)

nationality, religion, Wits newcomer. The study will attempt to provide an account of these transitioning identities within the divergent disciplinary contexts.

2.11.2. Academic identities and the Institution

Scholars[24] have concurred that after the discipline, the institution serves as a powerful source of identity and culture. Despite the university's multiple and shifting cultural configurations, there is always some symbolic unity of the institution[25] with the institution and the discipline coming together in the academic department, the autonomous operating unit. Clark (1983) has suggested that the strength of the institution's culture depends on its size and age, history and sagas, levels of interaction amongst operating units, as well as its competitive distinctiveness. A strong institutional culture and a small network of external supporters provide the competitive edge when it comes to fundraising, clients and human resources (*ibid*: 84). This is apparent in the English HWUs, which had developed strong institutional identities and reputations, shaped by their colonial origins and subsequent history, traditions and sagas as well as international and business networks. On their own, the culture of the discipline and institution may not always adequately explain the construction of academic identities of new entrants. Trowler has argued that academics bring values, attitudes and behaviours from the wider environment into the academy and in some settings, "these may be more important than the epistemological characters of disciplines in shaping academic professional cultures" (1998: 82). In South Africa, race, gender and class are important sources of identity that provide substantial foundations over which academic identities are overlaid and which influence the instantiation of particular academic identities.

2.11.3 Race and gender as sources of academic identity

Despite policy interventions, legislation, institutional commitment and resources, employment equity gains for black academic staff have been minimal in HWUs[26]. There are usually two categories of explanation for this, viz. economic, in terms of availability of qualified black people and the intense competition from the public

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[24] Clark (1983), Becher (1994), Henkel (2000), Becher and Trowler (2001), Moore (2002)
[25] Clark (1983: 86), Trowler (1998: 150)
[26] Cooper and Subotzky (2001), Jansen (2001a), Howell and Subotzky (2002), Kulati and Moja (2002)

and private sectors for these highly sought after people[27]. The other explanation may be described as socio-cultural, where black people experience marginalisation in the academic workplace and choose to leave the institution. The experiences of minority ethnic groups in predominantly white universities in the USA resonate with the experiences of black academics at HWUs, where they are no more than 10% of the total number of academics and an even smaller percentage of academics above lecturer level. Scholars[28] have concurred that black academics, and women, may have to confront a range of barriers on a daily basis such as tokenism, experiences of collegiality and essentialism that result in them feeling unwelcome and unsupported academically, stereotyped and pressurised to over perform. They may feel that they have to assimilate into the prevailing disciplinary and institutional cultures and may develop conflicting identities and roles (public and private), e.g. when research is considered worthy only when published in mainstream journals and not those that focus on rural or non-traditional perspectives[29] (Mabokela and Mawila, 2004: 202).

Addressing these barriers in HWUs is not a straightforward exercise. Mabokela (2000: 109) and Potgieter (2002), citing Harleston and Ngara (2000) have proposed strategies to help black people feel that they belong and that they can make a valuable contribution to the needs of the discipline, institution and country. Senior leaders should be visible champions of equity goals and outcomes, commit to resources and strategies to develop inclusive cultures, provide diversity training for management and staff and offer incentives for black academics to remain in academia, such as the provision of mentoring and the time and space to develop an independent research agenda. Although the EE Act included women and disabled people as designated groups, the GooT programme had targeted only black doctoral students and appointed equal numbers of men and women. Becher and Trowler (2001: 55) have pointed out that taken-for-granted ideas about gender identities have resulted in a gendered division of labour that has marginalized women in the male-dominated academies of the US and UK. Morley's (2000: 229) analysis of micropolitics, concerned with the exercise of gendered power relationships in daily practices, describes the 'subtle, elusive, volatile, and difficult to capture sub-text and

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[27] Howell and Subotzky (2002), Kulati and Moja, (2002)
[28] Tillman (2001), Turner (2002), O'Neill (2002), Quezada & Louque (2004), Mabokela & Mawila (2004)
[29] This is not only a 'black' or 'gender' phenomenon, although these may accentuate conflict

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underworld of organisational life' to understand the reasons that women remain concentrated at the lower levels of academic employment and underrepresented in the elite professions. It is about influence, networks and political and personal strategies to effect or resist change or to survive in increasingly competitive conditions (*ibid*: 232). It would be fair to suggest that women in the elite academies may face similar barriers as black academics in HWUs.

For the new recruit, the discipline and institution serve as main sources of academic enculturation. However, these identities may not sufficiently describe the construction of academic identities by new entrants. In South Africa, race, gender and class provide significant foundations over which disciplinary and institutional identities are overlaid as academics bring principles, approaches and behaviour from the broader environment into the academy. In order to build a sense of how disciplinary identities are constructed in a layered way, the study provides an account of transitioning identities, distinctive and embedded, that may have conditioned responses to the GooT programme, which by its nature, foregrounded the race, gender and institutional identities of the mentors and mentees.

2.12. Academic responses to change

Trowler (1998) and Henkel (2000) have explored responses of academics in their disciplinary settings to policy driven by external demands in non-elite and elite settings, respectively. Trowler's study focused on the role and power of academics to shape top-down policy. He found that academics have relative autonomy in their responses are, "likely to adapt as well as adopt it, shape and reshape as they implement it, or in some cases attempt to block the implementation process altogether" (1998: 153) so that the outcomes do not reflect what was initially envisaged. He argued that when policy is perceived as beneficial, it may be adopted with fewer problems, and this happens even when the policy contradicts current cultural characteristics (*ibid*). He has suggested that a top-down/bottom-up relationship between senior managers and academics should be characterised by clear and achievable goals, engagement and negotiation, commitment to cultivate a shared vision of organisational change that allows flexibility on the ground (1998: 154). This kind of relationship may foster ownership of the outcomes of change initiatives within the disciplinary unit.

Henkel (2000) focused on the implications of top-down policy on academic identities in elite disciplinary settings. She argued that managerialism has strengthened disciplinary identities since academic departments have "become the sites for collective opposition or the development of strategies to sustain the departmental interests" (*ibid*: 254). Henkel identified a variety of responses, ranging from ignoring the policy change (a powerful minority) or resisting it because it required a drastic shift in their values and agendas, to subversion and compliance, without much change actually taking place. She reported that more often than not, academics adapted to the change with "their values, beliefs and agendas essentially undisturbed" (*ibid*: 264), i.e. with relatively stable disciplinary identities. These varied responses have highlighted the adaptive capacity of the academic profession while still preserving pre-existing dispositions, in all its varying forms. Moore (2003: 211) concluded in his study that in elite settings, the responses of academics are linked more to intrinsic intellectual commitments and less to policy initiatives, pointing to the salience of the discipline in academic enculturation. Deriving autonomy from professional expertise, academics tend to respond in ways that suit their own interests, belief systems and intellectual dispositions. New academic entrants have less autonomy in the way that they respond to change initiatives. The construction of their academic identities will be conditioned by institutional induction and disciplinary socialisation processes.

2.13. Induction and organisational socialisation

Trowler and Knight[30] have explored the induction and organisational socialisation of entry-level academics in English and Canadian universities. For these authors, induction not only refers to formal processes but also to the discourses and practices of teams and departments that the new appointee is trying to join, i.e. activity systems where culture is "enacted and constructed and where personal identity coalesces, is shaped and re-shaped", as academics 'come to know' in new work contexts (Trowler and Knight, 2000: 30). Collaboration with colleagues on academic tasks would enable new entrants to gain knowledge and understanding of shared meanings and unwritten rules of acceptable professional and social practices and procedures with respect to teaching, research and supervision (*ibid*). For induction to be meaningful for new staff members it should be guided by the identities and

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[30] Trowler and Knight (1999), Knight and Trowler (1999) and Trowler and Knight (2000)

individual needs of each person, the disciplinary cultures, research interests, professional expertise, support from senior colleagues, future roles, amongst other things (*ibid*). The head of the operating unit, together with senior academics, would be best placed to facilitate appropriate induction activities. This would suggest that a one-size fit all approach to induction even within academic departments would have limited success. Trowler and Knight (2000:28) have argued that although institutional induction is less significant than disciplinary socialisation, the former does have value in that it provides access to new networks and may demystify the institution's operations and policies. However, in top-down change initiatives such as GooT, institutional induction may be equally as important. Although these scholars have not theorised about the induction of 'ethnic minorities' in Canada and the UK, they have suggested strongly that appropriate methods should be found to slow 'the revolving door' through which minority ethnic groups can enter higher education institutions and then quickly exit, finding the environment hostile (Trowler and Knight, 1999: 178). The retention of black academics is a challenge that HWUs in South Africa have acknowledged that they have to deal with urgently in order that their academic staff profiles begin to resemble the society they have to serve. The provision of mentors is regarded as one of the strategies to assist new academic entrants to cope with the challenges of academia.

The literature on the experiences of black academics in elite universities in the UK and USA has highlighted some important issues around the provision of mentoring. In traditional (informal) mentoring relationships, mentors are most likely to choose mentees, either consciously or unconsciously, who share the same ethnic, religious, academic, and/or social backgrounds[31]. Knight and Trowler (1999: 30) have cited the work of Boyle and Boice (1998)[32] to argue that 'spontaneous mentoring' reaches about a third of new academics and the single biggest advantage of informal mentoring goes almost exclusively to white males "already in the old boys network of elite universities". It has been argued that some white academic staff might be reluctant to mentor new black academics as they may be confounded by the task of performing a social practice outside of their personal experience (O'Neill, 2002; Mabokela and Mawila, 2004: 202). Given the academic profile of HWUs, black

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[31] Tillman (2002: 297), Thomas (1990) cited in O'Neill (2002).
[32] Boyle, P and Boice, R. (1998) Systematic mentoring for new faculty teachers and graduate teaching assistants, *Innovative Higher Education*, 22 (3), 157-159

academics may have fewer opportunities for informal mentoring and may need formal mentoring programmes to receive mentoring. Studies[33] have pointed to the crucial role of the mentoring coordinator in formal programmes, not only to perform routine administrative and financial tasks but also to provide consistent and appropriate support to the participants, while facilitating the provision of mentoring. This role requires an independent person with sufficient seniority, visible institutional backing and credibility amongst senior academics because the success depends not only on the levels of institutional support but also the willingness of mentors to impart the social and intellectual skills and knowledge needed to enhance the academic success of new entrants (Buhlungu and Metcalfe, 2001). This multi-faceted role should exercised with discretion and demands personal qualities such as integrity, commitment, openness and tolerance to facilitate productive relationships.

Paternalism, inherent in the mentoring process, may be viewed as an extension of the racial legacy. Understandably, some black academics may react negatively to this, as the nature of mentoring is such that it could result in negative practices where the mentees feel vulnerable and patronised or where they are not given the intellectual space to develop their own identities (Buhlungu and Metcalfe, 2001: 78). To overcome these perceptions, some have advised that mentoring should be mainstreamed for all academic staff and senior leaders, as champions of mentoring, should work hard to dispel any negative perceptions, stereotypes and stigmas that may be attached to it (ibid; Clutterbuck, 2004). For mentoring relationships to prosper, the purpose of each relationship should determine the functions that mentors perform. When the purposes of mentoring are career advancement and socialisation, mentors perform mostly career and psychosocial functions, respectively[34]. Career functions include coaching, personal development planning, protection and sponsorship of collaborative work opportunities. Psychosocial functions include role modelling, counselling, motivation and socialisation. Each mentor will perform unique combinations of these functions at different times within the relationship, depending on which ones are comfortable for them. In one

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[33] Clutterbuck (2002; 2004), Buhlungu and Metcalfe (2001), Lacey (2000), Knight and Trowler (1999).
[34] Kathy Kram (1985) cited in Tillman (2001: 298); Lacey (2000: 19); Clutterbuck (2002: 62); Clutterbuck (2004: 54)

study, (Tillman, 2001: 310) it emerged that black academics expected less psychosocial support and more career guidance from white mentors. Studies[35] have shown that some white male academics have shared their knowledge of institutional culture, internal disciplinary dynamics and facilitated access to resources and informal networks. Despite successful professional relationships with white mentors and adjustment to the predominant academic culture, some academics reported that they continued to feel like outsiders in the institution. It would seem that academic success does not always translate into a sense of belonging (*ibid*: 317). The provision of mentoring for black academics in HWUs is a challenging activity, as individuals bring to the mentoring relationship their experiences, cultural and social identities, values, expectations and behaviours, all potential conflict areas (Stanley and Lincoln, 2005: 49). In order to provide an account of the transitioning identities of the mentors and mentees, five case studies are presented to explore the disciplinary cultures, mentoring relationships and outcomes of the GooT initiative for them.

2.14. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the South African and international literature to explore the factors giving rise to, and the conditions shaping subsequent responses to, a policy that aimed to promote employment equity in the higher education workplace. To this extent, I have identified the various meanings that scholars have attributed to policy, such as policy as political strategies, processes and outcomes, texts and discourses that may be understood as a complex combination of these definitions at different phases of the policy cycle. The implementation staircase model will be used to trace the trajectory of the GooT policy because it allows the researcher to provide an account of the way the GooT policy was received, interpreted and responded to by the various stakeholders across the different levels of the university at different times.

The study has drawn on resource dependency and neo-institutional theories to explain that responses to external policy depend both on the institution's internal characteristics and relationship with the external environment. Other theories of

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[35] O'Neill (2002), Mabokela and Mawila (2004: 202).

change are less suited to this case study, as they do not consider the nature and structure of universities as factors in organizational change. The literature on the changing academic workplace explores the way in which universities are managed and institutional approaches to the management of change that have emerged, specifically, assimilationist and transformative approaches to equity initiatives in academic employment. Chapter 4 provides the global, national and institutional contexts into which the GooT policy entered to understand the contingencies of the resourcing environment that also shaped its outcomes.

The literature on organisational change in higher education has placed issues of identity as key to understanding the complex effects produced by policy and its implementation. For new academics, the discipline serves as the main source of academic enculturation. In South Africa, race, gender and class are important sources of identity that provide substantial foundations over which academic identities are overlaid. Mentees are located at the intersection of multiple identity indicators, each of which may be on a trajectory of change, e.g. race (and its ethnic sub-categories), gender, class, nationality, newcomer to Wits or not, doctoral student identity, disciplinary socialisation or location in the hierarchy. The literature suggests that identity positions are multiple, provisional and changing and they shape experiences and condition particular social agency in decision-making and interpretations, as they become socialised into their disciplinary environments. The social environment works to condition the fulfilment of these dispositions and some may achieve greater salience at different times, as the mentees become more embedded (or alienated) in their environments. The study will explore the roles of social and cultural capital in their respective integration and whether it is distributed or withheld. To understand the outcomes for the mentees, the study will investigate how mentoring relationships help to modify the salience of some of these identities with the purpose of achieving integration of the mentee into the academic environment.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, the study rests on the hypothesis that policy to achieve equity in academic employment seeks to intervene in highly complex social dynamics, and the results of policy initiatives are likely to vary according to the differing structural and contextual contingencies at work in the context under study. This chapter is concerned with the research design and methodology and discusses the way in which the research was conducted in terms of the research instruments, sampling techniques and criteria, data collection processes, coding procedures, data analysis. It points to some of the problems experienced and concludes by highlighting the shortcomings and limitations in the data.

3.1.1. Working definitions of the key concepts used in this study

Some of the concepts around which the conceptual framework of the study is built are contested and may provoke substantial debate. Although they may require further discussion, I have drawn on sources in the literature to provide working definitions.

Academic identities: A complex combination of individual and community values, visible commitment to particular forms of knowledge and a sense of self-esteem. Individual agents and individual actions cannot be identified in isolation from the context and traditions in which they are embedded (Macintyre, 1981 cited in Henkel, 2000).

Affirmative action: A positive measure to correct historical inequalities to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups[1] have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer (Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998).

Employment Equity: the elimination of discrimination, provision of training and equality of opportunity to ensure that the workforce becomes representative of the country's (or region's) demographics. It also includes specific measures (affirmative

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[1] The term "people from designated groups" in the employment equity Act refers to Black people, women and people with disabilities. "People with disabilities" refers to people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment.

action) to accelerate the advancement of people from designated groups (EE Act, No. 55 of 1998).

Equity: the use of processes, tools and mechanisms to promote equality of opportunity (both equality of access and equality of outcomes) in ensuring fair treatment of all (Cassim, 2005: 653)

Institutional Culture: The deep-rooted sets of norms, assumptions and values that predominate and pervade most of the environment on a day-to-day basis (Wits, 2003).

Managerialism: the pervasion of contemporary business practices and private sector ideas and values in public funded institutions and work practices (Deem, 2001)

Mentoring: A one-to-one, confidential relationship where experienced academics assist newcomers to adjust to their environments, master the craft of academia, understand the organisational culture, share opportunities for professional development and gain exposure to disciplinary networks. Mentors act as sounding boards in this protected relationship to achieve significant transition in knowledge, work or thinking (Clutterbuck, 2004).

Transformation: A process of negotiated organisational change that breaks decisively with past discriminatory practices in order to create an environment where the full potential of all staff and students can be realised (Wits, 2004).

3.2.   Design of the study

The research topic is investigated from a phenomenological perspective where the emphasis is on interpretive understanding and viewing the world from a small group of insiders, as they continuously interpret, create, define and rationalise their actions, behaviours and practices, trying to make sense of their life world (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 33). As an interpretive case study, it employed semi-structured in-depth interviews and documentary sources to develop an in-depth understanding of the particular insights, decisions and behaviours of these insiders.

Drawing on the influential work of Yin (1994), the structure of this study takes the form of a single-case holistic design in order that it may be used to test whether the specified propositions of theory are true or whether other explanations have more relevance (*ibid*: 38). The holistic design indicates that it has a single unit of analysis,

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in this instance, the individual responses of the interviewees. As is common for the case study method, a description of the global, national, institutional and local environments within which the intervention occurred is provided because the interaction of the unit of analysis with its context is a significant part of the investigation and is rarely unaffected by factors in its environment (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 282). The case study methodology has allowed the researcher to explore links between the conceptualisation, interpretation and implementation at the institutional and local levels and to provide accounts of the differing forms of collegial cultures and transitioning identities that might have conditioned responses to, and outcomes of, this equity initiative.

