STALINIST PLAN: A CHALLENGE TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Universities face the challenges of substantial reforms such as new managerialism, corporatism, neoliberalism, McDonaldisation, entrepreneurialism, massification, decolonisation, and many other approaches, philosophies, and practices that influence the original idea of the university. In competitive environments, new managerialism in the public sector can be a means of achieving more efficient, flexible, and adaptable management, thus, the permeation and manifestation of new managerialism in public higher education engender business practices and private–sector ideas. Furthermore, these transformations include globalisation and internationalisation, mass participation and vocational credentialing; business–like administration and internal product and performance regimes; quasi–market competition between institutions; and the part marketisation of teaching and research and services. These managerialist ideas, embedded in a neo–liberal conception of globalisation, have specific implications for higher education in the sense that they have the potential to limit contribution to future public administration research and graduate products to serve as public servants. Compounding the situation is academic capitalism, academic entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial academics and the commodification and commoditisation of a public good (education).

Furthermore, even research universities seem to be giving way to entrepreneurial universities and are associated with the emergence of corporate universities. The university's entrepreneurial behaviour is seen in professors' perspectives on the university's role in knowledge dissemination – innovation agents being entrepreneurial academics and academic entrepreneurs – the former resembles innovative university members, while the latter resembles a typical start–up entrepreneur. This "Stalinist plan or new managerialism or new functionalism" and entrepreneurialism represents a healthy capitalist enterprise and propel thinking about whether or not universities pursue epistemologies, ontological scholarship, research and curriculum to improve public administration. This conceptual paper identifies complexities in propelling universities to a higher fitness landscape in producing public administration research and graduates. This is because a public university now

fends for itself as it influences distinctive segments of the economy and militates against origins of public administration.

Keywords: commodification, commoditisation, entrepreneurialism, globalisation, internationalisation, new managerialism, marketisation, neo–liberalism, university.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of higher education, universities grapple with various formidable challenges, ranging from the far–reaching influence of new managerialism, corporatism, neoliberalism, McDonaldisation, entrepreneurialism, massification, and decolonisation, among other approaches, philosophies, and practices (Khanyile 2018; Rozakhon 2023). These multifaceted reforms have engendered profound transformations that have significantly impacted the fundamental essence and purpose of the university itself (Barnett 2021; Dafermos,2023). Yet, amidst this intricate tapestry of change, marketisation and internationalisation have emerged (MacKenzie and Lucio, 2022) as two pivotal forces reshaping the higher education sector on a global scale, spurred on by the inexorable phenomenon of globalisation (Maringe and Mourad 2012).

Delving into the annals of scholarly discourse surrounding the idea of a university, luminaries such as Bhattacharya (2018) have deftly examined the works of intellectual giants such as Wilhelm von Humboldt (1810), John Henry Newman (1852), Karl Jaspers (1923), Helmut Schelsky (1963), Jurgen Habermas (1987), and Jaroslav Pelikan (1992) to illuminate the myriad philosophical and educational perspectives that have shaped our understanding of this venerable institution. Tracing its origins to the medieval era, Van Heerden et al. (2009) contend that the university, as an institution, emerged as a bastion of support for the industrial and feudal societies of yore. Xing and Marwala (2017) further expound upon the notion that higher education, in its nascent form, was primarily conceived as a vehicle to mould the minds and characters of the ruling elite. However, as the nature and purpose of higher education have remained subjects of sustained literary discourse (Rothblatt, 2009) and fervent debates spanning countless years (Holubek 2018), Bhattacharya (2018, 23) aptly characterises the history of universities as one fraught with dual losses: the erosion of the original idea and the erosion of an "ontological self–presence of what a university means."

As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative to critically engage with these challenges and interrogate the profound implications they bear for the future of universities (Barnett 2021). Scholars, policymakers, and stakeholders must explore these changes

comprehensively, ascertaining how marketisation and internationalisation have reshaped higher education institutions' fundamental purpose, identity, and values (Javadi and Azizzadeh 2020; Khanyile, 2018). By discerning the historical underpinnings of the university and engaging in rigorous intellectual inquiry, it becomes possible to navigate the complex terrain of reforms, and pave the way for the revitalisation and reimagining of the university in the face of contemporary demands and transformations. Through rigorous scholarship and informed dialogue, an environment that ensures the university's continued relevance, robustness, and efficacy can be fostered as a cornerstone of knowledge, intellectual growth, and societal progress in the 21st century.

