Trajectories of restructuring: The changing context for initial teacher education in South Africa

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Abstract

The article aims to illustrate the complexity of institutional restructuring dynamics in distinct South African university contexts, in order to highlight the challenges posed for the initial teacher education system. It focuses on education faculties and schools that have undergone successive waves of internally and externally man-dated change over the last ten years. The first section demonstrates that there is a simple and a complex form of merger, characterized by varying degrees of integration, subordination or cessation of the former institutional configurations. This means that at the micro-level, in planning and implementing their initial teacher education programmes, some institutions are faced with reconciling diverse groups of academics with distinct histories, expertise and commitments. The second section of the article attempts to delineate the impact on initial teacher education programmes and curriculum. The article concludes with a consideration of the challenges for the relationship of teacher education providers with the National Department of Education, with institutional leadership and within faculties or schools.

Introduction

The recent release of the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (2007) emphasized that 'decisive measures' are required to increase the supply of new teachers in South Africa. This requirement is supported by the fact that, while there has been a marked decline in the number of students enrolling in initial teacher education programmes, demand trends suggest a growing shortage of teachers, particularly for the primary school phase (Peltzer et al. 2005, Hall et al. 2005, Crouch & Perry 2003). The task of initial teacher education is now the primary responsibility of 22 universities faced with multiple demands - from a new higher education qualification structure to new programme and curriculum frameworks, from shifting student demographic profiles to new funding and financing models, from

new educational approaches to new higher education challenges. Perhaps the greatest challenge is that they face these demands shaped by the experience of a decade of institutional restructuring, both internally driven and externally mandated. Their engagement with new policy frameworks, with qualifications and curriculum change, with the professional development of new teachers and of serving teachers all occurs on a base of profound institutional change and considerable organizational instability.

Hence, as part of the Teacher Education Research and Development programme funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy, we initiated a study of the restructuring processes evident at public teacher education providers and the ways in which these shape the conditions for and approaches to initial teacher education.

An initial analysis of the policy and legislative context suggested that restructuring had four main trajectories in distinct periods. First, in the mid to late 1990s many of the then 35(universities restructured internally in response to changing higher education imperatives. In many cases the status and position of education faculties was considerably diminished within the institution. Second, in 2001 colleges of education were legislatively incorporated into higher education, driven by state concerns about the cost, efficiency and quality of colleges. Third, from 2004 a process of mergers and partial incorporations was initiated to restructure the higher education landscape, impacting in distinct ways on education faculties and schools. Fourth, some institutions experienced these multiple waves of restructuring cumulatively in rapid succession, over an extremely short period of five years. Once the study was completed a fifth trajectory was evident, in that over the past two years some institutions once again have restructured internally to deal with the effects of incorporation or merger more effectively.

These institutional changes in South Africa were driven in complex ways by a double dynamic that is operating globally to re-shape teacher education.

Teacher policy, standing at the heart of the education system, is being reformed, remodelled and transformed in a range of developed and developing countries. Debate about the most appropriate policy and mechanisms for producing and distributing educational services, about a new relationship between government, schools and teacher educators, has become vigorous globally (Butt & Gunter 2005, Stuart & Tatto 2000, Sandy 2006, Avalos 2000). Such changes in teacher policy soon impact on teacher education.

At the same time, teacher education has typically been shifted from the specialized college sector into the university sector, in both developed and developing countries. Hence, teacher education internationally has also become subject to the multiple new demands of globalization and the knowledge economy as they are played out on the higher education terrain, particularly in the form of new funding and managerial models.

For teacher education providers in South Africa, as across the world, institutional

change is thus inevitable, driven both by shifting education policies and relationships (in South Africa, the shift to an outcomes-based education system and national qualifications framework, for example) and by shifting policies and relationships within their new higher education location (see Parker 2003, Kotecha & Harman 2001, Hall, Symes & Luescher 2004). However, as Robertson (2005) cautions, the form of change is not inevitable and always brings with it the legacy of the past - and the challenge to ensure that change 'maximizes outcomes' for all South Africans:

> Futures are not inevitable. They are imagined and created, but always with the legacy of the past bound into their very fabric. The important task we have is to be willing to imagine the creation of institutions and social relationships that maximize outcomes for all individuals rather than for a few. (Robertson 2005:167)

In particular the form of change is not inevitable - or the same - for different institutions.