3.2.1 Sample design and sampling methods

As in most interpretive studies, the sampling technique used in this study is purposive, i.e. it is often directed at specific, rather than random criteria that are chosen before the commencement of the fieldwork (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 288). The sample for the study is limited to the first GooT participants appointed from May 2000 until May 2003 as they had completed their contracts when this fieldwork started. This group was chosen as they had been part of the official launch and had experienced the discontinuities in the management and administration of the programme. Neumann (1997: 206) has argued that in special situations, purposive sampling is acceptable, as it selects respondents with specific purposes in mind. Due to time constraints and limits on the size of this study, the researcher focused on the in-depth experiences of five mentoring pairs. They were selected according to the subject areas that represented Becher and Trowler's (2001) four disciplinary groupings. This kind of selection served two purposes, firstly, to protect the anonymity of the respondents and secondly, to determine to what extent their locations within specific disciplinary groupings conditioned their responses to the GooT initiative.

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Table 2: Sample according to disciplinary groupings

Disciplinary grouping	Faculty	Mentor	Position	Mentee	Wits Experience
Hard Pure	Science	Male, Algerian, new to Wits	Senior Lecturer	Male, Congolese	New to Wits
Hard applied	Engineering	Male, SA, Wits graduate	Head of School	Male, Zimbabwean	Masters
Soft Pure	Humanities Social Science (HSSE)	Male, Kenyan, +10 years at Wits	Head of Department	Male, SA[2]	Undergraduate, Honours, Masters
Soft Applied	HSSE	Female, SA Wits graduate	Senior Lecturer	Female, SA	New to Wits
Interdisciplinary Hard pure & Soft Applied	Science and HSSE	Female, SA Wits graduate	Director of College	Female, SA	Undergraduate, Honours, Masters

(Becher and Trowler, 2001)

Table 2 indicates that the purposive sampling represented Becher and Trowler's (2001) four disciplinary groupings. However, one mentoring pair straddled two disciplinary groupings, which is termed as interdisciplinary because the Hard Pure disciplinary grouping intersected with the Soft Applied to create its own interdisciplinary knowledge structure. All five mentoring pairs are same gender pairings, three male and two female. The Hard Pure pairing were both non-South African Africans, relative newcomers to Wits and South Africa. The Soft Pure mentor was a non-South African African with considerable work experience of Wits while the mentee had completed all his tertiary education at Wits. Three mentors were in management positions in their Faculties and two were in Senior Lecturer positions. The mentees were mature students in their late twenties and early thirties and bar one, had previous work experience, either in academia or in private industry. These pairs were not selected to suggest patterns for the broader population but rather to explore the theoretical aspects of this study (Yin, 1994: 10), i.e. to investigate to what extent the various identity resources, the positionality of individuals and their distinctive contexts that had conditioned responses and outcomes to the programme. In addition to five pairs, the researcher interviewed three senior managers of the institution, including two managers that had been closely involved in the conceptualisation, implementation and management of the

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[2] Not interviewed due to illness at the time of the fieldwork and unfortunately passed away about six months later.

GooT policy. Inputs were also gained from the coordinator and the secretary of the programme[3].

3.3 Data Collection Process

3.3.1 Gaining access to research subjects

Drawing on already existing relationships with the respondents, the researcher was able to gain access to the subjects with relative ease. The requests for participation in the study were sent via e-mail, accompanied by a copy of the research proposal. All respondents expressed a willingness to participate and availed themselves during the one week in June 2004 that the researcher had set aside for the site visit. The interviews took place in their offices, and in one instance, in the departmental tearoom. The researcher was already familiar with their environments, as she had interviewed them no less than twice during the external evaluation process between 2000 and 2003. One interview was conducted at the University of Cape Town in July 2004, where the mentor was on sabbatical. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes but four continued for two hours.

3.3.2 Data collection methods

Yin (1994: 91-92) has suggested that multiple sources of evidence that converge on the same set of facts or findings provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon. Triangulation is one rationale for using multiple sources of evidence because it allows the researcher to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal and behavioural issues and it helps to develop converging lines of inquiry. Thus, any finding or conclusion is likely to be much more convincing or accurate if it is based on several different sources of information. In this way, triangulation assists with addressing potential problems of construct validity. The researcher used primary and secondary documentary sources and semi-structured in-depth interviews as the data collection methods in the study.

i) Documentary sources

Yin (1994: 78-101) has argued that the most important use of documentary sources is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. However, he has cautioned that documents should not be treated as containing unmitigated truths because they were written for specific purposes and for a specific audience other

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[3] It should be noted that they left the programme 18 and 24 months later, respectively.

than those of the case study. It was therefore important for the researcher to interpret them through an analytical frame.

Case study data collection frequently results in the accumulation of numerous documents at the field site. However, this was not the case in this study, as the researcher already had most of the programme documents as they had informed the external evaluation process.

The following documentary sources were used for the study:

> **Wits University:** Mission statements; policy documents, Employment Equity Plans and Progress Reports; Reports of the relevant Working Groups

> **GooT Programme:** Policies; proposal to funder; internal memoranda; minutes of management meetings; invitations to functions; participant progress reports, workshop materials and evaluations

> **Eight external evaluation reports[4]:** Permission was sought and gained from the Director of the CLTD, to draw on the external evaluation reports to inform the study.

> **Donor funders:** Policy, evaluation and workshop reports

> **Government policy:** National Commission on Higher Education (1996) Higher Education Act (1997), the Employment Equity Act (1998), the National Plan (2001)

> Print media coverage of the GooT programme

Due to the researcher's involvement with the programme, it was important for the researcher to corroborate aspects of the external evaluation reports with the respondents, as they had not been privy to these reports nor had the evaluator received feedback on the reports related to this cohort from the managers and coordinators. The use of semi-structured in-depth interviews facilitated the corroboration of information that the researcher already knew about the programme.

ii) Semi-structured in-depth interviews

The researcher spent ten days at Wits University in June 2004 to conduct face to face, semi-structured, in depth interviews with the respondents. The researcher had

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[4] The external evaluation reports were written between 2000 and 2003 and may reflect some bias, as the researcher was the sole author of these reports.

a general plan of inquiry and constructed an interview schedule with consistent questions that allowed for a flexible sequence that was determined by her perception of what was most appropriate for each respondent. The wording of questions was changed according the individual contexts of the subjects and some questions, which seemed inappropriate for a particular interviewee, were omitted or additional ones included. Open-ended questions and probes were used to encourage elaboration and to allow the depth of information that the researcher was looking for, to emerge. During the interview, the researcher had time to clear any or ambiguities and to observe non-verbal communication. Interpretive researchers use interviews to allow the respondents to share important insights and in-depth accounts of the processes under study. These enable 'thick descriptions' to emerge that would enhance interpretive understanding (Babbie and Mouton: 273). This method of data collection, conducted within the natural setting of the subjects, is consistent with the phenomenological perspective to understand social action "in terms of its specific context" and "against the background of the whole context" (Babbie and Mouton, ibid: 270). Although a broad open interview was used, the design of the schedule had already drawn on the theoretical propositions of the study with the intention of trying to discover analytic categories for the data.

The researcher is seen as the 'main instrument' in the qualitative research process and therefore had the added responsibility of presenting unbiased descriptions and interpretations. It was difficult for the researcher to appear naïve about the research topic (as recommended by Yin, 1994: 85) because they knew of her relationship with the programme. The interviews were conversational and the challenge was for the researcher had to interpret their responses without bias. Neuman (1997: 38) has pointed to the issues that arise when studying elites, i.e. highly educated and knowledgeable people. He has suggested that because they may be aware of certain social research techniques, they may cooperate (or not) or they may try to dominate or manipulate the interview. In this study, the researcher's knowledge of the programme and its outcomes may have influenced their responses to the questions and in one instance, the respondent had steered the interview into a particular direction. Yin (1994: 85) has cautioned that interviews should be considered as verbal reports only, as they are subject to the common problems of bias, poor recall

and poor or inaccurate articulation. To overcome this challenge, all the interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees.

One of the main concerns with this study is the potential bias of the researcher because of her close association with the programme in her role as the external evaluator. It could have resulted in what Neuman (2000: 259) has referred to as the research selectivity effect where the bias of the researcher influences the data that will be observed, selected and ignored, thereby compromising the objectivity of the study. He has argued that although qualitative researchers may take advantage of personal insights, feelings and perspectives as a human being to understand the social life under study, they have to remain aware of their values and the guard against the influences of prior beliefs, assumptions and the personal opinions. Neuman (2000: 333) has acknowledged this concern but has argued that first hand knowledge of events, people and situations provides a sense of immediacy, direct contact and intimate knowledge. Having served as the external evaluator of the programme, the researcher already had a rapport with the mentors, mentees and senior managers and had studied the events as they occurred rather than having to reconstruct them afterwards. This may have enhanced the trust that the respondents had placed in the researcher's integrity and interpretations with respect to her identity within the programme[5].

3.4   Notation used in this study

In order to maintain the anonymity of the respondents who had participated in the study, they are identified by a coding system, which signals the disciplinary grouping and their roles in the programme. Although it may be possible for people to identify the respondents, it is crucial to make these distinctions as the nature of each of these knowledge groupings and the contexts of their subject departments were factors that had conditioned the responses of the academics to the GooT initiative and had influenced the outcomes of the programme for each mentee.

The first part of the coding system refers to the disciplinary groupings:

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[5] Based on comments in my field notes, it became evident that the interviews had a therapeutic effect for the mentors and mentees in this study. It seemed that they had not had the opportunity to validate their experiences at the end of their contracts and appreciated the opportunity of the interview to reflect on their experiences.

1 refers to Hard Pure; 2 refers to Interdisciplinary grouping (Hard Pure combined with Soft Applied); 3 to Hard Applied; 4 to Soft Pure and 5 refers to the Soft Applied.

The second part of the coding system is the role that the respondent had in the programme, viz. mr = mentor, me=mentee and mn = manager

The third part of the coding system is the page number of the transcripts when quoted directly from the interview.

For example: 1:mr, 7 refers to the mentor of the pair in the Hard Pure disciplinary group, page 7 of the original transcript.

3.5   Qualitative data analysis

The data analysis process began during the data collection phase through early theorizing about the data and extensive field notes. This initial analysis guided the ensuing data collection and assisted the development of an analytical strategy to prioritise what to analyse and why. The researcher's style of thinking, presentation of evidence and attention to alternative interpretations would also influence the analytical strategy (Yin, 1994: 132). As noted earlier, the unit of analysis is the individual responses, seen in the context of pair-relations (mentor/mentee) and their relations within their academic departments, schools and the institution. The qualitative data analysis process was complex and time-consuming, as it involved coding, categorising, examining, evaluating, comparing, identifying absences as well as reviewing the coded data (Neuman, 2000: 246). It aimed to understand the various constituents of the data by considering the relationships between concepts and variables, recognizing patterns and to establish themes (Mouton, 2003: 108) to ensure that the interview data was interpreted through an analytic frame.

The researcher transcribed the interviews in order to familiarise herself with the data and to make notes. The researcher listened to all the interviews twice to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. She re-read the hard copies of the interviews several times and assigned labels to identified points of interest (open coding). It made working with the data manageable and enabled later speedy retrieval of the relevant parts later (Neuman, 2000: 421). Guided by the literature, prior knowledge and the theoretical propositions that led to the case study, links were developed among the initial codes, allowing analytical categories to emerge, noting patterns

and trends according to their relevance to the research questions (axial coding). For example, the researcher was able to connect common codes arising in several different interviews: data coded as 3a, *institutional rationale for GooT* and 3b, *the purpose of GooT* were joined to form Category 3 called, *Beliefs and values underlying GooT policy,* as respondents understood the GooT philosophy as an institutional response to nurturing young black academics into academic careers at Wits.

Category 3: Beliefs and values underlying GooT policy

> "It came from an understanding to change the staff demography, so it was an equity transformation initiative, looking for qualified black academics and to identify what we already had and to grow them into academia" (1, mn: 1)

> "It was one of the University's ways of addressing equity by way of growing our own timber as it were, nurturing them from the root and I suppose my own understanding was that the three year period would then give them experience to pursue careers in academia" (4:mr: 1).

> "There was that thing about redress, to deracialise the university and to give young black people a chance...it was redress, recruit and retain" (5,me:1).

While recoding the data, new questions emerged that allowed the construction of linkages with different constituents of the data. For example, the respondents' views of affirmative action measures were linked to their understanding of the GooT philosophy and by incorporating Code 16, *attitudes to affirmative action* into Category 3 it became clear that they experienced the programme as a positive measure to address historical inequalities in academic staffing within the university,

> "At a place like Wits where we are trying to transform the academic profile, I think that affirmative action is necessary so that black people and women can gain access to the profession" (3, mr: 4).

> "There is a need for it at Wits otherwise people won't gain entry into academia...(they) are very necessary in the current context" (2:mr:8)

> "Affirmative action or corrective action, call it what you want, it's required! It's a fact!" (1;mr: 8)

Although most respondents concurred that affirmative action measures are essential to ensure that black people gain access to academia, some asserted that some people might see their appointments as merely to diversify the staff profile as opposed to being appointed on merit.

> "I know that my work speaks for me, so if they want to seem me as affirmative action, it's their problem. I know that I work hard, harder than most, and deserve to be an academic" (2, me:10).

"Most of the blacks that I see here, including myself, I would not regard them as affirmative action in the sense of you are given a job because you are black because most of them are reasonably qualified and do very well, the bulk of the black academics at Wits do very well, both when it comes to publication and teaching" (4, mr: 5).

"I thought that once again that maybe I would have been selected on merit or maybe for excellence amongst blacks, something like that. I was comfortable with this because I am confident of my ability and I am not sure that others around here are comfortable" (5, me:1).

A senior manager confirmed this view that some people at Wits have interpreted affirmative action programmes such as GooT as having lowered standards and compromised excellence,

"if you need special programmes or special measures for black people and women, somehow that is proof that they are not good enough, because if they were good enough, they would have managed to get in anyway... You as a black person or woman coming into the environment like that, how is it possible for you to achieve your potential, if from the start you are seen as second grade" (1, mn:2).

It would seem that one of the unintended outcomes of an affirmative action measure such as GooT is that black people have to perform exceptionally all the time to prove their worth as academics to their colleagues. It must be borne in mind that the GooT programme was implemented with much fanfare at the same time as the academic restructuring exercise, a period of immense uncertainty and insecurity for academics, and this may have exacerbated the responses of colleagues to their appointments.

Breaking down the data into meaningful parts in this way brought distant responses closer together, which led me to rework the relationships between the categories in order to connect associated categories in several different interviews into themes as they related to the research questions. For example, Category 3 was then connected to Category 11, *Career choice*, to construct a link between the values underpinning the GooT philosophy and the mentees' motivation to pursue academic careers at Wits. It became clear that the GooT programme was an attractive prospect for these doctoral candidates to move closer to realising their goal of pursuing academic careers, albeit for different reasons. In this way, the researcher attempted to establish relationships between the categories to determine whether certain conditions may have been associated with other conditions and the theme, *Reception and interpretation of the GooT Policy*, was established. At a later stage of the data

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analysis, a link was made between this theme and another, *Vice-Chancellor's vision and role in the GooT programme*, because it highlighted the way in which senior management's interpretation of employment equity legislation had influenced the way in which people in academic departments responded to the initiative. This is elaborated on in Chapter 5.

By establishing associative relationships, the internal validity of the design was enhanced. The purpose and logic of the research design allowed the researcher to make distinctions analytically and relate them to the theoretical framework of the study. To improve the reliability of the research design, the researcher, as the main research instrument, had the responsibility of ensuring the reliability of the evidence that is reflected in the findings by presenting alternative perspectives and showing data to support the preferred interpretation (Mouton, 2003: 109). Using qualitative data analysis in this way, the researcher attempted to build an explanation about the whole case study that reflected some of the theoretically important propositions and some of the conditioning factors that seemed to be at work in this context. The analytic framework that was ultimately arrived at was achieved through a dialogue between the theoretical enquiry of the literature review and the data. Out of this dialogue, five case studies emerged to explore the distinctive disciplinary conditions, contingencies and academic identities that conditioned the responses and outcomes of this initiative. In this way, the pattern of influences of the policy that emerged captured the importance of the differing forces that influence the different locations on the staircase.

3.6   Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it is necessary to highlight the shortcomings and limitations of the study that may have influenced the quality of the data.

Shortcoming

A shortcoming of this study was that a pilot study was not done. Owing to financial restraints, the researcher was unable to conduct two site visits, for the pilot (3 days) and for the fieldwork (8 days). This is regrettable as a pilot study would have allowed the refinement of the line of questioning for the interviews and would have assisted with conceptual clarification for the research design (Yin, 1994: 74). In the

absence of the pilot study, I drew on my in-depth knowledge of the GooT programme as well as my already established professional and/or collegial relationships with the respondents to conceptualise the design of the study and to develop questions that would answer the research questions. It is acknowledged that pre-testing a questionnaire would have strengthened the study.

Limitations of the study

The researcher, as the principal generator of the interview data, had to exercise caution and self-reflection throughout the study due to her in-depth knowledge of the GooT programme and the contexts of the respondents so as not to substantiate preconceived positions, as these may have influenced her attempts to remain objective. The insertion of an analytic frame enabled the researcher to gain some distance from a process in which she had been heavily invested. She had clarified to participants that the interview was for an academic study as opposed to the programme evaluation. Yin (1994: 59) has suggested that the degree to which the researcher is open to contrary findings may test possible bias and where compelling evidence exists, the conclusions of the case study should reflect these contrary findings. The researcher has made every attempt to keep this in mind throughout the research process.

Another limitation of study is that the sample was not comprehensive. Only five of the nine mentor-mentee pairs of the first cohort were interviewed. It would be fair to argue that the findings of this study would not suggest patters for other pairs in this cohort as well as the remaining two cohorts owing to their unique circumstances, backgrounds and disciplinary contexts as well as the fact that the later cohorts had less teething problems to deal with as many lessons were learnt from its initial implementation. Nor would it be able suggest patterns for the new entrants in the broader academic at the entry level at other universities. The next chapter discusses the research findings by providing an institutional analysis of the GooT programme and a bottom-up analysis that explores the distinctive conditions in the specific disciplinary contexts that may have led to differing conceptions of academic identities and differing forms of collegial culture amongst the respondents.