UNIVERSITY MODELS, PARADIGM SHIFTS, AND EVOLVING ROLES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Literature records three university models, namely the research–oriented Humboldtian model, the training–oriented Napoleonic model, and the personality–oriented Anglo–Saxon model that has applied and focused on individual development rather than research and teaching (Sam and van der Sijde 2014). According to Bhattacharya (2018, 27), "the Humboldtian model inspired the American university system to merge teaching and research". The fourth model is a hybrid of the Anglo–American model and some of the features of the older models (Swartz et al. 2019). There is an indication of the influence of European education models, but the American model, which rose to favour in the late 19th century, has become internationally dominant (Sam and Van Der Sijde 2014). This American model envisions the university as a site of multiple forms of liberal, professional, technical and vocational training (Barber 1988).

In 1854 John Henry Newman described a university as a place that brings together students from all walks of life and academic disciplines into a community where they can share knowledge and experiences (Nair and Sharma 2017). Oakeshott (2017) describes the idea of a university in England as a "home of learning", where, for about 400 years the education of would–be scholars and the man of the world was the same. On the other hand, Lategan (2009) describes a university as a workplace, a social organisation consisting of academics, professional and managerial staff. Thus, according to Teelken (2011, 272), universities have changed from being "communities of scholars" to "workplaces" (Khanyile 2018). This argument of universities as workplaces is also seen in the views of Martin (1997), who claims that the industrialisation of education has resulted in a realisation that people work in universities according to an organised division of labour.

Universities are regarded as institutions that perform essential functions resulting from cultural, ideological, social, economic, educational and scientific roles (Bayanova et al. 2019; Enders 2004). In addition, universities ought to play a significant role in the development of society (del Mar Alonso–Almeida et al. 2015). In the 21st century universities are seen as ubiquitous and extraordinary institutions (Marginson 2011), but Barnett (2017) argues that they fall short of their potential. There are inconsistent ideas regarding the governance of universities. Williams (2005) argues that it would not be in the interests of the public or academic practitioners if the functions of universities were to be prescribed. It is also suggested that it is vital to change the traditional culture of public universities (Go´mez Mendoza cited in Casablancas–Segura and Llonch 2016). There seems to be agreement that the primary interest is that universities should serve students rather than faculty or the state (Williams 2005).

Market–oriented public sector reform strategies have been introduced to increase effectiveness and diminish bureaucracy (Khanyile 2018). Therefore, in competitive environments, new managerialism in the public sector becomes a means for achieving more efficiency, flexibility, and adaptability (Adams 2006; Khanyile 2018). It is conspicuous that the permeation and manifestation of the new managerialism in public higher education engender business practices and private–sector ideas (Seyama 2022). The term "new managerialism" is generally used to refer to public sector organisations adopting organisational forms, technologies, management practices and values more commonly found in the private business sector (Deem 2020). Therefore, implementing the corporate practices and techniques associated with "new managerialism" in higher education often requires considerable compromise and the retention of some long–established administrative and management regimes alongside the new ones (Seyama 2022).

Managerialism claims to improve efficiency and effectiveness via financial accountability, quality assurance and performance evaluation, notions that have become increasingly popular in the governance model of South African universities (Adams 2006, Coetzee 2019). Conversely, South African universities face an existential crisis in responding to the growing calls for transformation and decolonisation (Hlatshwayo 2023). However, the recent spate of changes in university management worldwide should be carefully considered, interrogated and assessed against its impact on the university's capacity to fulfil its unique role in society (Wolhuter and Langa 2021). With changes in societal needs influenced by various global issues, universities are under enormous pressure to demonstrate their relevance to society. Emergent and contemporary forms and ideas of the university suggest the need for a change in the approach of various

professional disciplines in the university's management. However, universities significantly impact their respective countries and regional economies; they prepare graduates for the world of work, apply research skills to identify societal and industry problems and needs, and find solutions to those problems (Du Pré 2010). Thus, the following section provides a panoramic view of general changes in higher education.