Universities in South Africa have distinct historical legacies, which continue to shape their response as they reorganize in the face of the multiple challenges set in motion by new policy and regulatory frameworks since 1994. In the present they experience the trajectories of restructuring in different combinations (Lewin et al. 2003; Sayed 2002; Jansen 2002). So, while the policy intention is to create a single teacher education system, institutional mediation leads to complex outcomes. The outcome is that schools, departments and faculties of education are positioned differently within their institutions and in relation to the national teacher education system, and face the challenge of integrating diverse bodies of academics from merged and incorporated institutions in different ways.

The study thus aimed to provide a detailed empirical analysis of the complex ways in which forms and processes of institutional restructuring shape the conditions for and nature of initial teacher education approaches and programmes in distinct institutional contexts. The following section describes the empirical study conducted, in order to situate the analysis offered in this article.

Researching change in teacher education

This section briefly describes the research design of the study and the selection of a sample.

A multiple case study design

A multiple, comparative case study design was developed to facilitate a 'thick description' of the nature of institutional restructuring at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels, focusing respectively on responses to national policy directives, institutional strategic dynamics and micro-dynamics within departments or faculties. The following specific focus and techniques have been applied to each case study:

- An institutional history with a focus since 1994, constructed from an analysis of official institutional policy and documents, interviews with current managers or former heads of colleges or merging entities and analysis of HEMIS data and secondary research reports
- Analysis of (the range of) mediations of the new national teacher education policy framework and the experience of restructuring teacher educators within the newly-restructured institutions, drawn from individual interviews with senior and long-serving staff members and focus group interviews with teacher educators, to represent all the 'constituent' institutions
- An overview of the current institutional governance structures that have developed, focusing on the relative power and contribution of 'constituent institutions', drawn from interviews with current managers as well as former heads of colleges or merging entities
- An overview of the recent history of and current positioning of teacher education within.the higher education institution, drawn from interviews with current managers within the institution in general and in the teacher education school, department or faculty, as well as with former heads of colleges or merging entities
- Analysis of the effects of restructuring on the core business of teacher education, exploring consensus or conflict and tension around pedagogical approaches and discourses of initial teacher education, through interviews with senior academics and focus group interviews with teacher educators

Selection matrix

A matrix was devised for the selection of cases that would reflect the full range of experience nationally. The key differentiating dimensions identified were the four trajectories of restructuring outlined above and the shift observed in the internal organizational form, from an education faculty with direct access to institutional resources and power to an education school or department that has to compete for access within a larger and more general faculty.

The table overleaf reflects the selection matrix, summarizing the main forms of institutional restructuring experienced by all 22 universities in 2006. The 11 universities selected for case study are highlighted in italics.

The article
It is only possible in the scope of this article to focus on a single trajectory for illustrative purposes. The fourth, most complex trajectory, of successive waves of internal restructuring, college incorporation and higher education merger over an intense period, has been chosen. The analysis is thus based on trends evident at seven universities: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), University of KwaZulu-Natal **(UKZN), North-West** University (NWU), Cape Peninsula University

A matrix of trajectories of restructuring

	Education faculty	School or department of education
	Direct access to institutional managerial and financial power	*Indirect access to institutional managerial and financial power*
Internal higher education institutional reorganization in response to shifting context	*Rhodes University* University of Stellenbosch University of the Western Cape	Vaal University of Technology University of Cape Town
Incorporation of teacher education colleges externally imposed	University of Pretoria *University of Zululand*	*University of the Witwatersrand* University of Venda
Higher education institutional mergers externally imposed	University of Johannesburg Tshwane University of Technology *Fort Hare University*	Central University of Technology, Free State
Internal restructuring, college incorporation and institutional merger externally imposed	*Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University* *University of KwaZulu-Natal* *North-West University* *Cape Peninsula University of Technology* Walter Sisulu University of Technology Durban Institute of Technology	*University of South Africa* *University of Limpopo* *University of the Free State*

of Technology (CPUT), University of South Africa (Unisa), University of Limpopo and University of the Free State.