CHAPTER 4:

GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS
THAT GAVE RISE TO THE NEED FOR GOOT

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the upper reaches of the 'implementation staircase' to explore the impact of the global pressures on the national policy environment and to trace the notion of equity in some key higher education and labour policy documents. A brief sketch of the institutional context of Wits University is provided to shed light on the way in which senior leaders received, interpreted and responded to national policy that compelled them to implement equity initiatives in academic staffing.

4.2. Global pressures on the national policy framework

Changing global conditions have contributed to the emergence of 'the new economy'. Powered by technology, it promotes the interests of global corporate capital. Castells (2001:3) has argued that the new economy has been successful largely because nation states have tended to accede to its demands for trade liberalization and deregulation, fiscal restraint, efficiency and reduced public expenditure. After 1994, South Africa rapidly re-entered the international community and the newly elected government had to confront the challenges presented by the global discourse of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability while simultaneously developing policies that would redress past inequalities. In 1996, the government adopted the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) as its macro-economic policy framework. In a climate of reduced public expenditure for higher education, the state used policy to 'steer' the higher education sector in the direction of its transformation goals, where the notion of equity[1] featured as one way to address historical inequalities in South African workplaces.

4.3. Equity in the national policy framework

This section traces the notion of equity in some key national policy documents to understand the external pressure that may have conditioned institutional responses

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[1] The use of processes, tools and mechanisms to promote equality of opportunity (both equality of access as well as equality of outcomes) in ensuring fair treatment of all (Cassim, 2005: 653)

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to achieving equity in academic employment. After a broad consultative and participatory process, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) identified "the inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for students and staff along axes of race, gender class and geographic discrimination" as the primary deficiency of the higher education system (NCHE, 1996: 3). It prioritised equity and redress as key principles to direct higher education transformation. The NCHE recommended massification as a strategy to increase opportunities for access and to produce the skills needed for growing the economy. Without providing specific details, it proposed equity targets for student places and recommended redress funding for individuals (through targeted funding) and for historically black institutions (HBIs) to enhance their resources, capacity and infrastructure (*ibid*). The NCHE was became a contested domain between commissioners and stakeholder who held contrasting views about transforming the higher education system (Sehoole, 2005: 144). The report was criticised for neglecting to address issues such as the shape, size and funding formula, "as these were found to be contentious given the fragility of the transition at the time" (*ibid*: 145). Despite its shortcomings, the NCHE report had prioritised equity and redress as the key drivers of higher education transformation.

Drawing on the NCHE, the state released the White Paper 3: A Programme for Transformation in 1997, which aimed to "redress pass inequalities, to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs and to respond to new realities and opportunities" (DoE, 1997: 3). Instead of massification, it proposed that the state should 'steer' the system to meet its goals through a single, nationally coordinated system using planning, financial incentives and reporting requirements (Cloete, 2002: 92). With respect to equity in academic employment, HEIs were expected to report on equity goals, recruitment and promotion policies and practices, staff development, remuneration and conditions of service, reward systems and attempts to change institutional cultures to support diversity (*ibid*). To 'steer' the sector in the direction of national goals, the state linked these plans to its new higher education funding framework. It has been argued that the White Paper had not prioritised equity, redress and transformation e.g. HBIs received no redress funding (Sehoole, 2005: 154). Other policy analysts argued that although the White Paper had prioritised equity, it was vague and reflected an 'all-things-for-all people' policy

(Cloete and Maasen, 2002: 455). After public hearings, the White Paper was promulgated as the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997).

After a period of policy inaction, the government published its National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) in 2001 as the framework for meeting the goals of the White Paper. The NPHE did not prioritise equity but rather proposed to expand participation within the context of a funding formula geared towards efficiency, described by Kraak (2000: 117) as "the final moment of policy slippage" away from the national reform agenda of the early 1990s. Some scholars[2] have argued that the NPHE was symbolic in its commitment to equity and was concerned more with policy production and less with details of policy implementation as it lacked policy instruments and neglected to address issues such as the nature of the institutions and their leadership, as drivers of change. Embedded in the discourse of transformation, they were open to widespread interpretation and much depended on the institution's resources and the commitment of senior managers and academics to achieving equity goals. Although equity was downplayed in the NPHE, the state promulgated employment equity policy that was more explicit about ways to change the racial and gender profiles of most South African workplaces, including HEIs.

The aim of the Employment Equity Act (1998) is to "to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination" (Chapter I, Section 2: 12). As designated employers[3], higher education institutions are compelled to submit annual employment equity plans and reports to the Department of Labour that reported on statistical profiles, equity targets, identified barriers, strategies to address barriers and meet targets and decision-making processes around the plans (Section 19.1 and 19.2 of Chapter III). Chapter III of the Act deals with the implementation of affirmative action measures that aim to ensure that people from the designated groups[4] are equitably represented in all occupation categories and

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[2] Jansen (2000), Howell and Subotzky (2002) and Cloete and Maasen (2002), Cloete (2003)

[3] Employs more than 150 people

[4] The term "people from designated groups" means black people, women and people with disabilities. "People with disabilities" means people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment.

levels in the workplace. It requires employers to develop these people by implementing appropriate training measures (as described in the Skills Development Act, 1998). The Employment Equity Act signalled the state's commitment to change the racial and gender profiles in the workplaces of designated employers, including HEIs.

The national policy environment had major implications for HEIs and those who worked in them. GEAR's demands for efficiency reduced public expenditure compelled higher education institutions "to do the same or more with fewer resources and to compensate by diversifying funding sources" (Gibbon and Kibaki, 2002: 196). New governance structures emerged in HEIs where corporate style executive management teams took responsibility for managing the transformation, often through cost-cutting measures, such as restructuring and rightsizing (Subotzky, 1999: 402). There were changes in the form, focus and dissemination of knowledge as academics sought alternative sources of funding through private sector partnerships, e.g. the shift towards Mode 2 research, i.e. trans-disciplinary and problem-solving knowledge that "is generated in the context of application" (Kraak, 2000: 14). It would seem that global discourses of efficiency, effectiveness and public accountability trumped equity concerns in the higher education policy environment. However, the Employment Equity Act compelled HEIs to find creative and sustainable ways to recruit and retain people from designated groups, albeit without additional resources from the state. It was left to institutional managers to interpret efficiency and equity demands according to local pressures and institutional contexts.

4.4. The Institutional Context of Wits University

This section provides a brief sketch of the internal context of Wits University after 1999 to shed light on the responses of stakeholders across the various levels of the university to pressure to achieve equity in academic employment. It considers the student and staff profiles, institutional culture, equity governance structures and the restructuring exercise.

By the late 1990s, Wits University had a majority black student population, 35% of which was African. Cooper and Subotzky (2001: 231) have described the enrolment trends as a 'skewed revolution', where black students were over represented in the Humanities and Social Sciences but under represented at postgraduate level and where female students were the majority at undergraduate level but 60% of Masters and PhD students were male. These scholars have argued that the enrolment trends were driven less by the effects of government and institutional policy and more by the political, cultural and socio-economic forces in South Africa (*ibid*). The well-resourced HWUs had the infrastructure and human and financial resources to attract the brightest black students in the country, catering mostly to the aspirations of the growing black middle class in South Africa. Moore (2003: 100) has suggested that during the latter half of the 1990s, the research-led HWUs consolidated their dominant positions in the South African higher education system by competing successfully for students and through increased research, contract and donor funding. However, the workforces of these universities have continued to resemble the inequalities and division of labour of apartheid workplaces.

In 1994, Wits University's mission statement signalled its commitment to changing its staff profile through affirmative action measures and equal opportunity policies. Table 1 reflects the race and gender stratification of the academic workforce at the time when GooT was implemented in 2000.

Table 1: Academic Staff Profile (2000): HEADCOUNT (permanent and temporary)

	BLACK			WHITE			RACE UNKNOWN			
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	F	Male	Total	Total
Tutor	11	10	21	30	7	37				58
Junior Lecturer	19	22	41	30	32	62				103
Lecturer	53	56	109	193	145	338	3	2	5	452
Senior Lecturer	10	20	30	92	123	215	1	2	3	248
Associate Professor	0	14	14	28	94	122		1	1	137
Professor	0	9	9	22	107	129				138
Clinical Professor	0	4	4	2	35	37				41
TOTAL	93	135	228	397	543	940	4	5	9	1177

Figures derived from Wits University EIS Data, April 2000, published in Wits Employment Equity Plan, June 2000 to May 2003, Numerical Table 9

This table indicates the under representation of black academics in all levels of employment. Concentrated at the lower occupational levels, they represented 40% of Junior Lecturers and 25% of Lecturers, an indication that the university had some success in changing its profile at the junior levels. Black academics are conspicuous by their absence at the senior levels, where they represented 12% of Senior Lecturers, 10% of Associate Professors and 0,07% of Professors. Interestingly, white males were in the minority as tutors. In terms of gender, female academics outnumbered males as Tutors and Lecturers. Except for Clinical Professors (about 3% of the total), white women academics had considerably greater representivity than the male and female black academics combined. This academic staff profile might have influenced the decision of GooT policymakers to target only black PhD students, including non-South African Africans.

As discussed in Chapter 2, alienating institutional cultures were identified by some black academics as one of the main reasons that black people left academia. The university acknowledged this in its report on the survey of the institutional culture in 2002, when it noted that "although Wits is an institution that comprises many cultures, the dominant culture still carries the burden of apartheid history as seen in the demographics of the institution, and the tradition of whiteness (and patriarchy) which emerges in the discourses of difference and discrimination prevalent on campus" (2003: xxiii). Many black, and some white, participants testified to instances of racism and prejudice, while many women spoke about sexism in recruitment and appointment strategies as well as remuneration and benefits. It is important to point out that the survey had a limited sample of only 84 staff members, mostly white women and black men and more support staff than academics. It therefore does not lend itself to generalizing, as there may well be other frames of references to describe institutional culture that exist within other parts of the university. Some of the mentors in this study testified to their experiences of the dominant culture,

> "there is very much an inside track and an outside track and someone coming from outside may experience it as a terrible place to get into and maybe a hard place to work" (3:mr, 1).

> "There are very little growth paths and that's when the school boy and girl networks begin to work. If you find yourself outside that (network) it is a major problem that we have to confront because it is very difficult to break into those

networks, even with a solid academic background...... most blacks just get disillusioned and move on (4:mr, 1).

"People feel that the culture at Wits maybe is not that welcoming or that there are informal power structures. There's that feeling that decisions are taken elsewhere and people who are not part of those circles feel disempowered" (1:mr, 1)

Another participant reported that subliminal racism made it difficult for black people to progress. She explained the case of a respected black academic, 'who seemingly fitted in well' left the university with much disillusionment. She cautioned that the university's natural reluctance to promote people unless they have a good publication record might in some case be interpreted as racism (2,mr: 2). The mentors reported that they had seen evidence of changing practices within the institution,

"it has begun to operate less like an old boys club where things would get sorted out over a drink or somewhere that you did not have access to" (2:mr, 1)

"there is a sense in which you can create your own space to do research and opportunities to be involved in scholarship programmes for postgraduate students" (4, mr: 1).

"Wits present challenges for the real building of South Africa in the academic workplace where it was possible to see development, change and transformation take place on a personal level" (5, mr: 5).

Mentees seemed less concerned about the institutional culture and restricted their views to their departmental cultures. They agreed that people's experiences in the workplace depended on where they were located within the university, signalling both the primacy of the discipline in the academic enculturation of new entrants and patterns of social preferment. Respondents concurred that the norms, values and assumptions that predominate in the workplace, particularly with respect to race, may work against changing the academic staff profile. In order to change the institutional culture to one that is more inclusionary, the university would have to promote transformative approaches to achieving equity that recognise and accommodate academic and social differences. Cognisant of the challenges, senior leaders committed to addressing its institutional culture by "identifying 'at risk' new staff and paying attention to induction, integration and orientation and seeking to develop more appropriate ways of dealing with staff complaints, queries and

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concerns"[5]. To guide the university in fulfilling its commitment to diversity, equity and transformation and to comply with newly promulgated legislation[6], the university established the Transformation and Employment Equity (T&EE) office in 1999.

Reporting directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Transformation), the Director of the T&EE office coordinated the formulation of the university's employment equity policy[7]. It was a high profile position in the university that sent a clear signal that the university was committed to redressing inequalities in staffing. Owing to the shortage of black South African academics, the university affirmed its commitment to 'growing our own timber', stipulating that vacancies at the lower levels should be utilised to develop and further the careers of young South African academics, wherever possible. The university also sought to strike a balance between appointing South Africans from designated groups while not excluding suitably qualified foreign academics,

> "the recruitment of foreign staff should not prejudice the development of South African academics, particularly those from designated groups, who must be given every opportunity to advance their careers" (EE Plan, 2001: 12).

It was left to faculties to review their own positions but it was suggested that foreign black academics might serve as role models for black students. Jansen (2001: 29) has argued that seeking to provide black role models for black students is a crude and insensitive manipulation of the staffing equity problem that would limit the emergence of a strong cadre of black South African scholars to emerge. It would be reasonable to agree with him, as this approach would undermine the sterling efforts of some white academic staff that have inspired black students to pursue academic careers. Simultaneous to giving attention to equity goals, the university responded to external demands for efficiency and effectiveness by embarking on a restructuring exercise in 1999 that would create much uncertainty and insecurity around staffing matters.

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[5] Wits EE Report to Department of Labour (2003), Section IV, Additional Measures
[6] SA Constitution, Employment Equity Act, relevant provision of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (No 4 of 2000) and the Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998) and the Report and Recommendations of the Working Group on Policies and Procedures relating to the Recruitment and Retention of Academic Staff.
[7] University of the Witwatersrand, Policy on Employment Equity, 2000/1597B

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In a climate of reduced public expenditure on higher education, universities were expected to act in a manner that would redress historical inequalities through generosity and trust. This tension between equity and efficiency found its way into institutional policy. In 1999, the Senior Executive Team (SET) embarked on an institutional restructuring process that distinguished between core (academic) and non-core (cleaning, catering, etc) services. Despite limited consultation with the unions representing non-core service workers, SET forged ahead with cost-cutting that resulted in large scale retrenchment of staff in the lowest paid categories, most notably cleaning, and the outsourcing of these services to private companies (van der Walt et al, 2002). Many of the workers were rehired by the private outsourcing company but with reduced take home pay, no benefits and the loss of the right of having their children study at reduced rates, often the main reason for their long service records at Wits. In the end, the most vulnerable workers at Wits had borne the brunt of the restructuring exercise.

The framework for academic restructuring that emerged in February 2000 focused on merging smaller faculties into larger ones and merging departments into schools. Academics had strong representation on review committees where discussions around restructuring happened (Johnson, 2005). A statistical formula measured the efficiency of academic departments and many in the Faculty of Arts fared badly and the least affected were the Faculties of Science, Health Sciences and Engineering (*ibid*). By June 2000, nine faculties had been configured into five and 99 departments were merged into 35 schools. Operational functions (human resources, finance, research and academic administration) were devolved to the Faculties even though budgets were set centrally. Johnson (2005) has argued that the restructuring exercise was an attempt to usher in a new organisational culture and design informed by a discourse of efficiency and effectiveness that had led to retrenchments, worsened academic working conditions, increasing casualisation, freezing vacant posts and fewer permanent positions. Mentors in the study testified to these changes,

> "there is a move away from what counts academically to what counts financially, I think government has been very successful in that way, forcing its policy on the university through the purse strings. They did not have to tell the universities what to do, they just had to say to the universities if you don't do this, you don't get funding for that. In that way, it's become much more management orientated, but that's a worldwide phenomenon and I don't think its only Wits" (2: mr, 2).

"my load has never been so high and I just feel that I work very hard, ... But I think that Wits as an institution is struggling on its direction, its financial survival in a way" (5:mr, 1).

The restructuring exercise created an environment that was fundamentally hostile to the kind of social dynamics needed to implement equity initiatives, such as GooT. It generated uncertainty and competitiveness about future career prospects and made it very difficult for academics that were not beneficiaries of equity initiatives to embrace them. This may have led to some academics being resentful towards the GooT appointees from the outset.

4.5.   Conclusion

This chapter has described the national policy environment and institutional context of Wits University to enable the researcher to understand the ways in which senior leaders responded to pressure to achieve equity in academic employment. The next chapter discusses the findings of this study. Through an exploration of how the GooT programme unfolded, the study provides both an institutional analysis as well as a bottom-up cognitive analysis that explore the managerial conditionalities and the distinctive conditions in the different disciplinary fields, respectively.
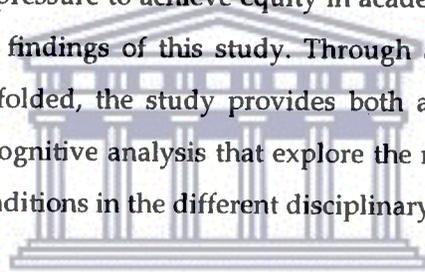
CHAPTER 5

Institutional and Departmental implementation of GooT policy

This chapter draws on the implementation staircase to trace the trajectory of the implementation of the GooT policy. It does this by presenting two kinds of analyses; a top-down institutional analysis that explores the environmental and managerial conditionalities that had influenced the reception, interpretation and responses to national policy at the institutional executive and managerial levels of the university and a bottom-up analysis that explores the distinctive contexts at the local levels that conditioned the experiences of the mentors and mentees. In the top-down institutional analysis, it has focused on the Vice-Chancellor's vision of GooT as an institution-wide initiative to contribute towards equity in academic employment at the entry level. It explores the nature of the GooT award, the location and staffing of the GooT office as the implementing agency and the design of the GooT programme as a proactive intervention to change the academic staff profile within contradictory environmental demands. The bottom-up analysis has focused on the distinctive disciplinary conditions of the participants. It does this through the presentation of five case studies that highlight the different conditions with respect to the knowledge structures of the discipline, their differing collegial cultures and the retention outcomes for the mentees.