UNIVERSITY CONCEPTS: NEOLIBERAL SHIFT, MARKETISATION, AND PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

The university concept has undergone numerous changes and interpretations (Barnett 2011). Literature indicates various university concepts: the metaphysical, liberal, entrepreneurial, open, civic, liquid, postmodern, research, pragmatic, therapeutic, and ecological university. Barnett (2011) claims that metaphysical, civic, liberal, service and research universities attempt to emulate the past ideas of the university. In contrast, Dienstag (2006) cites the dystopian university as representing a pessimistic imagination at work. Many changes have occurred in higher education. Some commentators suggest this is due to a wave of neo–liberal thought (Marginson 2011; Radice 2013). Levidow (2002, 235) goes as far as to say that higher education has become "a casualty" of the neo–liberal policies that have been "imposed" on southern African countries. Neoliberalism is arguably a model that bridges politics, social studies and economics. It favours the movement of the economy from the public sector to the private sector through deregulation and privatisation. Market competition is essential in neoliberal thinking, and land, labour–power, money and knowledge are commodities (Jessop 2017, 858).

The central defining characteristic of neoliberalism can be understood as a renewal of many of the central tenets of classical liberalism, especially classical economic liberalism (Olssen and Peters 2005). In general, neoliberal expectations regarding the effects of free markets on society were based on the emergence of a "trickle–down" result of sustained growth that had led to better employment and higher incomes (Portes and Martinez 2019; Seyama 2022). Jessop (2017, 858) further describes neoliberalism as "a model that stimulates competition by transferring state activities into private, commercial activities". Such privatisation has also reached higher education. The trend of privatising higher education systems by increasing the private–like aspects of the dominant public system has stimulated competition among students for funding (Teixeira et al. 2017). Like the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, dissenters of such neoliberal practices contend "that privatisation denies university workers jobs and wages" (Langa

et al. 2017, 62).

As more higher education institutions have accepted varieties of academic capitalism as part of their attempts at transformation (Schulze–Cleven and Olson 2017), marketisation and financialisation have become the centre of their business purpose (McGettigan 2014). According to Chiramba and Maringe (2020), marketisation has a strong focus on commercialisation. However, it is essential to note that some commentators argue that the financialisation of higher education cannot be regarded as mere profit accumulation. Eaton et al. (2016) contend that financialisation in higher education occurs at multiple levels and in multiple subsectors of organisations. This contention agrees with Slaughter and Leslie (1997) who suggest that universities can earn revenue from a complex, multi–layered assortment of sources such as government subsidies, tuition, charitable donations, capital gains and other commercial activities.

Some public organisations utilise intelligent technologies to promote the economisation and financialisation of social life instead of advancing the public good (Jessop 2017). Publicly funded universities in South Africa receive monies from the government based on the throughput rates of students and the research outputs of academics. As in other southern African countries, the South African Government has needed to reduce funding for higher education to increase social grants in the name of egalitarianism and efficiency (Levidow 2002). At the same time, in many countries, students and graduates are struggling with rising tuition costs and have taken to the streets to protest (Schulze–Cleven, Reitz, Maesse and Angermuller 2017). The rise of "fallism" in South Africa (Heffernan 2018, 1) and the #FeesMustFall movement saw the government acceding to pressure to provide fee–free higher education. However, advocates of economisation in higher education suggest that students should pay fees to the university, whether it makes a profit or not (Jessop 2017). This supports an elitist neoliberal strategy to create a means by which African universities could be intellectually recolonised through tuition fees that would effectively control admissions, thereby limiting access to the university. As a school of thought associates tuition fees with educational quality, access to quality higher education in South Africa continues to dominate academic debates (Moloi and Motaung 2014). Introducing student fees in higher education can result in more unusual consumerist behaviour by applicants where the issue of "value for money" may become a big part of applicants' decision–making (Maringe 2006).