The article aims to illustrate the complexity of dynamics in specific institutional contexts and to highlight the challenges posed for managers and academics involved with initial teacher education programmes. It is divided into two sections. The first demonstrates that there is a simple and a complex form of merger, characterized by varying degrees of integration, subordination or cessation of the former institutional configurations. This means that at the micro-level, in planning and implementing their initial teacher education programmes, some institutions are faced with reconciling diverse groups of academics with distinct histories, expertise and commitments. The second section of the article attempts to delineate the impact on initial teacher education. It shows that over the period of restructuring higher education dynamics, particularly new financial imperatives, are increasingly shaping education faculties and schools and that consequently initial teacher education has diminished in significance across the system. Restructuring impacts on curriculum reform and development directly or less directly, depending on the extent to which incorporated colleges and merged universities retained strong leadership, a significant group of staff with valued expertise and complementary programmes. Finally,

this section identifies key issues of contestation or potential synergy. In conclusion, the article considers the challenges for the relationship of teacher education providers with the National Department of Education, with institutional leadership and within faculties or schools, to aid the task of 'maximizing outcomes'.

Section One: The dynamics of externally-mandated change: Mergers and complexity

It is not possible to describe the fascinating history and complex dynamics of each university in detail but only to identify broad patterns and trends, with pen sketches of individual cases as illustration.

Jansen's South African taxonomy (2002) was useful to illuminate the form of incorporation and merger. Mergers and incorporations have led in some cases to 'institutional'obliteration' where little remains of the structures and programmes of one partner, or to 'protected enclosure' where the incorporated institution continues to operate as usual but formally within the new institution, or to 'subsumed integration' where the one partner is integrated but in a subordinate manner, retaining only parts of their former identity or programmes, and finally 'equal partnership' where integration occurs on a more equitable basis.

Each of these forms was evident to varying degrees, distinguishing two distinct institutional patterns, with different consequences and potential impact.

Simple and complementary mergers

First, there is a simple pattern. These institutions experienced relatively simple higher education mergers in that they are either partial incorporations of a single campus of a university or totally complementary institutional mergers. These mergers occurred on the basis of a form of college incorporation that led to the effective 'institutional obliteration' of the college in that no programmes or staff were retained and only 'pipeline' students were catered for.

In the Free State case, for example, the merger interaction is effectively one of legal incorporation of a single campus of two other institutions. This means that the terms of interaction, of incorporation into existing structures and practices, were more clear-cut - although the resultant dynamic is not a foregone conclusion. For the School of Education at Free State it would appear that the primary concern was education's academic standing and survival within a Faculty of Humanities, but that neither the incorporation of the Qwa Qwa and Bloemfontein Vista campuses nor the earlier college incorporation was seen as a strategic asset to this process.

In the case of Limpopo, the institutional merger with Medunsa did not directly affect the School of Education, except in a general manner, as Medunsa's medical niche was

strongly complementary to its existing areas of focus. Although there are those who would argue that there are strategic opportunities to be mined, there was not evidence at the time of research of a proactive response from the school.

For education faculties and schools at these universities, despite institutional restructuring through mergers and college incorporation, it was largely possible to continue with 'business as usual'. As will be discussed below, the challenge remains to integrate the small number of new staff from the incorporated campuses, at Free State for example.

Complex successive waves of restructuring, then mergers

The second pattern is of successive waves with complex institutional mergers and which involves two institutions with education faculties or schools that have recently incorporated colleges, typically but not solely in a process of 'subsumed integration' or 'protected enclosure'. This means that they have retained some of the college staff, typically using their expertise to develop the new BEd programmes, particularly for the Foundation Phase (see Becker et al. 2004, Sehoole 2005, Van der Westhuizen 2004). They involve the externally-mandated merger of entire universities with considerable structural and procedural reorganization for all academic staff and they may involve the merger of institutions with potentially competing teacher education programmes. What adds to the complexity is that there are multiple parties to the merger - one or more former colleges, two or more universities or technikons - and the relations and balance between these differ within the same new university.