5.1.   Institutional approach to achieving equity in academic employment

The previous chapter sketched the national policy and institutional contexts into which the GooT policy entered.   It was argued that as an elite, research-led historically white university with progressive credentials during the latter years of apartheid, it was important that Wits was seen as taking the lead in redressing historical inequalities, particularly with respect to academic staffing.

5.1.1.   The Vice-Chancellor's vision of GooT

In 1999, the newly appointed Vice-Chancellor secured generous funding from an international donor to implement his vision of a sustainable transformative intervention that he described as an attempt 'formalise the social engineering of the

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university'[1], i.e. to change the academic profile in a structured way. Acknowledging the shortage of qualified black academics, he articulated his vision as one of 'growing our own timber', where the university would draw on its pool of black doctoral candidates and employ them as junior lecturers. This, he contended, would "provide the opportunity of an academic apprenticeship and thereby to develop a critical mass of black intellectuals who remain as teachers and researchers in the university" (*ibid*). The retention of these junior academics was a key outcome of this initiative. The GooT programme was launched with much fanfare in August 2000, three months after the appointment of the first cohort. It was officially named the Dr T W Kambule Award in recognition of the contribution of Dr Thamsanqa Wilkie Kambule, a renowned and dedicated educator and mathematician had made to the university and the country. Dr Kambule had a long association with Wits University[2]. Having Dr Kambule's reputable name associated with the GooT programme raised its profile and credibility within the university and the higher education sector. The GooT programme received favourable media coverage between 2000 and 2002, both in the mainstream and the university press as a way to fast track young black people into academia[3].

As the champion and chief architect of the GooT policy, the VC held the view that successful transformation initiatives required "proper systems, sustainable programmes as well as commitment to its values" (*ibid*). GooT employed thirty junior lecturers[4] over a three-period with remuneration and benefits akin to those of permanent full-time academic staff. It also allowed for the establishment of a dedicated office to manage, coordinate and administer the programme's activities and finances and that would provide the necessary support for the participants in their roles as mentors and mentees on the programme.

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[1] Bundy, C. Growing Our Own Timber: Enhanced Postgraduate Studies as a Means to Developing a New Generation of Black Academics, unpublished policy document, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. (1999:2)

[2] From 1978 as a maths tutor; University Council member since 1989; Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* in 1996.

[3] Planting the future, Lecture notes, Mail and Guardian, 11 August 2000
Wits aims to 'grow' black lecturers, Daisy Jones, Business Day, 18 August 2000
Nurturing future stars, Wits Reporter, 26 May 2000
Investing in our futures, Wits Edge, September 2000
Bundy's dream realised, Wits Edge, May 2001
Promising GooT product, Mandla Mpangose, Wits Edge, May 2001
Fast track for local Blacks, Karen McGregor, The Times Higher, 1 March 2002

[4] 10 junior lecturers were appointed in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Cognisant of the challenges that confront new recruits into the academic profession, the Vice-Chancellor prioritised the provision of mentoring as one way to introduce them to all facets of academic life and to nurture and guide them to become independent academics[5]. At the launch, he appealed to the faculty representatives to include these new recruits into staffing plans to ensure their retention. The university had envisaged that it would retain 80% of the first cohort of GooT appointees[6]. For Wits University, GooT was a well-intentioned, visible and practical intervention in response to pressures to change its academic staff profile, given its institutional context. It helped to enhance the university's reputation as a progressive university that was committed to redressing past inequalities in academic employment in the long-term.

5.1.2. The nature of the GooT award

The conditions of the GooT award[7] provided ample financial resources for these junior lecturers to complete their doctoral studies, unfettered by financial constraints. It covered all their employment costs (salary, pension, medical aid, 13th cheque and annual increases), i.e. they were appointed into supernumerary positions that did not impinge on faculty staffing budgets at a time when cost cutting was the order of the day. Earlier evaluations have recorded mentors and mentees agreeing that the generous financial award was one of the most attractive aspects of the award. GooT policy recommended a reduced teaching load (40% of the normal load) for mentees to allow them time to engage in other academic tasks that would facilitate their smooth transition from doctoral students to academic staff members. The mentors and mentees were obliged to attend orientation and training, submit biannual progress reports, attend one GooT meeting per quarter and participate in the external evaluation process. Apart from the details in Appendix 1, no specific details were provided on the nature and timing of these activities, nor was clarity provided on the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders involved in the programme. This meant that the GooT office, as the coordination and implementation agency, had a critical role in providing support to the participants and ensuring the coherence of the programme.

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[5] Vice-Chancellor's speech at the official launch of the GooT programme on 10 August 2000
[6] Wits Report, 26 May 2000, Vol 18 No 6, pp3
[7] See Appendix 1

5.1.3   Location and staffing of the GooT office

The GooT office initially resided in the Transformation and Employment Equity (T&EE) office. It was located in the main administration building of the university but on a different floor to the T&EE office. Earlier evaluations reported that this was not an ideal situation as the staff were not integrated into the activities of the T&EE office and had little interaction with the people who worked in the that office. The GooT office employed a Programme Manager (full-time), reporting to the Director of the T&EE office and an Administrative Assistant (mornings only). They were not new to the university; the manager had been a lecturer and the administrative assistant was a registered Masters student, both in the Faculty of Humanities.

After the resignation of the manager in December 2001 and the departure of the Vice-Chancellor for an academic position in the UK, the GooT office moved to the Centre for Teaching and Learning Development (CLTD), a newly established centre that offered training for academic, administrative and technical staff. It would be fair to argue that this shift may have confused the regulative priorities informing the programme, where it became less associated with equity and part of the mainstream training and development and staff. However, it was argued later[8] that the transfer to the CLTD was to ensure that the development and mentoring functions could receive a higher level of attention through 'explicit support structures and specifically trained personnel for successful implementation and management'. A CLTD staff member became the manager and the GooT Executive Committee (GEC)[9] was established to oversee its implementation. Following a period of relative inactivity during the first 18 months, the GEC signalled a renewed commitment from the university to ensure that the programme remained on track to achieve its goals.

Owing to a lack of office space at the CLTD, the admin assistant remained in her office on East Campus for five months before relocating there. The physical distance (about 200m) between her and the new manager had made it difficult for them to develop a productive professional relationship. By the time the assistant relocated, their relationship was already strained and lacked mutual trust and respect. They

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[8] University of the Witwatersrand (2004), Equity Development Unit, CLTD, GooT Report
[9] The GEC included a DVC, the Director of the CLTD and the manager of , to oversee its implementation.

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were unable to reconcile their differences; the manager felt that the assistant lacked the requisite skills for the position; the assistant believed that she was treated poorly and under constant surveillance. University mediation was unsuccessful and a bitter labour dispute ensued that centred on the assistant's lack of capacity to perform in her job. She left the university in the first quarter of 2003 and was replaced by a temporary full-time secretary. After her departure, the external evaluator not only had the longest association with the programme but was also the only black person associated with its implementation. It was unfortunate that one of the university's flagship staff interventions came to be managed only by white people, a situation that did not escape the mentees. However, this was addressed at the end of 2003 when its coordination became the responsibility of the Manager of the newly established Equity Development Unit (EDU), located in the CLTD. The role of the EDU was to manage and coordinate the implementation of all donor- funded equity initiatives for academic staff within the university. At this stage, the participants in this study had completed their GooT contracts and had no interaction with the staff of the EDU. Earlier evaluations reported that the discontinuities that emerged from these contingencies had adversely affected the implementation of the programme.

5.1.4 The GooT office as the implementation and coordination agency

After the GooT office was established, the award was advertised within the university. Earlier evaluations[10] reported that the programme was not advertised extensively and mostly went to senior academics and HoDs. Applicants were required to apply as a pair, which meant that they could move quickly to develop mentoring relationships because, bar one, they had previous supervisory relationships.

The selection process was uncomplicated with pairs selected on their basis of their application forms[11]. It was underpinned by the mentees potential to be successful in academia,

> "I think that one of the things we insisted on was that merit would be an important component of the selection. Yes it was targeted at blacks but that did not mean that the standards were lower, we insisted that they met certain criteria and I was intimately involved in the selection of the first cohort and my sense was that they were academically superb so that we were selecting

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[10] Metcalfe, A. (2001) External evaluation report 1
[11] See Appendix 2

candidates who could stand on their own two feet academically, regardless and could go out and prove that" (1:mn, 2).

"It was quite fast and the candidates that applied, according to my own discussions with many of them, they deserved it, the selection was quite wise in that way (1: mr, 1).

The selection process appeared to lack rigour. The applicants were not interviewed which would have made it difficult for the selection committee to gauge whether the pairs would be most likely to develop productive mentoring relationships. Apart from being black doctoral students, the criteria for selection was not apparent to the applicants,

"It seemed pretty easy, maybe because (mentee) was a good candidate but we just filled in the stuff and they said that we got it. We sent CVs, we had to fill in the form and quite a lot of it seemed based on my ability to supervise her." (2:mr, 1).

"I just got a letter to say that I was accepted. It was very nice but there was no transparency in the selection process ....we know nothing of how we were selected" (2: me, 4).

"I don't really know how the selection worked. There was the application and we had to write what we would do together, why we would get on together in terms of our research interests and in terms of our personalities, what would I offer in terms of mentoring" (5: mr, 1).

The lack of rigour in the selection process may have lowered the prestige of the programme amongst other academics because mentees were not subjected to departmental appointment processes. The consequence of this may have led to the view that they were appointed merely to diversify the academic staff profile and not for their academic potential and abilities. The supernumerary nature of their appointments within the academic departments may have made it difficult for Heads of Departments to justify their appointments, particularly if their skills and knowledge had not met the staffing and disciplinary needs of their academic departments. The selection process remained the same for the later cohorts and this may have exacerbated the view amongst some people that they were token appointments, commonly referred to as 'affirmative action appointments'.

It may be argued that the apparent haste with which these candidates were selected was driven by the need for senior managers to signal that it was serious about redressing historical inequalities in staffing not only to the new government but also to the university community. However, it had occurred at the same time as the

university was engaging in an unpopular cost-cutting restructuring exercise that created much tension and job insecurity amongst all staff. However, it was argued that that one of the key reasons for the hasty selection process was the result of pressure from the donors,

> "the way donor funds are granted often mean a programme has to hit the ground running as soon as funds are allocated, which may mean that there is inadequate time for concerted initial conceptual work, or anticipation of potential problems. I think the problem was that we got the GooT money and we immediately ran off and found ten mentees and got it started" (3: mn, 1)

The apparent haste with which the programme was implemented may have inadvertently harmed its image because programme managers had little time to consult, plan and clarify programme procedures and interview the candidates. From the above discussion, it would be reasonable to suggest that the GooT policy was a political strategy that aimed to accommodate the values and stated purposes of national policy within the institution, was assimilationist in its approach to employment equity and its implementation conditioned by contingencies of its resourcing regime.

The GooT staff were responsible for the administration and coordination of the programme. Due to the lack of planning, procedures and guidelines, they spent most of their time attending to a myriad of teething problems, e.g. its lack of alignment with the university's administrative divisions, particularly finances. The GooT office paid the entire annual allocation of R36 000 into the research accounts of the mentors, of which 50% was for the mentee's PhD and the mentors had sole discretion over the remaining 50%. Some mentees said that they would have preferred to manage their research funds themselves. This was surprising as it would have been better for mentees to manage their own research funds, with strict accountability procedures. One mentee described this as being 'contrary to the goals it wanted to achieve' (5:me, 9), that of creating independent academics. The delays in accessing their research funds became a major source of frustration for the participants as it had consumed a lot of their time and to some extent, slowed their PhD progress. The GooT staff lacked the authority to make policy decisions and they had to refer several issues to senior managers for approval, creating further delays. These problems adversely affected the credibility of the office as the implementation agency amongst the participants. Some participants described the

office as inefficient, inaccessible, unable to resolve problems and as "more hot air than anything else" (2:mr, 4), where it became apparent to participants that the policy was being formulated as the programme unfolded,

> "it was something that was new to them, a number of things had to be developed along the way", which resulted in long delays in responding to money and workload queries ...It was issues that were dealt with, only as problems came" (3: me, 3).

Despite their disappointment with the level and quality of support that they received, most respondents reported cordial relations with the GooT staff, although mentors seemed to have less interaction with the office than mentees.

Apart from the official launch of the programme in August 2000, the GooT office hosted an orientation workshop for participants in October 2000. Participants welcomed the opportunity to discuss some of the design and administrative aspects of the programme at the workshop, even though it occurred six months after their appointments. During the first 18 months, the programme had lost much of the momentum and goodwill that had been generated at the official launch. In the absence of clear guidelines, procedures and support from the GooT office, participants were largely left on their own within their individual academic departments. This led to diverse interpretations of the various aspects of the policy. The lack of capacity amongst the GooT staff and the accompanying operational problems had severely limited the GooT office's capacity to forge a sense of pride, identity and belonging towards the programme by mentors and mentees.

The new programme manager spent an extraordinary amount of time trying to resolve some of the problems she had inherited, particularly the finances. She made a concerted effort to restore the image of the programme and to develop relationships with the participants by organising social gatherings and separate meetings of mentors and mentees. She arranged skills development workshops for the mentees, such as presentation and writing skills. However, these were not well attended. Some participants said they have received too short notice for these activities and that the communication from the GooT office was often unclear. Despite an improvement in the management of the programme, it may have come too late as some respondents remained unconvinced that these activities could salvage the programme's outcomes,

"There was certainly an improvement when they changed over, around communication, except there was still a tendency that every time they organised something, it was just like a party. I just thought every time they are asking us to come eat" (2: mr, 5).

"I always felt that they were more concerned about projecting an image. The emphasis was very much on the mechanics of the programme, a whole range of cocktails, where the VCs appear and they are made to believe that there is something going on. Those things to me don't translate into serious transformation..... I sensed that and it was like a PR kind of thing" (4: mr, 3).

Some mentors stated that they would have preferred rigorous workshops where they could share ideas and experiences and interrogate the meaning of mentoring new recruits into academia. Some mentees were more positive about the improved administration but said they would have preferred guidance in dealing with the realities of academic life, such as the challenges of teaching and balancing the demands of teaching and their doctoral research. To be fair to the managers, it would not have been unreasonable for them to expect the mentors to provide this kind of support. Some mentees held the view that the workshops were too generic to be of any use to them, as they had not considered the disciplinary differences and the varying stages of the mentees' doctoral studies,

"maybe what could work is if you rather clustered, rather than having the whole group, keep sciences together for example, something where there is some similarity in what they were doing, because the group was very diverse. My experience is that when I am dealing with different departments, even when they are all in one faculty, each one is different and that is within one Faculty. They all have their own ways of doing it and you can't dictate to them. I think that's what the university is like, it's not a uniform organisation" (2: mr, 5).

It would be fair to argue that the task of salvaging the programme at this late stage was overwhelming for the new manager and it would have been unfair to expect her to do so considering the enormity of the problems that she had inherited. She also had to deal with similar teething problems for the second cohort that was appointed in June 2001, while simultaneously preparing for the selection of the third cohort, appointed in June 2002. At this stage, most pairs in the first cohort had become accustomed to working with limited support from the GooT office and were in any case preparing for their visits to overseas universities.

The GooT award included R30 000 for mentees to spend a semester at an overseas university of their choice to enhance the quality of their PhD research[12]. Mentees supplemented this money with their conference allowances and in most instances, mentors provided top up funding from their own GooT awards,

> The R30 000 from my overseas visit basically covered my accommodation and flight and I had to find the money for travel and food. The overseas semester funding was inadequate to cover all the costs that I incurred. Luckily, I had saved up some of my annual conference allowance over the three years and (my mentor) gave me some of her money" (2: me, 8)

To assist mentees to prepare for these visits, the GooT office hosted seminars where senior academics were invited to share their experiences. Mentees concurred that these were useful although some said that they were too generic, i.e. they were not disciplinary specific and included only experiences of the USA. Mentees arranged the visits themselves, with varying degrees of support from their mentors. Mentees agreed that the trip was an invaluable opportunity to gain international exposure for their research and to extend their disciplinary networks. However, there was a sense that it slowed their research progress, as it took up a lot of time in the final year of the contract. There was a sense that it may have been more productive to use the money for post-doctoral studies.

GooT expected PhD supervisors to mentor their doctoral students into all aspects of the academic profession. However, the programme provided no training, guidelines and support for the development of productive relationships. It was left to the mentors to decide on the kind of mentoring they would provide. This resulted in differing interpretations of what constitutes a mentoring relationship, both between mentors and mentees and amongst the different disciplines. With mentoring under-defined and weakly understood, it had limited capacity to address some of the structural barriers that new academics have to confront when entering the academia. The divergent interpretations of mentoring had the capacity to confound the mentoring relationships, resulting in different outcomes within the different disciplines. In the next section of this chapter, the complexity of these diverse

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[12] The unfavourable rand/dollar exchange rate at the time meant that they could only go for three months.

interpretations and the way in which they conditioned the nature of the mentoring relationships within each specific discipline will be explored.

The lack of clarity, capacity, continuity and support that characterised the first two years might have limited the institutional socialisation of the mentees as Wits academics. The supernumerary nature of their appointments, entering academia via institutional rather than departmental appointments, may have had the effect of weakening their disciplinary socialisation and much depended on their relationship with their mentors and the support they received in their academic departments. Mentoring relationships, particularly when they are undefined and weakly understood, may only make a limited contribution to overcoming and mediating structural forces that impact on new recruits entering the academic profession. These factors may have conditioned the responses of the faculties and departments to the achieving the outcomes of the GooT programme, i.e. PhD completion and their retention at the end of their three-year contracts.

5.1.5   The outcomes of GooT

As noted at the start of this chapter, the GooT programme provided the opportunity for the mentees to complete their doctoral studies while being appointed as junior lecturers for three years. The two outcomes of the GooT policy was that they should have made satisfactory progress with their doctoral studies, as assessed by the mentor, and their retention as academic staff members within their departments on completion of their contracts.

i)   PhD completion

At the orientation workshop in October 2000, mentors nominated one of them to write to the Vice-Chancellor to request that the award be extended to four years to ensure that mentees completed their doctoral studies by the end of their contracts. No response was received to this request and the GooT contract remained three years. Irrespective of their disciplines, mentors and mentees concurred that GooT's three-year time frame for PhD completion was unrealistic and unattainable,

> "it is rare that a student would take three year unless it is vigorous, full-time, fully sponsored but also exceptionally good students.....and if you are teaching, it even compounds the load. When you still add three months overseas, with one-month taking time to settle in, it's too much with too little time " (4:mr, 3).