The #FeesMustFall movement was essentially South African, and yet part of the protests for fee–free education reverberated in other countries (Wilson Fadiji, Luescher and Morwe 2023). The campaign called for the decolonisation of the educational system and the Africanisation of

education, which would dismantle any neoliberal strategy that might seek to recolonise Africa intellectually. The #FeesMustFall movement demanded that universities transform to address racial and gender disparities in staff composition and the insourcing of general workers (Hlatshwayo 2023; Langa et al. 2017). This significantly impacted how universities were governed and managed (Morwe, Garcia–Espana and Luescher 2018). At the time of writing, in South Africa public universities receive payments for tuition in grants for those students in a prescribed bracket, while those who did not qualify for free education had to pay fees. However, the universities have not abandoned strategies to source other revenue types, including commercialisation. Financial mechanisms have gradually dominated income sources and spending strategies in the higher education sector in which "universities borrow and invest funds from endowments, student loans, interest payments, and profits from commercial activities" (Schulze–Cleven et al. 2017, 800).

As mentioned above, the university is often understood from a pedagogical or scientific perspective. It is common knowledge that higher education institutions strive to improve academic excellence (Mishra 2007). The literature suggests that it is in the "domain of secular intellectual practices" (Ramos, Audet and Martínez 2018, 6), in which new knowledge is formed, and people find the essence of the contemporary idea of a university (Marginson 2007). The domain of secular intellectual practices comprises support for and freedom of the practices integral to productive intellectual activity, which includes "curiosity, inquiry, observation, reasoning, explanation, criticising and imagining" (Marginson 2007, 11).

The preceding scenario raises questions about the relationship between knowledge, power, and money. The effects of the permeation of new managerialism and marketisation in higher education on the operations of publicly funded universities are investigated in the following section.

NEOLIBERAL INFLUENCE: MANAGERIALISM, MARKETISATION AND ENTREPRENEURIALISM

As mentioned above, the "Stalinist plan or new managerialism or new functionalism" (Radice 2013, 408) and entrepreneurialism represents a healthy capitalist enterprise and propels thinking about whether universities pursue epistemologies, ontological scholarship, research and curriculum to improve public administration. The South African higher education system currently follows neoliberal trends, with state managerialism at the service of the market (Le Roux and Breier 2012), and its impact could be linked to broader typologies of academic capitalism and entrepreneurship (Jessop 2017). However, a business approach to strategic planning and organisational development

is rarely used in university environments (Medenica 2016), even though the permeation of business practices and private sector values is discernible in higher education (Ntshoe 2004). The "Stalinist plan or new managerialism or new functionalism" (Radice 2013, 408) represents a healthy life under capitalist enterprise. However, the higher education report published in 1985 in the United Kingdom, that focused on improving efficiency in universities, made recommendations on various issues, including that universities should be run as healthy profit–making businesses or commercial enterprises (Knight 2002). In the early 20th century, there was an increase in competition between traditional independent and private universities, resulting in market saturation (Celuch and Robinson 2016; Filip 2012).

Challenges facing the higher education sector are stimulated by competition (Schulze–Cleven et al. 2017), and increased competition has led education businesses and the application of various business approaches to compete in the market for higher education. In addition, profound changes have been generated at universities by the rise of the knowledge–based economy, globalisation and regionalisation, heightened dynamics of labour markets, computerisation, and increased competition among higher education institutions (among others). These changes have increased universities' domestic and international competitiveness and encouraged higher education institutions to function according to marketing principles (Şişcan 2016).

The preceding factors refer to current marketing practices in higher education as marketisation, because they are comparable to long–term, relationship–building marketing practices based on co–created value. However, as marketisation aims to increase promotional brand building, it can erode the chances of publicly funded and governed universities to deliver socially just results (Marginson 2012). Instead of being institutions responsible for guiding social change, evidence suggests that universities have become subordinate to a corporate style of managerialism and income maximisation (Levidow 2002). Higher education institutions are seen as instruments of society and should not become revenue–generating institutions engaged in activities that detract from their social contributions (Hayter and Cahoy 2016). Business–like behaviour should include knowledge of the market and the employment of effective marketing strategies (Nuseir and El Refae 2021). However, the trend toward academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997), privatisation and accountability, as well as industry–like behaviour has led to criticism. The convergence of decreasing state funding, entrepreneurial behaviour, and increasing regulations has led to oscillating social contributions from universities (Hayter and Cahoy 2016). Education marketing has reportedly reached epidemic proportions as universities increasingly apply business

practices to become more competitive and become "brands".