In turn, two patterns of such complex institutional mergers may be discerned. In the first, the form of merger is characterized by a degree of equal partnership, veering towards subsumed integration - evident in the cases of CPUT and UKZN. Typically here a strong leadership was able to promote the interests of staff from each party to the merger. So at CPUT, for example, the former Cape Technikon strategically recruited two colleges, one traditionally English and the other Afrikaans, that could expand their niche from FET to all phases of teacher education. The incorporation in 2001 was understood by the colleges to be a merger and there was considerable resentment that Cape Technikon dominated the new relationship de facto, gaining valuable real estate and considerable student numbers. Then in 2006 Cape Technikon merged with Peninsula Technikon, where the Education Department had been part of the science faculty. It chose to join the Cape Technikon Education Faculty in the merged institution. Time and the balance of relationships will determine which scenario will prevail — whether the relationship will be one of equal partnership or become a subsumed integration into the larger faculty, following the pattern of college incorporation.

In the second pattern the form of merger is largely institutional cessation, with subsumed integration of complementary parts of one or more parties to the merger -

evident in the cases of NMMU and Unisa. For example, Port Elizabeth University (UPE) incorporated colleges in such a way that they did not retain any staff or programmes, resulting effectively in 'institutional obliteration' of the college, while the university benefited in the form of a considerable injection of funds to cover the fees of 'pipeline' students. It also incorporated the Port Elizabeth campus of Vista, which determined that it was the senior partner in that relationship. The merger in 2005 with PE Technikon, which had incorporated a college but retained some staff and a single programme, meant that this pattern was largely reproduced in the new NMMU. Considered together with the fact that the technikons had a recent history of teacher education, introduced only after 1993, with very small enrolments in a niche area (typically FET), the former UPE staff came to dominate the merger de facto.

The case of NWU straddles these two patterns, with a merger between formally equal university partners, both of whom incorporated colleges in a form of protected enclosure.Given the very distinct historical legacies, institutional cultures and strongly Contrasting ideologies of the two universities, the main parties operate largely on parallel tracks in practice. There are two faculties with two deans operating on the two campuses at considerable geographical distance from one another. The complexity of the dynamics of interaction is such that there is a possibility of subsumed integration or institutional cessation of one partner in the future.

These universities face a major challenge at the micro-level to integrate groups of academic staff with distinct histories, institutional cultures and sometimes conflicting approaches to teacher education within a single organization (see also Woodward & Parsons 2004, Humphrey 2003, Arnolds & Boshoff 2004, Pillay 2004). The form of incorporation or merger will continue to impact over the medium term in shaping the conditions of consensus or contestation created within the 'new' institution — and the conditions for initial teacher education. Before discussing this in Section Two below it is important to consider the challenges at the meso-level of the position of initial teacher education within the new universities.

Higher education dynamics shape education's position within universities

Initially after 1994 state steering and the dynamics of education change drove the restructuring of teacher education more strongly. However, the merger process made it clear that higher education imperatives were increasingly predominant in driving change and shaping institutional conditions. Many academics and senior managers reported support in principle from central management, rectors or vice-chancellors to promote teacher education within their institution in the national interest. In the majority of cases contestation at the meso-level, determining education's institutional status, depended on its financial standing within the university, its ability to enrol students and its image as an academic discipline. (A commonly reported view of those in other faculties was that teacher education is not 'the real thing', not a strong

academic discipline.) Together with the devolved faculty structures and decentralized financial models adopted by many universities, this might result in the needs and priorities of initial teacher education being overshadowed by other pressing responsibilities of institutions.

The cases do illustrate a degree of variation, with higher education dynamics in some cases playing a strong determining role and, in others, articulating more effectively with education dynamics to varying degrees. At Unisa, for instance, shortly after merger, the Faculty of Education was changed to a school within a college and then a year later to a cluster of departments within a school within a college, driven by financial imperatives of the newly merged mega-university. Here higher education dynamics operated strongly but in a potentially negative way, in that institutional financial policies are creating pressures on education that may be in tension with professional education imperatives — or certainly, the priorities of initial teacher education as academic staff perceives them. The UKZN case reflects the growing pressure from the university centre to improve research outputs, which for some staff is in tension with their task of professional education of teachers. CPUT represents the other end of the spectrum, in which merging was seen to provide an opportunity to further education agendas within the institution, shaping a more proactive strategic pathway for initial teacher education.

The challenge for teacher education faculties and schools is to ensure financial security and synergy with other university priorities — in order to protect or promote their educational priorities.