"you cannot do a PhD in three years, even if you do it full-time, very few people do it within three years, so it was an unrealistic expectation" (2: me, 7).

"I think that they were all overloaded. If you want someone to do a PhD in three years, you actually got to let them do nothing else but the PhD, otherwise it will definitely take longer than three years" (2: mr, 6).

"I think that in our environment to do a PhD in three years, including a proposal is ludicrous. I have another student on the Mellon who is now finishing, when he graduates, it will be his fourth year. Four years is much better and he does not have the teaching load (5: mr, 4).

"I think the programme had to be extended to four years because we are required to do other activities, like the overseas semester. I could manage 30% teaching over four years and complete my PhD. In as much as it was highlighted later that it is okay not to finish in three years but inevitably, that was the target (3: me, 6).

At the start of their contracts, the mentees were at varying stages of their doctoral studies, ranging from submission of PhD proposals to having completed two chapters. The one-size-fits all approach of the GooT time frame had not considered that some mentees would have needed more time to complete than others. It was suggested that the programme should have addressed this by assessing their PhD progress on appointment, in consultation with the mentors, to determine a realistic time frame for completion for each mentee. Even though GooT expected the mentees to have made satisfactory progress, the mentors and mentees agreed that PhD completion was critical to enhance their retention prospects. Mentees agreed that this would prove that they deserved their positions as academics rather than being appointed only to diversify the staff profile of their departments. The disjuncture between the GooT's time frames and the actual situation for each mentee had created much anxiety for the respondents even though most departments had extended the contracts of the mentees in this study for up to one year to enable them to complete their PhDs. The individual situation of each mentee is discussed later in this chapter.

ii) Retention at the end of contract

Although the university at no stage guaranteed the mentees' retention after three years, the participants believed that because the university had invested so much, it would endeavour to retain them as staff members, as the VC had stated at the launch of the programme. However, without clear criteria for retention, except for mentees had to have performed satisfactorily, their futures as Wits academics

depended more on the staffing situation within their individual academic departments than on the university's will to retain them. The tension between the goals of equity and demands for efficiency became evident in the contradictory actions of the university, i.e. appointing black academics into supernumerary positions during an academic restructuring exercise that reduced faculty staffing budgets. This tension between equity and efficiency in institutional policy was captured succinctly in the following comments,

> "the university was cutting down on positions and yet they give the impression that there are posts for these people" (4: mr, 4).

> "It was done in such an offhand way. I mean to me the most incredible thing was that these people were not promised jobs and to me the most basic thing is if you take over somebody's life to the extent of employing them for three years and you put all this money into them, why are you then so casual about letting them go? That was surprising to me but it was probably part of the culture of Wits, and also probably HWUs in the country (2:mr, 1).

> "I think probably the problem with GooT was the timing of its implementation. It seems to run contradictory to the other efforts that were being made in the University to downsize and to rationalise. (5: me, 5).

> "I think its because the way it was implemented that maybe the academic units would see this as an opportunity of getting supernumerary posts, without thinking ahead of what happens when the money comes to an end, there was really no vacancy that was available. I think it's a question of people maybe not thinking ahead and making plans of absorbing that post (2: mn, 1).

Within this contradictory environment, the university was unable to guarantee their retention because the decision to retain them rested with the faculties or the schools. The different contexts within the faculties and schools meant that each mentee experienced the retention issue differently,

> "First, they said that there were no posts, the posts were all frozen.... But then I was told that if there were any posts, they would be advertised and then I could apply like everybody and if you are the best candidate amongst those who apply then, so we have to compete with everybody else. It does not matter how hard I worked, it does not work in my favour in any way" (1: me, 4).

> "The most obvious thing is that they got to know that there is a job waiting for them...I mean you can say, on satisfactory completion or on successful completion. In (mentee's) case, yes there was a job but it wasn't the policy for the programme. I just couldn't understand that (2: mr, 7).

> "In my contract, they have given me a probation, where they have given me one year of my appointment that I need to submit my PhD. I contested that right at the outset by saying that last year, I had a very heavy load until the end of year and with that kind of load, I was not able to focus on my PhD (5: me, 7).

"His PhD is still carrying on and hopefully it will be completed this year. Because the GooT period expired and then there was this whole question, he had been led up to the point and completed the GooT funding and then what do we do with him. Because of all the financial squeezes at Wits, at one point it looked like we couldn't carry on supporting him and we put a very strong case to the Dean about getting funding (4: mr; 1).

The conditions of continued employment (or not) differed amongst the mentees: one was appointed immediately after the GooT contract (without PhD submission); one was appointed for an extra year to complete the PhD and was retained thereafter, one had a position earmarked after PhD submission (became a full-time student); and one school extended the contract for one year and then left the university after PhD submission; the fifth unfortunately passed away before PhD submission (no post was available. Of the remaining four mentees in the first cohort (not in this study), one had withdrawn from the programme after one year, one was retained (completed PhD) and two had left the university with incomplete PhDs. One third of the first cohort was retained, the average for the entire programme[13]. Earlier evaluations reported that participants viewed the programme as unsuccessful as it had not delivered on its goals of 'growing our own timber'.

Academic restructuring had generated much uncertainty and insecurity around staffing issues. Within this environment, the appointment of the GooT mentees had two benefits for academic departments; they obtained a 'free resource' as it were and their equity profile was being addressed. However, apart from approving appointments, academic heads and Deans had very little interaction with the GooT programme, even where one faculty had four GooT appointments.

"Both of those individuals had to say that, 'I support this application', but maybe it was not worth the paper that it was written on. There was a very clear acknowledgement that we couldn't simply bring people on the programme if the academic heads were not aware and supportive of it (1: mn, 2)

Retention of the mentees seemed not to be a priority for faculties. This may be due to competing priorities that emerged due to the restructuring exercise. In some instances, mentors engaged their Deans up to six months prior to the end of their contracts about the retention prospects of their mentees. The GooT Executive Committee (GEC) also engaged the relevant Deans, albeit it at a very late stage, but much depended on the staffing context in their schools and departments, and in

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[13] Lewins, K (2006: 115) Table 9: GooT mentee completion and retention information

some cases the positionality of the mentors, some of whom were Heads of Schools and Chairs of academic departments.

5.1.6   Conclusion

It is evident that the lack of clarity and criteria with respect to PhD completion and retention had influenced the mentees' retention prospects. Even though completion of the PhD was not a formal requirement of the GooT policy, the mentoring pairs knew that without a PhD, they would be less likely to be retained at the end of their contracts. The faculties and schools were under no obligation to retain them and the university and the GooT office were in no position to enforce their retention. The inability of the GooT policy and the institution to influence their retention as Wits academics is evident that the demands for efficiency in policy and funding had triumphed over the goals of equity, even when the performance was of the GooT mentee was considered more than satisfactory. The next section of this chapter provides a bottom-up cognitive analysis of the programme that explores the distinctive differences in each of the disciplines that had conditioned responses to achieving the envisaged outcomes of the GooT programme.

5.2.   Analysis of the distinctive disciplinary conditions

This section of the chapter is concerned with GooT's implementation at the lower levels of the staircase. It strives to provide a bottom-up analysis that explores the distinctive disciplinary conditions that may have conditioned the experiences of the participants. This is done through the presentation of five case studies that encompass the four disciplinary groupings that Becher and Trowler (2001) have identified. As background to the case studies, the responses of these academics (mentors and mentees) to their participation in GooT are explored to determine whether they were linked more to intrinsic intellectual commitment and cultures than to the spirit of the initiative. To this effect, it investigates their motivation to participate in the GooT programme, the values that they associated with GooT policy and their construction or otherwise of an emerging academic identity.

5.2.1. Motivation to apply for the GooT award

Most mentees, except one, were mature students that had worked previously in other HEIs or in the private sector. It would appear that registering as doctoral candidates went hand in hand with their desire to pursue careers in academia. The GooT programme served as the vehicle for them to achieve this goal,

> "it was a good opportunity for me to progress in the direction that I had chosen" (2:me, 1) and " it was a blessing and a miracle" (5: me, 3).

Contrary to the popular belief that black people are more attracted to lucrative careers in the public and private sectors than they are to academic careers, these candidates were driven by the desire to become knowledge producers and teachers within the higher education sector and were therefore ideal candidates to achieve the aims of the GooT policy,

> "I have been a teacher all my life; I have never earned a big salary. I think here there is opportunity to earn more money, because of the consultancy work that you can do, which will more than supplement your salary. I think if I want to be rich, I can be rich" (5:me, 9).

They did not regard themselves as disadvantaged individuals in the sense that they represented the minute percentage of black doctoral candidates in the country. However, the employment and financial security that GooT award provided were the key factors that motivated them to apply. Mentors applied for the GooT award with their doctoral students not only because they supported its goals but also because they believed their mentees had the potential to pursue careers in academia,

> "It means that in future, you already have a relationship which means it makes life extremely easy, to tighten up the synergy with that person, you have a common background and you can move fast from a professional point of view and a human point of view (1: mr, 2)

Earlier evaluations of the GooT programme reported that mentors and mentees were proud to be associated with the GooT programme and the university[14].

5.2.2. Values of the GooT programme

Participants in this study were supportive of the rationale for GooT and saw it as a practical intervention to contribute to achieving equity in the academic workplace,

> "There was that thing about redress, to deracialise the university and to give young black people a chance...it was redress, recruit and retain" (5: me, 1).

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[14] Drawn from external evaluation reports of the GooT programme

"It was one of the University's ways of addressing equity by way of growing our own timber as it were, nurturing them from the root and I suppose my own understanding was that the three year period would then give them experience to pursue careers in academia" (4:mr: 1).

Cognisant of the institutional context of Wits, participants believed that without affirmative action measures, black people would find it difficult to enter the academy,

"At a place like Wits where we are trying to transform the academic profile, I think that affirmative action is necessary so that black people and women can gain access to the profession" (3: mr, 4).

"There is a need for it at Wits otherwise people won't gain entry into academia…(they) are very necessary in the current context" (2: mr, 8)

"Affirmative action or corrective action, call it what you want, it's required! It's a fact!" (1: mr, 8)

Affirmative action is an emotive issue in most South African workplaces, including higher education, where some people may perceive it as lowering standards and compromising excellence, a view that some participants were aware of or shared,

"I know that my work speaks for me, so if they want to seem me as affirmative action, it's their problem. I know that I work hard, harder than most, and deserve to be an academic" (2: me, 10).

"Most of the blacks that I see here, including myself, I would not regard them as affirmative action in the sense of you are given a job because you are black because most of them are reasonably qualified and do very well, the bulk of the black academics at Wits do very well, both when it comes to publication and teaching" (4: mr, 5).

"I thought that once again that maybe I would have been selected on merit or maybe for excellence amongst blacks, something like that. I was comfortable with this because I am confident of my ability and I am not sure that others around here are comfortable" (5: me, 1).

"it is necessary because if it only goes by merit, then only the best will come through" (5:mr, 1)

Negative perceptions that some of their colleagues may have had about their academic abilities seemed not to concern the mentees. However, working in an environment that is hostile to affirmative action is challenging for black people as feel that they are constantly under pressure to over perform to justify their appointments, a view confirmed by one of the managers,

"if you need special programmes or special measures for black people and women, somehow that is proof that they are not good enough, because if they were good enough, they would have managed to get in anyway… You as a black person or woman coming into the environment like that, how is it

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possible for you to achieve your potential, if from the start you are seen as second grade" (1: mn, 2).

Where resistance to affirmative action exists in the workplace, it is important that there is visible support both from the institution and the academic department to ensure that new black recruits are able to perform optimally.

5.2.3. A GooT identity?

As the beneficiaries of GooT, mentees had a GooT identity thrust upon them from the outset by virtue of their institutional appointments into supernumerary positions in their academic departments. After the departure of the VC and the subsequent absence of visible champions at the institutional executive level to drive the initiative, the profile of the programme gradually diminished within the institution. Mentees reported that within their academic departments, the identity of the GooT programme was weak, as many of their colleagues had little knowledge of GooT and its goals. In some instances, mentees were not introduced to their colleagues as staff members. In those instances where Heads of Departments had welcomed them as staff members, the institutional nature of their appointments tended to be emphasized. This approach was understandable considering that the GooT appointments occurred at a time when the university was reducing the number of posts available. The result was that mentees had constructed strong GooT identities within their academic departments that they would sustain until the end of their contracts.

Initially, there was a sense of pride and enthusiasm associated with the GooT identity. However, structural difficulties, staffing discontinuities, lack of support and uncertain outcomes served to work against the development of positive GooT identities amongst the participants, particularly the mentors,

> "I did feel a bit that we didn't really need them as much as they needed us. Frankly, I just felt eventually that if they would just leave me alone, just let me get on with it and give us the money and bye-bye. Obviously, it doesn't work like that but I can imagine that that would have been the attitude of most academics who would have attended these things, would probably have been, I am going to do my duty because they have given me this money, I better show my face. It wasn't, I need these workshops. It's going to give me something" (2: mr, 5).

> "I didn't see that I got much personal value out of the kind of things that they wanted me to be involved in, although it is not completely true because it was a good networking opportunity. I did find them very in my face, always

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messages to phone them, do this, drop everything and come to a cocktail party this afternoon (3: mr, 2).

"I think it was just considered as a source of income for your student. It was like the Mellon, if the students can get the money. It's not seen as something, which is making a critical intervention. I think it was very badly conceived, there were no long term plans (4: mr, 4)"

With their strongly established disciplinary identities, mentors appeared less concerned about constructing viable mentoring identities for themselves. Mentors seemed not to make much of the GooT award amongst their colleagues, possibly because they were receiving funding for a task that most of their colleagues were performing without remuneration. It was a time when fiscal restraint was the order of the day and they may have thought it inappropriate to advertise the generous conditions of the mentees' appointments to their colleagues.

Apart from their GooT identities, the mentees had pre-existing and relatively well-developed identities as doctoral students within their academic departments. Identities have complex layers and academic identities tend to have other identities overlaid on them. By virtue of their appointments via an affirmative action programme, the racialised identities of the mentees were more pronounced. In some instances, they had to contend with the view in some quarters that they had been hired instrumentally to diversify the staff profile and by implication, that they were not able to meet Wits academic standards, even though they were accepted as doctoral candidates by the institution. There was a sense that they were expected to assimilate into the prevailing dominant culture of their academic departments even though they brought with them their own ways of knowing, experiences and other transitioning identities. In the next section, the analytic frame of reference provided is a bottom-up analysis that focuses on the distinctive features of each disciplinary grouping as factors that may have conditioned the outcomes of the initiative.

5.2.4 Five case studies of the mentoring pairs

This section presents five case studies that explore the distinctive disciplinary differences to provide an account of the transitioning identities of the five mentoring pairs. The five case studies draws on Becher and Trowler's (2001: 46) four disciplinary groupings to account for the variations in the disciplinary contexts that

may have conditioned the dispositions of the mentors and mentees, the nature of their mentoring relationships and the outcomes for each mentee.

The knowledge structures of disciplines and their cultures are explored as they serve as the primary sources of academic enculturation for new academics. The knowledge structure is interwoven with the disciplinary culture, as the way that these academics engage with their subject matter is a key factor in the formation of the culture of the discipline. The Hard disciplinary groupings have explicit knowledge structures and are usually found in the natural sciences and the professions, respectively. The Soft groupings are found in the Humanities and Social Sciences and tend towards conflicting knowledge structures and bodies of thought e.g. Sociology, Education, Languages and Literature. The case studies explore the development of each mentoring relationship as well as the outcomes of the GooT with respect to PhD completion and retention prospects.

i.   **Hard Pure discipline**

After the academic restructuring exercise, the location, staffing and governance of this discipline remained unchanged, except for having the status of school conferred upon it. Located in the Faculty of Science, the knowledge structure of this discipline is explicit, cumulative and relatively value free with clear criteria for knowledge verification. Within this discipline, there are two distinct research groups, or sub-disciplines, that have specialised close-knit ways of working within clearly defined boundaries and minimal academic or social interaction between them. New academics are recruited into one of these groups that are typically led by a professor and include two or three senior academics and a few doctoral students.

The academic staff profile in this School resembled the demography of the institution, viz. a mostly ageing white male professoriate and senior academics and a smaller diverse group of male younger academics, of which four were GooT appointees. The leadership of the School displayed a strong collegial authority that seemed to have the power to influence the pace and kinds of changes that occur within the discipline,

> "there are those who are dictating the policies of the department, they are
> established, renowned, A-rated researchers or academics" (1:me, 1).

"it's not easy to be promoted for your skills. Still, we have this, how do you say, Cosa Nostra philosophy. If you are part of the Cosa Nostra it moves, it's not the criteria that you are capable or not. This is extremely sad" (1: mr, 2).

Perceptions that differing collegial cultures and pre-existing identities condition disciplinary socialisation and progress within the academy were strongly expressed by this pair as serving to limit the prospects of diversifying the academic staff profile,

> Immediately, you are judged for your background, not for your outputs. Who you are and where you come from is most important. Someone coming from Cambridge or Oxford for example, even if he is not qualified, immediately he will stand a chance to be listened to, he'll be given a chance, simply based on his background (1:me, 1).

> "He was seen an extra component for only teaching, without paying him, he is paid from another source... he was not integrated. He can go to the tearoom and nobody will speak with him. He is not a staff member, even if he was considered as a staff member officially from the institution, but from the department, the conservative staff, clearly he is not sidelined but he is not a part of (1: mr, 2).

Being non-South Africans from francophone African countries may have contributed to their perceptions of marginalisation within the discipline. Despite the mentee's lack of social integration, he was expected to uphold the academic standards of the discipline in terms of his teaching duties and was "treated equally as everybody else" (1:me, 4).

Mentoring relationship development

The mentor had a well-established disciplinary identity that was conditioned by his strong affiliation with his research group, of which he was the leader. This emerges in his explanation of how he had linked up with his mentee,

> "He was at another division, completely other discipline, but still based in (the school). He approached me many times about wanting to join my group but the problem was that he was not South African so in terms of finance it was not easy" (1:mr, 1).

The research group served as the primary source of academic enculturation for this mentee as it was here that he gained knowledge of accepted social and professional behaviours, attitudes and beliefs held by members of the research group. As a beneficiary of mentoring in his early academic career, the mentor's approach to the mentoring relationship was one that considered the holistic development of the mentee, i.e. "teaching him skills that you need in an institution like this" (1:me, 2),

which he described as enhancing his subject knowledge, teaching skills, while considering the 'the human factor', i.e. the mentee as a unique individual that would develop into an independent researcher who could work within a community of scholars. Collaboration on academic tasks, such as co-authoring and presenting papers and posters and co-supervision of postgraduate research projects, facilitated a productive mentoring relationship that assisted the mentee to understand shared meanings, unwritten codes and gain knowledge of disciplinary practices and standards. Despite their perceived marginalisation in the School, the research group served to strengthen their disciplinary identities.

PhD completion and retention

The mentee's doctoral research had important practical implications for the country and had increased the exposure of the group through an international patent. The mentee carried a 50% teaching load in the School. The mentor viewed this as unreasonable because as a novice, he had spent an inordinate amount of time on teaching preparation, assessment and consulting with students. The School seemed to demonstrate an instrumental approach to the mentee by showing very little intent to facilitate his effective entry into the disciplinary community.

> "they gave him more teaching, more marking, more invigilation and used the GooT guys in particular as cheap, free manpower" (1:mr, 5).

Perhaps due to his own sense of alienation in the School, the mentor seemed powerless to intervene on his mentee's behalf to create conditions that would have facilitated his PhD progress and increased his chances of success.

There were divergent assumptions between the mentoring pair and the school around the mentee's retention prospects. The mentor and mentee concurred that although three years was an unrealistic time frame for PhD completion, they assumed that meeting the academic standards of the discipline would have met the conditions for entry into the disciplinary community. It would seem that his admission was frustrated by the lack of opportunities for entry as increasing scarcity of resources seemed to tighten up those conditions of entry.

> "that if there were any posts, they would be advertised and then I could apply like everybody and if you are the best candidate amongst those who apply then, so we have to compete with everybody else. It does not matter how hard I worked, it does not work in my favour in any way (1:me, 4).

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This contradiction seemed to suggest that even though the scarcity of resources may have caused the School to tighten up its opportunities for entry, in the form of limited or no posts available or for advertisement, the GooT mentee took the view that the School was reluctant to adapt their codes of access to include race and background. It might be reasonable to argue that the School had 'inherited' him from the GooT programme and was therefore not obliged to retain him even though it was satisfied that he had upheld the academic standards of the discipline during his contract, as evidenced by the expectation that he carry the same teaching load when it extended his contract for an extra year. There was a sense that he was being set up for failure as no concessions were given to allow him the time to complete his PhD, without which he was unable to gain entry to the discipline (even though it was suggested that there were academics in the School without PhD). It is uncertain whether the school would have retained the mentee had he completed his PhD.

This pair had assumed a strong GooT identity, in part due to their perceived marginalisation in the School. They were visibly disappointed that the GooT programme was unable to influence the School's decision on whether to retain the mentee.

> "GooT is there to teach you skills, and the post is not guaranteed and you had to work it out with your School and you were left on your own and that kind thing. GooT did not look at my performance and I only got a certificate when I finished and we submitted final report" (1: me, 4).

The outcomes of the programme for this mentee were the antithesis of the ideals of the Growing our own Timber programme philosophy. The mentor captured its essence by asking,

> "how can you take a small seeds, you wait a long time to get roots, when it just starts to grow, you chop the tree down (1: mr, 5).

Despite having invested in the mentee for three years, the university and the GooT programme appeared reluctant to intervene in their retention as academics at Wits as faculties determined staffing policies. The contradiction between the noble intentions of an institution-wide equity initiative and the reality of how academic staffing was managed and resourced at the 'chalk face', particularly during a period of reconstruction, suggest two divergent normative priorities, viz. those of equity on the one hand and those conditions that allow entry into a strongly bounded community. In the academic context, it could be predicted to expect that these codes

of entry would be tightened up when efficiency demands lead to an increasing scarcity of resources. However, it was also unclear the extent to which the dynamics of race and background could be excluded as factors that conditioned the response of the School to the outcomes of GooT.

ii.   Hard Applied

After the academic restructuring exercise, the location and staffing of the Hard Applied discipline remained unchanged. As with the Hard Pure discipline, it had the status of a school conferred upon it, within a slightly restructured faculty that did not affect its governance structures. Located in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, this discipline has a knowledge structure that is purposive, pragmatic and orientated towards solutions. Academics in this discipline work closely together in research groups and new academics are recruited into one of its five research groups, sometimes working within even smaller specialised teams. The research group leader, usually a professor, becomes the new person's PhD supervisor and informal research mentor. In this discipline, the research group serves as the primary source of academic enculturation for the new recruit. By the time of his appointment as a junior lecturer, he was well integrated into the research group as postgraduate students are expected to tutor and supervise laboratory classes.

The mentor and mentee concurred that the School had a nurturing culture that facilitated the entry and socialisation of new academic entrants,

> "we certainly take people under our wing...and have in place a lot of mechanisms that help new people" (3: mr, 3).

The School was supportive of GooT's goals and other staff members were aware of his appointment as a GooT candidate. The academic staff profile of the School was mostly white males with one or two females at the junior levels but no black academics.

Mentoring relationship development

The research group leader was his PhD supervisor and GooT mentor. The original mentor and PhD supervisor had passed away one year after the GooT appointment and this impacted on the research progress but also that of the entire group,

"When you are all doing your research in a project and one person is the leader, once that key link goes away, everybody goes and does their own thing and the project loses its coherence with the school's research. We were not able to regain that coherence totally again and it set the research group back a lot" (3:me, 5).

The School then allocated a new research supervisor and a new GooT mentor, which proved unsatisfactory, as his supervisor was unfamiliar with research topic. After six months, the mentor interviewed for this study (Head of the School) assumed both roles. In the absence of guidelines from the programme, the mentor drew on his own experiences of mentoring to enhance the mentees access into the discipline. He described his style of mentoring as having to "walk with the person and help them to do the things that they got to do" (3:mr, 1). Although the mentor noted that he had not received formal mentoring in his early academic career and was "chucked into the deep end and left to swim" (3: mr, 1), it may be reasonable to suggest that he was the beneficiary of informal mentoring and was well socialised into the discipline by virtue of having been a graduate of the department. The mentor and mentee concurred that they developed a good collegial and professional relationship based on trust and respect for each other.

PhD completion and retention

Having three mentors and research supervisors had hindered the mentees research progress. Although he had a reduced teaching load, as a novice lecturer, he seemed overwhelmed by his teaching tasks and spent an inordinate amount of time on preparation, assessment and consulting with students,

"never stood in front of a class to teach a university student, let alone a big group, let alone with all the complexities of your notes, marking and all those things" (3:me, 2).

At the end of his contract, his PhD was not complete and in hindsight he contended that he should have focused on completing his PhD, as it would facilitated his entry into the discipline. Six months before the end of his contract, the mentor was unsuccessful in his attempt to persuade the faculty to retain him. The School accepted that the time frame of GooT was unrealistic for PhD completion and was willing to adapt its codes of entry to include equity considerations, despite opportunities being limited due the resourcing environment,

"we strongly believe that we want the staff to reflect the student body more clearly, which is largely black. This is one way to do it and I think everyone

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wants to transform. When the appointment came through, it was a post created especially to help us with our transition" (3:mr, 3).

The mentee captured the contradiction between the programme's time frames and gaining entry after his contract,

"you are left in a situation where you have not finished your research, you are not taken up into the system, so where are you? So you are left in an uncertain situation" (3:me, 7).

As the Head of School and senior professor in the school, the mentor was influential in the School's decision to adapt its codes of entry to allow the mentee temporary access into the discipline. It is clear that the discourses of efficiency led to an increasing scarcity of resources in the School, militating against entry into the discipline. It is uncertain whether the School would have retained him if there were other black internal candidates available to employ. Although the mentee expressed disappointment that GooT was unable to influence his retention prospects, he was grateful that GooT gave him access to the profession and an opportunity to prove that he deserved his position.

iii.   Soft Pure

After the academic restructuring exercise, this discipline was relocated into a larger school structure along with other soft pure disciplines and became part of the newly restructured Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. Most of these disciplines had fared poorly in the cost-cutting formula that the university applied to determine their efficiency in terms of income generation and staff to student ratios. The restructuring compelled them to compete amongst each other for their share of the faculty staffing and operational budgets. The mentor described this as a traumatic period for academic staff that had impacted on the autonomy of the disciplines as the power and role of the Heads of Departments had been reduced considerably. The knowledge structure of this disciplinary grouping is value-laden and its interpretive outcomes are open to contestation. The source of academic identity in these disciplines is akin to the personal family where identity is negotiated, rather than based on hierarchy. Social roles and status are achieved and they are typically lone researchers that publish independently.

The mentor in this study was the only black mentor appointed in the first GooT cohort. Although his experiences have limited generalisability for other senior black

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academics at Wits, his view that the exclusionary institutional culture is an impediment to the career advancement of black academics within the academic governance structures is one that the university has acknowledged publicly. It is uncertain to what extent his being a non-South African, African might have conditioned his responses to the GooT initiative even though he had more than ten 10 years experience of working as a senior academic at Wits and had witnessed transformation and turmoil within the university and higher education sector. At the time of the interview, he expressed disillusionment with the outcomes of the academic restructuring exercise that seemed to stem from his perceptions of continued marginalisation at the school and faculty level,

> "I am a lot more vulnerable also because I am a foreigner. There's always a very fascinating tension that they want to use, either they want to pit you against black South Africans. It's very easy for a white outsider to come in here and get assimilated, and walk around as if they have been here for twenty years, even when they have been here for two weeks. You are made to feel like you are absolutely privileged, you are lucky that we are happy to have you, what more do you want, that kind of thing. You end up being quiet, you got kids to take care of and a life to lead but it's hard because I was never brought up that way. I have spent so much of my academic life here that it is offensive to be made to feel like I don't belong. I feel like I have a stake" (4: mr, 7).

With limited access to social capital, senior black academics may find it difficult to advance their careers within the institution, beyond their disciplinary environments. He lamented the lack of value that the institution attached to the role that black academics perform in enhancing student success,

> "You will always come across one problem or the other and again, very few people have the patience. But if you are black, you tend to understand some of the things and you can talk to these people and when you do that, you also have the moral authority to tell them off when you think that they are playing around. But if you don't do that and then you tell them off, especially if you are a white, then it is seen as racism, even if it's not" (4: mr, 2).

There was a clear distinction between his perceptions of the institutional culture and his disciplinary experiences. As a senior professor, he was an integral to the leadership of the discipline, having served a term as its chair. The academic profile of the department was unique to the institution, i.e. mostly male black academics, bar one white female professor. The profile is largely influenced by the distinct content of its knowledge fields. As part of the dominant group, it may be expected that he would describe his department as open and friendly and supportive of new

academics. The mentee had considerable experience of the university and upheld the view of the inclusive disciplinary culture[15].

Mentoring relationship development

The mentor and mentee were already in a supervisory relationship prior to their GooT appointments. In the absence of mentoring guidelines, the mentor was guided by his instinct, the demands of the discipline and the kind of mentoring he would wanted to receive as a novice academic. In earlier evaluations, the mentee reported that he was more than satisfied with the commitment his mentor had shown towards his professional and personal development. However, the mentee took ill in the final year of his contract and was unable to complete his doctoral studies. Even though this had led to less personal contact between them, the stayed in touch with the mentor offering personal support and counselling to the mentee,

> "I am still one of the few people that he listens to. He listened to my advice about putting his registration in abeyance. I continue supporting him whenever he applies for jobs" (4: mr, 4).

At the time of his illness, the mentor had written a letter to the GooT programme asking for advice about placing the PhD registration in abeyance until he recovered to full health. He was expressed disillusionment that he never received a response to this letter. Sadly, towards the end of 2004, the mentee had passed away. His untimely death towards the end of 2004 was a great loss to the discipline.

PhD completion and retention

Doctoral supervision received greater attention in this relationship, as the mentor was aware that a completed PhD was one of the codes of entry into academia. From the outset, he argued that GooT's time frames for PhD completion was unrealistic as novice teachers spent an inordinate amount of time on preparation, assessment and consultation. He was satisfied with the mentee's progress within the first two years as he had almost completed the first draft of his PhD and had written one research paper in two years. Shortly after the mentee's return from an overseas visit, he became ill. Even though they did not have to deal with the mentee's prospects of entry into academia, it seemed that the equity goals were frustrated by the discourses of efficiency within the school. This contradiction between equity goals

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[15] Although the mentee was not available to be interviewed for this study, owing to ill health, he had participated in the external evaluation process.

and increasingly scarce resources, limited opportunities for entry into the profession,

> "there is this illusion that you have a job because you on this programme, but you end up jobless. The problem with that kind of situation is, is that you end up blaming the system that raised your hopes but failed to absorb you. GooT's aim was that they would plant. They would try as much as possible to absorb these people and I am not sure how that has gone with the other mentees, but here we could not absorb them....that I experienced as a major failure of the programme in not delivering what they promised" (4: mr, 3).

He conceded that it would be unrealistic for the university to have retained all the GooT mentees but there was a sense that top-down discourses of equity do not consider the reality of the staffing situations within the academic departments. In other words, it seems to matter less what senior people in the university want as power to grant entry rests with the schools and the faculty,

> "the idea of just abandoning you at the end of your three year contract, is not on. They need to send a clear signal that this person must be placed and they should have shown more effort in trying to find places in the university to employ them....the VC and these other people have actually very little influence, but it's what happens down here really will determine whether the University is transformed, or not" (4: mr, 6).

This mentor argued that without clear career paths for black academics, it would struggle to stem their departure to the public and private sectors. However, he detailed the benefits of their participation in the GooT initiative: the opportunity to develop a close working relationship with a bright young academic; the opportunity for the mentee to extend his international networks; the opportunity to enable the mentee to pursue doctoral research unfettered by financial constraints; and significantly, that the mentee had gained three years of teaching experience that would have enabled him to find a position in another higher education institution. All was not lost, he contended, as GooT had built capacity for the country's higher education sector, as he believed that the mentees that were not retained would find employment at other HEIs.

iv. Soft Applied

The impact of the academic restructuring exercise on the location, staffing and governance structures of this discipline were significant. National policy compelled its merger with a training college. During restructuring the status of the discipline was downgraded from a faculty to a school that was incorporated into the newly formed Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, where it would have

to compete for its share of the budget with hugely diverse disciplines. The School was relocated to the training college, two kilometres away from main campus. It was a difficult period for these academics, as there was much uncertainty about their future academic prospects and the implications of the merger for their future of their discipline.

The knowledge structure of this discipline is functional, utilitarian and concerned with the enhancement of (semi) professional practice. There is a low consensus on paradigms and its outcomes usually have implications for policy and procedures. Academics in this discipline demonstrate a strong sense of individualism in their academic socialisation and are usually lone researchers that raise their own research funds for projects and publish independently. Some may work closely with two or three colleagues with whom they publish, teach and conduct assessment.

The academic staff profile of the school was majority women, with white women occupying senior positions. The mentor's social capital facilitated her access into the disciplinary culture while the mentee's perceptions of marginalisation within the discipline suggested that academic background was a crucial factor in building social capital,

> "There is a legacy of fragmentation, already. It's about cliques and it's very hard to break in. I find that those who have studied here, I think that they believe that they kind of embody the ethos of the institution, as being very elitist and as being very avant-garde. Anybody that comes with new or you got your degree from some other place, you struggle to fit in, even it seems if you come from UCT, yet they have lots of colleagues and strong links there......Perhaps, it's my short stint teaching at (an HBU) that actually locks me out, I am not sure" (5:me, 2).

As an independent researcher with a strong sense of her own academic identity, the mentee drew on her experiences of academia and outside intellectual networks to integrate herself into the disciplinary environment.

> "the ideological space is a barrier too, especially for me, as I haven't come her to ride on anyone's back. I come with my own thing that I want to achieve. Whether I got the support from other people or not was not important to me. (5: me, 2).

Collaborating with other black doctoral students on a research project had strengthened her identity as a doctoral student. She formed strong collegial and personal relationships with another GooT mentee in the department, whose mentor was the Head of School. Although the mentee perceived the disciplinary culture as

exclusionary for new comers, she acknowledged ongoing support of the HoS, particularly when she had difficult interactions with colleagues. The contradiction between the goals of equity and the demands of efficiency may have contributed to her perceived marginalisation, as codes of entry to the discipline seemed to limit access opportunities.

> "there was no real effort to say hey, these are the new people, this is what this programme is all about…We just landed here! We were here for three years and not much happened" (5: me, 5).

> "On the one hand, people were feeling threatened about their jobs, on the other you had this cohort of people who were already vying for posts. It did create an antagonism, a lot of it was very silent, but you could pick it up" (5: me, 5).

Under normal conditions, the culture of this discipline is one that tends to favour the individual above the collective, where the emphasis is on achieved roles and statuses. However, it may be reasonable to argue that disciplinary socialisation was restricted by too many competing priorities that resulted from the restructuring exercise.

Mentoring relationship development

The mentor and mentee had no previous relationship prior to the mentee's arrival at Wits. The mentor was appointed as the PhD supervisor on the basis of their shared research interests. Although initially apprehensive about entering into a mentoring relationship with a relative stranger, the mentee applied for GooT because it provided the vehicle for her to achieve her goal of pursuing an academic career. The mentor, a senior lecturer, seemed to be confounded by the task of mentoring an independent and competent academic and researcher,

> "She is a very strong academic herself and she is very well networked, sometimes she helped me with the links more than I helped her, she is not an example of someone needing me" (5: mr, 2)

She understood that the mentoring process as a sense of nurturance and exposure to different contexts and networks. However, she prioritised PhD supervision ahead of mentoring, as she understood PhD completion as one of the codes of entry into the discipline. She conceded that her own work pressures and the nature of the relationship with the mentee had restricted her from doing more,

> "I don't have enough time to do research, but I am coping… I have a lot of supervision on all levels. I think it has an impact on the notion of mentoring because you are not able to work with the student in a structured way on the mentoring. Its really adhoc and it depends a lot on your relationship" (5: mr, 2).