Section Two: Impact on initial teacher education

This section considers the impact of the double dynamic driving restructuring and of the specific forms of institutional restructuring experienced. It signals general trends across the system but focuses on the institutions that have experienced successive waves of restructuring. First, it describes the current organizational structure, focus and capacity of education schools and faculties to produce new teachers across the phases of the school system. Second, it considers the points of potential contestation and synergy within schools and faculties as a result of successive waves of restructuring.

Current organizational structure, focus and capacity

Current organizational structure

In general there has been significant internal change, from a discipline-based organization informed by the logic of fundamental pedagogics or other educational philosophy, to a tripartite-programme-based structure derived from the distinction between in-service, initial and postgraduate teacher education. This logic is found with a num-

ber of variations in most universities, strongly shaped by education imperatives and dynamics.

Where institutions have experienced successive waves of restructuring, there were essentially three main responses with variations on the theme: include the incorporated or merged entities within existing structures, co-exist on parallel tracks in separate structures or create new integrated structures. There is a degree of disjuncture between the new formal internal organization as intended and the extent to which staff have accepted or contested the structure to make it work effectively in practice. This is particularly the case where there have been complex multiple mergers or a lack of strong leadership at critical points in the process. The cases illustrate the demands of creating new integrated structures, which tend to question the basis for long-standing academic 'homes' and disciplinary territory. Finally, the way in which leadership positions are filled in merged institutions (in particular, the extent to which each party, to the merger is represented) creates the potential for power imbalances and 'undercurrents of dissatisfaction', which may impact on programme delivery.

Programme   structure

Education changes determined the nature of the tripartite-programme-based division, but micro-level dynamics of specific institutions determined the final shape of internal structures - and likewise with the programme structure of individual universities. Different universities are prioritizing initial teacher education, continuing professional development or postgraduate programmes as a niche area of specialization, related to their patterns of restructuring. Just who prioritizes what is not solely determined by incorporation or mergers but rather by the institutional legacy, research profile and the strategic vision of the faculty or school or, in some cases, university central management. The choice of programme focus within a faculty or school, however, can exacerbate or facilitate contestation and tension at the micro-level, between the groups of staff brought together in a single new university, who may prioritize one of the three areas of focus differentially. This is exacerbated when the institution prioritizes or accords greater status to one of the three areas, in particular to postgraduate programmes and research.

Enrolment   patterns

The balance of enrolments found at the time of the National Teacher Education Audit in 1994 had shifted considerably by 2006. The proportion of postgraduate enrolments has stayed relatively steady but it is evident that only a few universities have significant research capacity, reflected in the number of accredited publications and the quality of postgraduate programmes (see the 2006 HEQC review of Med programmes). Relative to total output across the system, for instance, education has a

very low share, consistently representing 5% of the national total of publications — 288 articles of a total of 6 018 in 2000 and 348 of a total of 6 492 in 2004. The proportion of initial teacher education enrolments has declined dramatically and the proportion of formally certificated in-service and up-grading programmes (NPDE and ACE qualifications) has increased dramatically. In fact the proportions of the two have virtually inverted over the last ten years. This trend is driven in a contradictory way by an intersection of the education imperatives of the National Department of Education to promote teacher upgrading and equity and the entrepreneurial or survival interests of individual higher education institutions — and even individual academics.

Mergers and college incorporation provided significant opportunities for universities to grow student numbers and some have taken advantage of this to expand into complementary new fields and qualifications, while others have responded in a reactive and short-term manner to the opportunities offered. Restructuring has also shifted the traditional student demographic profile in some universities, which presents challenges for implementing mergers.

Emerging from the analysis is evidence that the desirable and achievable balance between teaching and research, between initial teacher education and in-service education programmes, between professional education and post-graduate education programmes and between professional education programmes oriented to different phases of schooling is strongly contested — both within universities and between universities and the National Department of Education.

Impact on approaches to initial teacher education

The degree to which restructuring impacts on approaches to initial teacher education and curriculum processes varies between the universities that have experienced successive waves of change (see also Mfusi 2004, Jansen 2002).

In some cases, restructuring has a *strong direct* impact on the nature of initial teacher education programmes. These universities have to develop new approaches and curricula based on complex organizational dynamics that include multiple academic voices with potentially contrasting histories and identities, potentially giving rise to contestation and requiring considerable energy to negotiate and create synergy — the cases of CPUT, UKZN and NWU. The challenge at UKZN, for example, is to establish working relationships between groups of staff who have come from a college, a historically advantaged university with two geographic locations and a historically disadvantaged university, each with their own distinct ethos, focus and programmes.