It would be fair to argue that the positionality of the mentor as a senior lecturer might have conditioned her response to the provision of mentoring as she was working hard to develop her own academic career. The mentee expressed disappointment that they had not collaborated on academic tasks that would have facilitated the development of their relationship beyond PhD supervision.

PhD completion and retention

This pair concurred that GooT's time frames were unrealistic. The mentor contended that programmes such as GooT increases the visibility of candidates and places enormous pressure on the mentee to perform well consistently,

> "if you work in a programme where you get financial support in a structured way, where someone else is looking at what you do, people will demand more of you ...they end up doing more work in the name of mentoring" (5:mr, 5).

As a GooT mentor, the Head of School was empathetic to the contradiction between PhD completion and gaining access to the profession, i.e. the PhD had become prerequisite for continued employment (although some academics had permanent appointments without PhDs). Towards the end of the contract, it became clear that increasing scarcity of resources had tightened up codes of entry to the discipline when the mentee was informed that her retention was not guaranteed. This uncertainty about her career prospects had caused her to become demotivated,

> "Suddenly you are told that your contract is terminated...as if a rug had been pulled out from under your feet, and I don't think you want to do that, its very demoralising, especially when you have invested so much time and then everything, like medical aid, its all gone. So you can't wait until the last minute to tell me, you need to tell me at the very least 6 months in advance to show some consideration for us" (5: me, 8).

> "It was the hardest time in the period because she did not know what was going to happen with her and she in fact withdrew her energy from the research for a while" (5: mr, 3)

It would seem that the codes of entry to the discipline were adapted to allow the mentee to gain access on condition that she completed her doctoral studies within one year. It would be fair to argue that for this mentee, achieving the codes of entry into the discipline, such as publishing independently, had outweighed efficiency discourses that tended to restricted access to the profession.

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v. Hard Pure and Soft Applied

This mentoring pair straddled two disciplinary groupings, viz. hard pure as the home discipline and soft applied, a newly established multi-disciplinary unit that focused on teaching. After the academic restructuring exercise, the hard pure discipline gained the status of a school and its location, staffing and governance structures remained unchanged. The mentor became the director of the new interdisciplinary unit and reported directly to the dean of the faculty. This allowed her relative autonomy in managing the unit within the Faculty of Science.

The knowledge structure of these two disciplines are divergent; the hard pure one is explicit and relatively value free whereas the knowledge structure of the interdisciplinary unit is more akin to the soft applied disciplinary grouping, i.e. it is functional and concerned with the enhancement of professional practice. A key challenge for the new unit was that the nature of the knowledge that it generated, i.e. its focus on enhancing the epistemological access of black students into the institution, was viewed as marginal as it had limited capacity to generate income for the faculty,

> "I am always fighting in this School. Because I am also working on access programmes, which are regarded as marginal anyway and we are always regarded as having the so-called weak students, we are always working against the mindset....they pay lip service and don't put their money where their mouth is "(2: mr, 2).

In a resource scarce environment, the mentor faced fierce competition from other disciplines in the faculty and presented enormous challenges for the mentor while establishing the unit. The academic staff profile of the home discipline was mostly male, and white, particularly at the senior levels. As women in a hard pure discipline, the mentor and mentee contended that sexism was a feature of their daily lives. They concurred that the school seemed reluctant to diversify its academic staff profile,

> "They don't take on the ideas, they don't address the issues of this country and then when it blows up, they quickly put a token in place and then say that the person has not achieved, its so ridiculous and unfair because it almost engineered so that you are set up for failure and that for me is demoralising. I mean take (a GooT academic), she was a very able black academic and they just let her go and they, for me, are just letting opportunities to go by" (2: me, 9).

The mentee was appointed in the Hard Pure discipline. She reported to the Head of the School in terms of her teaching duties while her PhD research was closely

aligned to the focus areas of the new multi-disciplinary unit. Straddling two divergent disciplinary groupings in this way presented unique challenges for the mentee,

> "because you are obligated to your (school) to do things and because the (sub-discipline) was nowhere, you weren't even getting credit for all the stuff we were doing there. Because you belonged to both, you had to do in both places" (2: me, 8).

Because she was not affiliated to a research group, the mentee felt unsupported in the home discipline, e.g. she had to become aggressive in protecting her interests when it came to teaching workload allocation. To her it seemed important to have someone to "look out for you lest you get landed with the jobs that nobody else wants to do" (2:me, 9). Although the mentee had limited interaction with the Head of School (also a GooT mentor), she was satisfied that he had defined her roles, provided practical support and tried to ensure that she was treated fairly. Still, she felt that she was not integrated into the school and left to her own devices,

> "it was just like you were on your own and you were there, swimming and just keeping your head above water (2: me, 2).

The interdisciplinary unit, with its majority women staff profile, including three GooT, served as the main source of academic enculturation for the mentee.

> "they formally welcomed us in a staff meeting, let everyone know who we were and they were most helpful and did it in a good manner" (2: mr, 6).

It may be argued that the fundamental contradiction in her socialisation was guaranteed to set her up for failure as she was expected to perform consistently well in both disciplines. These kinds of conditions impacted on the effective socialisation and entry to the discipline.

Mentoring relationship development

This pair developed a productive mentoring relationship that was based on reciprocity, trust and respect and strengthened by collaboration on a range of academic tasks. The mentor understood her role as the mentor as having to provide "epistemological access to the discipline and to provide her with networks and support systems and ideas of how to play the game" (2: mr, 3) and to coach the mentee into finding solutions to problems that emerged rather than providing her with answers. The mentor was positive about her participation in GooT as it provided the opportunity for her to work closely with a good student that was well

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suited for academia. She acknowledged that it helped her build a profile within the university because co-authoring articles with a black woman academic counted a lot within the current institutional context. The mentee reported that she was very fortunate to have an excellent researcher, who was principled and approachable as her mentor. It seemed that this relationship would endure well after the conclusion of the GooT contract.

PhD completion and retention

The mentee started working on her PhD proposal in July 2000, as she had first to complete two Masters courses because she was unfamiliar with the research area. Having only started her doctoral studies in early 2001, she expected not to complete her PhD at the end of her contract,

> "you cannot do a PhD in three years, even if you do it full-time, very few people do it within three years, so it was an unrealistic expectation. My recommendation to the GooT office was, they should actually take people that are well into the PhD. So you are not concentrating on getting two things into place. You were trying to get your research going and on the other hand you had to teach and other things" (2: me, 7).

As a novice teacher, the mentee had spent an inordinate amount of time on preparation, lab supervision, assessment and consultation with students. Straddling two disciplines had placed enormous pressure on her and she appeared overwhelmed by the workload. In the resource scarce environment, the codes of entry were tightened and Head of School made it clear from the outset that her access to the profession could not be guaranteed by her participation in GooT. About six months before the end of the contract, the mentor and Head of School agreed that PhD completion would guarantee her access into academia. In hindsight, the mentee had mixed feelings about her GooT experience,

> "For me it was very taxing, with the teaching load, I am paying the price now as I could have moved a lot faster on my PhD without it. It's a trade off. I would have finished my PhD much quicker had I not had all the other stuff, but on the other hand, the three years of experience was very valuable and I can't deny that" (2: me, 1).

At the time of the interview, the mentee said that she had not made much progress with her PhD because she had to attend to family responsibilities. She was no longer employed by the university and appeared reluctant to pursue an academic career as she displayed a sense of failure that even though she had performed satisfactorily, she was unable to gain access to the profession. Despite her satisfactory

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performance in both disciplines over the three years, her contribution had not earned her entry into academia. It would be fair to argue that having to perform in both disciplines in the way that she was expected to had restricted her ability to achieve the disciplinary codes of entry as determined by the hard discipline, which is where she would have been appointed.

5.2.5 Discussion

Through the presentation of the five case studies, the research has sought to provide a bottom-up analysis of the distinctive disciplinary conditions of the participants to provide accounts of the differing cultures and transitioning identities that may have conditioned responses to the outcomes of the GooT initiative. The case studies have illustrated that the way in which academics engage with their subject matter conditions the academic enculturation of new recruits. A common theme that emerges from these case studies is that power to grant entry to the discipline rests with the schools and faculties and not with the top-down sponsors of discourses of equity. It would be fair to argue that any strongly bounded community will assert conditions for entry and in the academic context, where there is an increasing scarcity of resources, the community will tighten those conditions for entry.

In the Hard Pure discipline, the research group served as the primary source of academic enculturation for the mentee to gain knowledge of the unwritten rules of accepted social and professional practices. The mentor and mentee shared the view that the disciplinary culture of the School more broadly was exclusionary and that the School was reluctant to adapt its codes of entry to accommodate pre-existing identities of race and background. Their perceived alienation within the School hindered the disciplinary socialisation of both the mentor and the mentee within the School but served to strengthen their identities within the research group. Discourses of efficiency, characterised by increasing scarcity of resources seemed to have limited the opportunities for admission into the discipline.

In the Hard Applied discipline, the research group served as the primary source of academic enculturation. The mentor and mentee concurred that the disciplinary culture was nurturing and inclusive for new entrants. It would be fair to argue that the mentor's social and cultural capital played a major role in persuading his

colleagues to adapt their codes of entry to include equity goals even within a resource scarce environment.

In the Soft Pure discipline, the discipline served as the primary source of academic enculturation. The culture of the Soft Pure discipline was described as inclusive and open. This discipline was staffed mostly by black, male academics, an anomaly within the broader institutional context. As the mentee fitted this mould, its supposed inclusive culture might only have been tested if the mentee were a female or a white male. The social and cultural capital of the mentor seemed not to count in this instance where the goals of equity appeared to be frustrated by the restrictive resourcing regime in the School and faculty that limited opportunities for entry.

In the Soft Applied discipline, the mentoring pair held differing perspectives about the disciplinary culture. The mentor held the view that it was inclusionary whereas the mentee felt codes of access included race and background and had conditioned her lack of disciplinary socialisation. In this instance, it would be fair to argue that achieving the codes of entry, such as publishing independently, had outweighed efficiency discourses that tended to restrict access to the profession.

The fifth case study was less straightforward as the mentee straddled two disciplines; a Hard Pure as the home discipline and a Soft Pure, where her doctoral research was focused. Under normal conditions, the mentee would have belonged to a research group in the home discipline, which would have served as the primary source of academic enculturation. It seemed that the mentor served as the primary source of disciplinary socialisation in both disciplines. The divergence in the knowledge structures and disciplinary cultures had resulted in a fundamental contradiction in the mentee's socialisation and seemed to set her up for failure as she was expected to perform optimally in both. It would be fair to suggest that this situation hindered her ability to achieve the codes of entry into either discipline, and certainly not in the home discipline.

GooT expected the mentors to introduce the mentees to all aspects of academia and to guide them to becoming independent academics. In summary, it is possible to identify three ideal types in classifying approaches to mentoring: Transformative,

Assimilationist and Instrumentalist. The Transformative relationship aims to reconstruct the discourse of the discipline itself with the mentee an active contributor to this reconstruction. In the Assimilationist approach, the institutional discourse remains unchanged and the mentee is socialised into the dominant cultures. In the Instrumentalist approach, the mentee gains access to the disciplinary environment to satisfy external expectations with little or no intent to facilitate effective entry. It would be fair to argue that Wits' approach to achieving equity in academic employment was not transformational but broadly assimilationist[16]. The assimilationist approach was frequently frustrated by the resource scarce environment, which served to tighten codes of entry into the various disciplinary communities.

The discourses of equity were strongly sponsored at the level of institutional management and may have been persuasive enough to be echoed in the disciplines but it seems apparent that the power to grant entry lies ultimately at the faculty and school level where the conditions for entry may be affected by a number of considerations. It is clear that the resource scarce environment, an effect of broader and institutional trends, driven by the discourse of efficiency, may have militated against more adaptive conditions for entry that would have enable the partly socialised mentees to strengthen their disciplinary identities over time. It may be that codes of entry and conditions of resource scarcity were operating alone but there is a case to be made that they may have been overlaid by internal dynamics of race and gender, particularly as the nature of the GooT programme foregrounded these identities. The normative priorities of equity and efficiency seemed to be in contestation when achieving the outcomes of GooT as the retention of the mentees appeared to be frustrated by the lack of opportunities for admission. This points to the significant observation that the achievement of transformation is not without resource implications and to ignore these is to put additional constraints on the pursuit of equity.

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[16] Some instrumentalist perceptions were present but those were external to the mentoring relationships.

CHAPTER 6:   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.   Introduction

This research aimed to explore the factors giving rise to, and the conditions shaping subsequent responses to a policy of affirmation action to achieve employment equity in the higher education workplace, specifically the conceptualisation and interpretation of a centrally coordinated, institution-wide, mentoring programme for junior academics, the Growing our own Timber (GooT) policy at the University of the Witwatersrand. The historical overview of higher education provided the point of departure to understand the reasons for the absence of a critical mass of black intellectuals at the elite, research-led Historically White Universities (HWUs). It revealed that in much the same way as other sectors of South African society, colonialism and apartheid ideology shaped the character, development and provision of higher education for all South Africans. It was argued that the higher education system had ensured that knowledge production remained the exclusive preserve of white people while exclusion, discrimination and inequality characterised the experiences of black people.

The historical overview traced the origins and role of Wits University throughout the 20th century. It was argued that the persistent exclusion of black academics was not only due to the segregationist policies of the apartheid government but also the reluctance of university authorities to challenge these policies. It was noted that although the academic workplace replicated the apartheid workplace, Wits University has an alternative legacy of non-racialism and strong opposition to apartheid that pushed university authorities to confront the state. However, these were unable to change the status quo with respect to the under representation of black academics. After 1994, the historically white universities came under increasing pressure to transform in ways that would meet the goals of the new democratic South African state. Wits University adopted a mission statement that affirmed its commitment to redressing past inequalities and the elimination of race and gender-based discrimination in the academic workplace. It seemed that changing the academic staff profile, particularly at the senior levels, was a complex task that seemed unfamiliar to senior managers and academics, as was revealed in 'the Makgoba affair'. Between 1997-1999, the university management demonstrated

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a renewed impetus to transform the university. The GooT programme was one of the institution's responses to contribute to achieving equity in academic employment.

Resource dependency theory proved useful to explain the relationship between organisational adaptation to change and the values underlying the macro-level policy shifts in the national policy framework. The adoption of GEAR as the macro-economic policy framework had led to the contraction of public expenditure as the state prioritised global demands for efficiency ahead of equity goals in higher education policy documents. However, it was employment equity policy that required universities, as designated employers, to develop plans and report on the implementation of staff transformation initiatives. The study revealed that the tension between equity and efficiency in the national policy environment had filtered into institutional policy, as the university implemented the GooT initiative while simultaneously embarking on a cost-cutting academic restructuring exercise. It was suggested that in the absence of funding from the state, it would be reasonable for government and society to expect the elite, well-resourced HWUs, with strong international funding links to take the lead in redressing historical inequalities and to fund equity initiatives.

Although resources for change initiatives are critical, the study also looked to neo-institutional theory to explain institutional change. By investigating the existing identity, behaviours and procedures of the institution and understanding the values and beliefs that underlined the GooT policy, the study aimed to examine the extent of the normative match between them. It highlighted the need for transformative approaches to equity because the predominant institutional culture seemed to militate against the goals of changing the staff profile in the long-term. Resource dependency and neo-institutional theories proved useful to explain the relationship between government policies and institutional responses as well as the internal dynamics of the university that might condition responses to change initiatives within academic departments.

The study sought to understand the complex nature of policy and its processes to understand the interpretation and responses of institutional managers and other

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stakeholders to pressures to change academic staff profile of the university. The implementation staircase model proved useful to trace the trajectory of the GooT policy from its conception at the executive management level to the local level of the individuals in their academic departments. The staircase revealed that different stakeholders adopted divergent interpretations of the policy and that contextually contingent factors conditioned the reception and responses to the policy at the various levels during its trajectory down and up the staircase. It was argued that the GooT policy might be defined as a political strategy, as it was more concerned more with institutional declarations of purpose than changing actual practices.

6.2. Institutional approaches to managing change

The GooT programme was the brainchild of the then newly appointed Vice-Chancellor who derived charismatic authority from his strong anti-apartheid credentials and identity as a progressive academic. Drawing on his and the institution's international networks, he was able to raise donor money to implement organisational change through his vision of GooT. With the VC as the champion of the GooT programme, it had credibility and legitimacy as a practical attempt by the university to change its academic staff profile at the entry level.

The study revealed that Wits University did not escape the global trend of managerialism as an approach to managing change. It was argued that Wits University adopted a soft managerialist approach where strategic power, including the setting of employment equity targets, was located at the centre while authority for finances and staffing functions was devolved to the newly appointed Executive Deans of faculties. The study illustrated that the implementation of GooT policy was more akin to hard managerialism where appointment procedures were adapted to achieve transformative institutional goals but without planning for the retention of GooT staff after their contracts. As a centrally managed institution-wide initiative, the GooT policy reflected a technical-rationalist approach to managing change that was based on the assumption that those on the ground shared its values of redressing inequalities in academic employment. However, this approach did not consider the loosely coupled relationship between the autonomous units in the understructure and the institution, which has the potential to result in an enormous implementation gap. The varied responses of the faculties and academic

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departments to the goals and outcomes of GooT revealed that in a technical-rationalist approach, the institution has a limited capacity to manage coordinated change and cannot force change on the ground, particularly during periods of instability.

It was argued that the GooT policy was akin to an assimilationist approach to employment equity. The haste to implement the programme suggested its concern with 'getting the numbers right'. The one size fits all approach of GooT neglected to consider the distinctive disciplinary cultures and the transitioning academic identities of the participants that conditioned responses to, and outcomes of, the GooT policy. It was suggested that the GooT programme was unable to influence practices that might have addressed some of the covert barriers that the mentees had to confront daily in their academic departments.

6.3.   The management of the GooT programme

Even though the GooT programme displayed most of the features that Smith (2005) associated with effective Equity Development Programmes, it experienced managerial failure from the outset, mostly owing to the lack of proper planning and clear policy on the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, the mentoring process and the outcomes of the programme. Its hasty implementation resulted in policy being formulated and reformulated during implementation, as the need arose as it were. This led participants to interpret the outcomes of the policy and their specific roles according to their individual contexts within their academic departments. It was argued that the lack of rigorous selection and appointment processes that GooT followed would have given substance to the view held by some within the university that they were appointed merely to diversify the staff profile and not for their potential as future Wits academics.

Despite the presence of managerialism as an approach to managing change, the GooT programme was under-managed. The GooT staff also did not have some of the critical skills to manage and coordinate such a programme within an unstable institutional environment. It is reasonable to expect the institution to take responsibility for not appointing the right people and not providing appropriate training for them. It was argued that owing to the inefficient operation of the GooT

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office, the programme lost its momentum and ability to forge a positive identity amongst the participants. When the programme was moved to the CLTD in 2001, the newly appointed GooT Executive Committee (GEC) became preoccupied with rescuing the programme as opposed to providing strategic leadership with respect to the provision of mentoring and the retention of the first cohort of mentees. These issues may have been addressed for the second and third cohorts as the GEC started to think strategically about keeping the programme on track to achieve its goals.

In terms of Lewin's (2006) typology of responses to academic transformation processes, the GooT programme was classified as a passive response in that it had transformative goals but lacked drive and operated from 'a deficiency or technocratic management of a diversity paradigm'. It would be fair to argue that the impetus of the programme diminished over time, particularly after the departure of the VC as its champion and as the inefficiencies in programme coordination and management became apparent. However, it was argued that the GooT programme, as an affirmative action measure, did not set out to change institutional cultures but rather to increase the number of black academics at the entry level.

6.4. The Institution as a source of academic identity

The persistence of the apartheid legacy in the academic workplace adds complexity to the construction of academic identities and policy interventions that aim to change racial profiles. Race became an important source of identity for the mentees within their departments due to their appointment via an affirmative action programme that only benefited black doctoral students. Their GooT identities were strengthened in their academic departments by virtue of the supernumerary nature of their appointments by the institution. In some instances, the mentees' GooT identities inhibited their disciplinary socialisation, as they were not seen as full-time staff members whose appointments were approved by their colleagues. Initially, mentors were proud to be associated with programme and assumed GooT identities. However, the discontinuities and inefficiencies that plagued the first two years of the programme limited the construction of positive GooT identities amongst mentors because if an identity is not viable, it becomes unsustainable. Mentors tended not to make much of their role as GooT mentors amongst their colleagues, possibly to underplay the generous financial conditions of the GooT award during a time of fiscal constraint and that they were receiving financial

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reward for performing tasks that some colleagues may have seen as part of their jobs as academics.

6.5.   Distinctive disciplinary contexts

The bottom-up analysis explored the differing forms of collegial culture within the disciplinary context of each pair and provided an account of their transitioning identities in order to understand the outcomes of the initiative. The work of Clark (1983) and Becher and Trowler (2001) in defining the nature of knowledge in different disciplinary groupings proved useful in this regard. The study revealed that the knowledge structures of the discipline play a major role in the academic enculturation of new recruits, influencing their identity dispositions, e.g. the Hard disciplinary groupings were akin to the 'positional family' where academic identity is fixed and explicit with the hierarchy of the research group whereas the Soft disciplinary groupings were akin to the 'personal family', where the new recruit is a lone researcher and has more leeway to negotiate an academic identity. The study concurs with Becher and Trowler (2001) that the four disciplinary groupings do not capture the complexity of some disciplines, in this instance, the one that shared the characteristics of both the Hard Pure and Soft Applied disciplinary groupings. This new recruit had a fixed identity in the former but was able to negotiate an identity within the latter, which was charting new waters to gain acceptance as a distinctive discipline. The study revealed that the highly specialised nature of academic work within these disciplinary groupings led the new academics to enter into 'different cultural houses' and their experiences were conditioned by the differing norms and values of their individual disciplinary contexts.

It was argued that the knowledge structures of the disciplines inform the production of disciplinary cultures. In the Hard Pure discipline, the mentor and mentee experienced the disciplinary culture as exclusionary and it was argued that socialisation was determined not only by one's place within the hierarchy but also by pre-existing identities of race, background and area of expertise. The research group, of which the mentor was the senior academic, facilitated the mentee's disciplinary socialisation. As perceived outsiders within their academic department, they developed a productive mentoring relationship that included numerous collaborative tasks and socialising outside of work hours that helped the mentee

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gain an understanding of shared meanings and unwritten rules of acceptable professional and social practices. However, it seemed that the provision of mentoring had a limited capacity to address some of the structural barriers that the mentee had to confront as a new academic. In the Hard Applied discipline, the mentor and mentee concurred that the disciplinary culture facilitated the socialisation of new academic recruits. As in the Hard Pure discipline, the research group served as the primary source of academic enculturation. It was argued that the mentor's access to social and cultural capital had played a major role in addressing some of barriers that the mentee had to confront and in facilitating the mentee's retention.

In the Soft Pure discipline, only the mentor was interviewed for the study although the researcher had interviewed the mentee as part of the external evaluation process. As the mentee was a graduate of the academic department, he was well socialised into the disciplinary culture. As one of the senior black academics in his discipline, the mentor distinguished between the inclusive disciplinary culture and the alienation he experienced within the school and faculty structures. It was argued that the mentor's social and cultural seemed not to count as the restrictive resourcing regime in the school and faculty appeared to frustrate the goals of equity. In the Soft Applied discipline, the mentor and mentee held divergent views of the disciplinary culture, inclusionary and exclusionary respectively. It would seem that pre-existing identities of race, background and occupational and skill levels had limited the disciplinary socialisation of the mentee. It was suggested that the positionality of the mentor at one occupational level above the mentee might have limited the development of a mentoring relationship, as she was working hard to build her own academic career. It was argued that achieving the codes of entry, such as publishing independently, had outweighed the efficiency discourses that tend to restrict admission to the profession.

In the Hard Pure and Soft Applied discipline, the mentee had to deal with the added complexity of straddling two disciplines and being expected to perform optimally in both. Although she was a graduate of Hard Pure discipline, it would

seem that identities of race, gender, religion and field of expertise limited her socialisation. The disciplinary culture in Soft Applied discipline was experienced as inclusive and allowed for the negotiation of identities within a multi-disciplinary unit. Although this pair developed a productive and collegial mentoring relationship, the codes of entry to home discipline were not adapted to accommodate the mentee.

6.6.   Achieving the outcomes of GooT

From the outset, the outcomes of GooT were ambiguous as the mentees were expected to have made satisfactory progress with their doctoral studies by the end of their three-year contracts. The study revealed that PhD completion was the most important code of entry into the discipline and that in all disciplines, a three-year time frame for completion, even if it is pursued on a full-time basis, was considered unrealistic. The case studies also revealed that the 'one size fits all' approach of GooT did not work as the mentees were at varying stages of their doctoral studies and the academic demands of each discipline have great divergences between them. The disjuncture between GooT's time frames and the actual situation for each mentee led to different interpretations and approaches to their retention prospects within their academic departments. The study revealed that the tension between demands for efficiency and the goals of equity had filtered into the lower levels of the implementation staircase where the increasing scarcity of resources served to tighten up codes of entry into the disciplines. In the absence of clear retention criteria and the lack of planning for their absorption into their academic departments, their prospects were determined by the staffing situation within their faculties and academic departments, e.g. in the Hard Applied discipline, equity was a code of entry. In the Hard Pure and Soft Applied discipline, the PhD remained the code of entry whereas in the Soft Applied discipline, the mentee was as an independently published academic, which is one of the most important codes of entry into this discipline. It was argued that rather than the nature of the mentoring relationship, it was the mentors' access to social and cultural capital that conditioned the responses to the outcomes of GooT for the mentees. The study concurred with the literature that policy that is driven from the top is reinterpreted by academics to suit the disciplinary contexts, i.e. they shape, reshape, may block the initiative and where the policy contradicts the cultural characteristics of their

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disciplines, it is reasonable to expect resistance to its outcomes. It revealed that although senior management had noble intentions when it initiated the GooT policy, it had designed its failure by setting time frames that were unrealistic and not employing people with the necessary skills to implement it. However, the timing of its implementation meant that it became mixed up with divergent priorities around the restructuring exercise. It would be fair to suggest that mentors became involved in the GooT programme because they subscribed to its values and believed that their mentees had the intellectual potential to pursue careers in academia. The outcomes for the mentees were less the result of the change initiative and more determined by the power of the autonomous work units, or academic departments, to grant entry to the partially socialised academic.

6.7. Gaps/surprises in the research

This study is confined to five mentoring pairs in the first cohort of GooT appointments. Given the divergent disciplinary contexts, contingencies and outcomes for each mentee, it would be difficult to suggest patterns for the outcomes of the four mentees in this cohort and for the mentees in the two later cohorts. This points to the need for further research in this area. A surprise in the research findings was that mentees appeared not to hold strong views about the institutional culture of the university. They preferred to confine themselves to their departmental cultures as they concurred that people's experiences of the institution were condition by their location within the university. It may be argued that they had not had the opportunity to engage with the institutional structures in the same ways as the mentors had and points to the salience of the discipline in the academic enculturation of new recruits.

6.8. Implications of the study for policy

Technical-rationalist approaches to managing change have limited capacity to bring about change in higher education. They tend to disregard the role of agency in institutional dynamics that are influenced by power relations and differing values and transitioning identities of academic staff. The natural drivers of change in higher education tend to be cognitive rather than managerial. This presents a real challenge for institutional leaders in terms of how to manage transformation in an administered as opposed to an organic way, which would take a much longer time.

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The huge capacity of autonomous units for independent functioning enables people to side-step managerial initiatives particularly if they don't agree with its values and beliefs. A healthy combination of top down (champions at the top) and bottom up (buy-in from senior staff on the ground) approaches to change may ensure a reasonable degree of success and enhance the credibility of change initiatives. Consideration of local disciplinary cultures may encourage academic departments to take ownership of the change process more readily, if they have a vested interest in working towards achieving the envisaged goals.

Change initiatives need to take into account the contexts from which they have emerged and understand the contexts into which they enter. 'One-size fits all' approaches do not acknowledge disciplinary differences nor the divergent needs of individuals and result in the same policy being received, interpreted and applied differently, leading to different outcomes in each department.

Social transformation initiatives are typically undertaken in turbulent environments and tend to contribute to both the cause and result of turbulence. To ensure a reasonable degree of success, the goals and values of the initiative should not be seen to be in conflict with too many disciplinary values that may hinder buy-in on the ground. An unstable environment, such as the one created by the academic restructuring exercise that impacted directly on staffing, seemed to be less receptive to equity initiatives. Thorough planning and consultation prior to implementation may assist in reducing the tension between the demands for efficiency and the goals of equity within academic departments.

This research attempted to understand the reasons that well-motivated top-down equity initiatives within elite research universities do not achieve their envisaged outcomes on the ground. It has illustrated that the authority of the academic project has the potential to trump the legitimacy and credibility of the transformation endeavours and that the process of identity (re)formation is more complex than well-intentioned initiatives may have anticipated.

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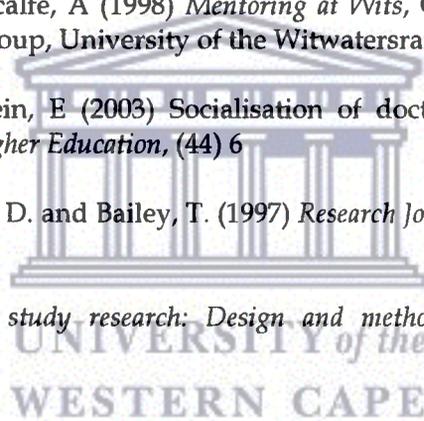
Appendix 1: Conditions of the GooT award

GooT: CONDITIONS OF AWARD/APPOINTMENT FOR MENTOR AND
MENTEE   **May 2000**
Dear Ms/Mr

Congratulations on being selected as a participant in the Wits Growing our own Timber
programme. As you know, the aim of this programme is to recruit, develop and retain junior
black academic staff by providing them with an opportunity to complete their post-graduate
studies, while assuming teaching duties as Junior Lecturers in their discipline of choice.

The programme provides the following for the Mentee :
- a three year appointment as a Junior lecturer (see letter of appointment)
- funding of R4 000 per annum to attend conferences (money not used in one year may
  be accumulated to be used in subsequent years, but unused funding will not be paid
  out at the termination of the contract, nor may this funding be used for any other
  purpose.
- Funding of R30 000 to spend one semester at an overseas institution in the final year
  (year three) of the programme. (Again, if this funding is not used for the overseas
  semester, it will not be paid out, nor may it be used for any other purpose.)
- Access to a Programme Director, Mr Dumisani Ntshangase, Room 5015, Senate
  House, who has been appointed specifically to administer the Growing our own
  Timber programme and to assist you with any queries, problems or requests you
  may have.
- Mentoring, regular assessment, assistance with goal setting and performance
  management
- Courses in teaching skills, research skills, writing skills, preparing papers for
  conferences/publication, computer software programmes and others.

The programme requires that you as a Mentee :
- will undertake to remain at the University of the Witwatersrand if a post is offered to
  you, for at least one year after completing this programme (or four months for every
  year that you remain in the programme.)
- participate in evaluation processes of your own performance, your mentor's
  performance and the programme itself.
- Make satisfactory progress in your postgraduate studies, as assessed and reported by
  your Mentor.
- Make a satisfactory contribution to teaching in your department, as assessed and
  reported by your Mentor.
- Participate regularly in goal-setting and outcome evaluation with your Mentor, in
  order for an accurate assessment to be done.
- Attend regular meetings of participants in the Growing our own Timber programme

The programme provides the following for the Mentor :
- payment of R36000 per Mentee per annum into your research grant
- payment will be made in quarterly tranches of R9000 each
- at least 50% of the R36000 grant must be used to enhance the research which the
  Mentee is conducting

As a Mentor, you are expected to :
- participate in evaluation processes of your own performance, your Mentee's
  performance and the programme itself
- participate regularly in goal-setting and outcome evaluation with your Mentee, in
  order for an accurate assessment of progress to be made
- submit biannual progress reports

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- attend initial orientation sessions organized by the ADC
- attend one meeting every quarter, of Mentors participating in the Growing our own Timber programme
- make adequate arrangements for ongoing Mentorship and supervision should you be away on Sabbatical (or unavailable for any extended period) at any stage in the three-year programme.

Payment of the quarterly R9000 tranch is subject to satisfactory fulfilment of the above requirements.

Undertaking :

I ...., accept the conditions of participation in the Growing our own Timber programme. I agree to stay in the employ of the University of the Witwatersrand, if a post is offered to me, for a period of at least four months for every year completed on the Growing our own Timber programme.

Signature...........................

Date..............................

Return this form to : **Growing our own Timber**
Room 5015 / 16 Senate House
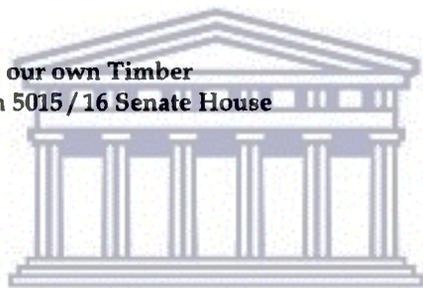
Appendix 2: GooT Application form

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

CENTRE FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT

"GROWING OUR OWN TIMBER" PROGRAMME

APPLICATION FORM

Please read the accompanying information sheet.

A complete application will consist of the following:
- Letter of motivation signed by student and mentor
- Section A of the application form
- Section B of the application form
- Proof of permanent residence (if applicable)
- Proof of registration
- Academic record
- Certificate of good conduct
- One page outline of research proposal (if applicable)
- Brief CV of mentor
- Letter of support and approval signed by the Head of School and Dean of the Faculty concerned.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.
Completed applications must be returned to:
The Director: Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development
SH 4th Floor
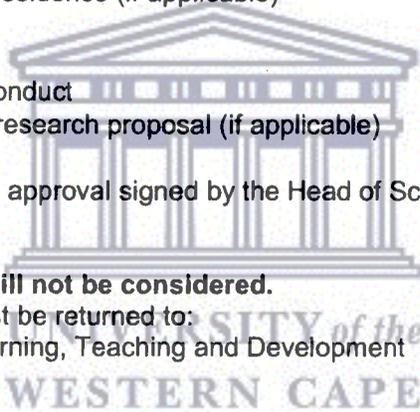
A. PARTICULARS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENT		
Surname:		Title:
First name(s):		Date of birth:
Student no:	*Citizenship:	
**Degree for which you are currently registered: Date of first registration for this degree: Expected date of completion of this degree:		
Department:	Faculty:	
***University where you obtained your undergraduate degree:		
***University where you obtained your Master's degree:		
Contact details: Address: Telephone: e-mail:		

Statement by student: I certify that the information supplied in and with this application is correct. Signature: _____ Date:_____
* If you are not a South African citizen, but have permanent residence, attach proof of permanent residence. ** Attach proof of registration. ***Attach academic record, copies of degree(s) and certificate of good conduct
B. PARTICULARS OF MENTOR
Name:
Position:
Department:
Contact details: Telephone: Fax: e-mail:
List up to five publications over the past five years that you regard as your best publications during that period (do not include work in preparation or work submitted for publication)
During the potential period of mentoring support (three years), do you envisage taking sabbatical leave? YES / NO If yes, please state how the student will be adequately supervised/ mentored in your absence.
Record of supervision of postgraduate students over the past five years:
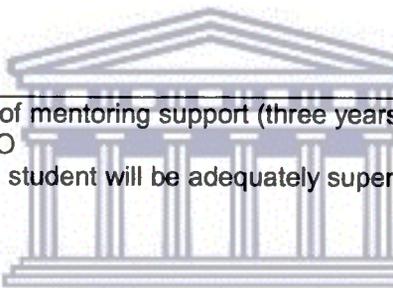
Student	Degree	Date of Registration	Date of completion

Statement by mentor: I certify that the information supplied in this application is correct. Signature: _____ Date:_____