In the other cases, restructuring has a 'medium' degree of direct impact on initial teacher education. In these cases — Unisa, NMMU and Free State — a single institution dominated incorporation and the merger, and only a small number of academics from one or more of the other parties are retained as a minority within the newly-created

institution. This means that the structures, curricula and staff of the dominant party tend to determine the approach and practice in the new institution. However, the academics from the legacy' institutions maintain a subordinate voice that needs to be accommodated in the process of dealing with the demands of curriculum development. They may add to and complement what is possible in initial teacher education programmes or they may potentially undermine new programmes in practice — but two of the possible responses. The cases in the study have dealt with these challenges of accommodating subordinate voices in different ways. For instance at Unisa it was explained that programmes of the incorporated colleges and merged universities were 'taught out', because college programmes were not seen as valuable and Vista and Technikon SA did not have a strong education identity or programmes to offer. The subsumed academic staff was generally positive about becoming part of a 'more reputable' academic institution but they highlighted the often negative ways in which

first instance, but these institutional restructuring patterns and dynamics complicate the demands and challenges.

In general there has been widespread recurriculation after 2000 to bring initial teacher education programmes in line with the Norms and Standards for Educators and the qualifications requirements of SAQA. In most cases this primarily entailed the repackaging of existing programmes as the core of the new BEd. In many cases curriculum development processes only extended to the *alignment* of the curricula of the merging parties. In one case the principle of 'equivalence' was used as a compromise that allowed a degree of curriculum and pedagogical variation between groups from merging institutions, with a shared set of outcomes.

A strong awareness of the need to develop new curricula was expressed at most universities, particularly in those cases that had undergone multiple waves of restructuring. However, national processes hampered universities from actively undertaking this task. First, because of delays in finalizing a new National Framework for Teacher Education in response to the recommendations of the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education (finally gazetted in May 2007) and, second, by the demands of preparation for the review process of the Higher Education Quality Committee, being rolled out over an extended period of three years from 2006.

Nevertheless, it was evident that there are significant common issues of contestation between groups of academics from incorporated colleges or merged universities, which present a challenge for initial teacher education in the new university. Examining the substance of the (contrasting) approaches to teacher education that academics with different institutional identities contribute to the programme and curriculum design, and the lines of debate and contestation that may ensue, can contribute to the task of building synergy within institutions. (A second phase of the study, focusing on the new institutional cultures that emerge out of the processes of restructuring, will consider this task.)

Two sets of issues are highlighted in this regard. A first set of issues with which teacher educators are grappling relates to the pedagogical and theoretical approaches articulated by academics from different backgrounds and institutional identities, which shape future curriculum development in teacher education.

By way of illustration, in one case with a subordinate form of integration, academics from each of the institutions shared a fundamental pedagogics approach, which it was claimed made it relatively easy to reconcile different modules, qualifications and programme structures for recurriculation. However, this approach has been largely discredited and the academics share a common challenge to shift away from it. In other cases there were significant differences along ideological-pedagogical lines, reflecting different models of teacher education, which made the process of recurriculation more complex and conflict ridden. Academics interviewed framed the differences variously in terms of a dichotomy between 'Christian National Education'

and 'People's Education', or between Afrikaans and English traditional approaches, or between 'behaviourist' and 'child-centred' approaches, and so on.

A second complex set of issues around which there have been strong efforts to create synergy, or around which there has been considerable contestation, relates in the first instance to the perceived differences in the 'college' and the 'university' approach to teacher education. Clearly the set of issues has various interwoven strands and multiple layers - and is not specific to only those institutions that have incorporated colleges. At its heart it centres on different positions in relation to the most desirable balance between 'theory' and 'practice' in teacher education programmes and curricula. It is also overlayered with debates around the specific nature of initial teacher education required for different school phases, particularly for primary as opposed to secondary schooling. Contestation centres around what is the best place for content subjects to be taught, the best way to deliver professional teacher education, the most appropriate balance between theory and practice in programmes, and the most appropriate balance between research and teaching in teacher education programmes.

Competing discourses and models of teacher education and competing resolutions of the balance between theory and practice were often expressed in tensions between groups of staff. In the most complex cases of restructuring these tensions led to stereotyped perceptions of each other's positions. In some cases, unfortunately, these differences in approach and organizational culture are overlaid and exacerbated by the fact that positions are drawn along racial (or language) lines. Academics in these situations - particularly where there had been little integration and operation on parallel tracks - generally stressed that the dynamics of 'covert' and subtle racism, inter-site tensions and inferiority-superiority complex issues combine racial divisions with institutional background, which tend to deepen tension.

At the micro-level the amount of management and effort required to structure positive opportunities for engagement and dialogue in these universities is considerable.

In conclusion - futures and outcomes

The article reflects the emerging teacher education system and in particular the position of initial teacher education after undergoing an inevitable and necessary series of seismic changes. In pointing to the challenges and demands arising out of restructuring, it aims to contribute to the creation of a new vision for the future.

There are instances of success in creating new institutional forms and relationships, but at this early stage in the process the challenges for individual academics, faculties and schools remain considerable and are highlighted in this final section.

The relationship between the national Department of Education and universities

Currently, there is a lively national debate around the ideal nature of state steering in

higher education and the potential loss of academic autonomy (Jansen 2005, Hall & Symes 2003, Hall 2006, Jonathan 2007, Habib, Bentley & Morrow 2006, Freedman & Edigheji 2006). Engaging with the debate around state steering and institutional autonomy, of problematizing the ideal relationship between national and provincial teacher education structures on the one hand and universities on the other is critical in order to deal with initial teacher education — and produce the much needed corps of new teachers - more effectively in the future.

State steering of the teacher education system has strengthened over the period since 1995, driving externally-mandated restructuring. However, there has been an absence of a coherent vision at critical points. The creation of a new policy vision for teacher education is a priority. The national framework goes some way towards this. However, the case studies emphasized that the substantive implementation and mediation of policy at institutional level is critical to determine the actual form and direction of change. Ad hoc policy implementation potentially has severe unintended consequences. For instance the loss of the close relationship between provincial education departments and teacher education providers that resulted from the closure of colleges was a constant theme raised in relation to the current mismatch between supply and demand. The implications of the location of initial teacher education in universities, subject to potentially competing higher education imperatives driving decisions on the resources for teacher education, need to be taken into account more centrally. The shift away from initial teacher education enrolments towards the more lucrative professional development programmes, driven by state funding to upgrade the quality of the teaching workforce, is another instance of unintended consequences and of the double dynamic driving restructuring.

Coherent, systematic interventions across the board, based on a strong relationship between provincial and national departments of education and university providers of teacher education, seem to be necessary.

The relationship between faculties and universities

Individual universities also have a role to play in creating a new national vision. There was a degree of stated commitment of senior university managers to recognize their contribution to teacher education as a national priority. At the same time there was a degree to which teacher education was disadvantaged within institutions by being in the lowest subsidy funding category, but without compensatory recognition of the high costs of professional education in financial expectations. There were new pressures on academics to increase research outputs and raise academic standing, again without recognition of the specificity of professional teacher education.

A substantive recognition on the part of university managers of their responsibility to the public good in terms of the production of future teachers might aid education faculties and schools in developing a strategic vision.

The lack of a strong institutional vision of how teacher education is meant to be is evident in the way that some faculties and schools were swept along by restructuring, responding in a reactive, short-term, narrow interests manner that was ultimately potentially undermining their own best efforts. The contrast with those that had a stronger strategic vision that was able to channel a more proactive, medium- to long-term response in the broader interest of teacher education stood out starkly.

The relationship within faculties and schools

These institutional pressures often frame contestation within education faculties and schools and can exacerbate differences between groups of staff with different institutional identities and depiographic profiles. There were evidently competing visions of the 'best' way to conceptualize initial teacher education, in terms of the underlying approaches arid philosophies, the balance between theory and practice within curricula, the ideal requirements for primary and secondary school phases and between academic research and professional education as priorities. The absence of a coherent shared vision of teacher education and the personal and professional experience of multiple waves of restructuring have contributed to a situation in which academics adhere strongly to their own ways of organizing the curriculum, as one 'safety net' in an unstable situation. The danger for initial teacher education, of differences becoming solidified into stereotypical and prejudicial perceptions, was highlighted as a key challenge for faculties and schools to address at the micro-level.

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