In competitive environments, new managerialism in the public sector can achieve more efficient, flexible, and adaptable management. Swartz et al. (2019) claim that political, social, and economic processes enable the marketisation of public universities. Marketisation can be identified in many areas, including the emergence of fee–paying students, university–industry partnerships, pressures to make the curriculum more practical, and the diversification of management systems. However, critics of marketisation in higher education argue that commodification and commoditisation are responsible for the corruption or erosion of education's fundamental values and goals as a public good.

As public universities have leaned towards becoming entrepreneurial and have adopted market–like behaviour and governance, various governments have strengthened market principles of university governance to shape competition in different ways (Schulze–Cleven and Olson 2017). However, stakeholder engagement is the norm in higher education governance, and universities must recognise the need to improve their entrepreneurial style of leadership. There are potential benefits to entrepreneurialism and the pursuit of income–generating opportunities in the light of diminishing financial support from the State (Hayter and Cahoy 2016). However, this should be handled with great panache.

The research university, which seems to be giving way to the entrepreneurial university, is associated with the emergence of the corporate university (Barnett 2011). Etzkowitz (2013, 487) describes the entrepreneurial university as an "emergent phenomenon" that has resulted from the university being a conservator to a creator of knowledge. Renault (2006) suggests that the university's entrepreneurial behaviour can be seen in professors' perspectives on the university's role in knowledge dissemination. Martinelli et al. (2008) argue that entrepreneurial academics and academic entrepreneurs are two types of innovation agents. The former resembles innovative university members, while the latter is similar to a typical start–up entrepreneur. According to Davies (cited in Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa 2009), customer and market orientation are essential to sustaining an entrepreneurial university. This is because the entrepreneurial university fends for itself as it influences distinctive segments of the economy (Barnett, 2011). Clark (1998) states that the entrepreneurial university is consumer or market–driven, establishing a link between entrepreneurship and market orientation.

In light of a fluctuating economy, it is unsurprising that managerialism, marketisation of the academy, and university entrepreneurialism are evident in South African universities and hugely

influenced by neoliberal policies.

THE COMMODIFICATION AND COMMODITISATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY

The commodification and commoditisation of knowledge in higher education have become pervasive phenomena that intersect with the concept of societal responsibility. Once primarily regarded as institutions of intellectual pursuit and societal betterment, universities are increasingly influenced by market forces and consumer–oriented practices. This transformation has led to the perception of knowledge as a product, with students viewed as customers and education treated as a marketable commodity. The emphasis on market–driven approaches has raised concerns about the erosion of the traditional social role of universities and their commitment to serving broader societal needs.

The commodification of knowledge involves transforming education into a marketable entity driven by market forces, demand and consumer preferences. This shift has propelled universities to adopt marketing strategies, reconfigure services and tailor their offerings to cater to specific market segments. As a result, education is increasingly treated as a consumable product, and students are viewed as customers seeking a return on their educational investment. This transformation has profound implications for societal responsibility as universities grapple with balancing market demands and their commitment to fostering intellectual growth, critical thinking, and social development.

The commoditisation of knowledge raises significant questions about the societal responsibility of universities. While universities strive to meet the demands of the knowledge economy and remain competitive, there is a growing concern that this market–driven approach compromises their core mission of producing well–rounded, engaged citizens. The tension between market–oriented practices and societal responsibility calls for a reevaluation of the purpose of higher education and the role of universities in shaping society. It is crucial to strike a balance between the market value of knowledge and its intrinsic social value to ensure that universities fulfil their responsibility as drivers of intellectual growth, societal progress, and the betterment of humanity.

Society receives higher education products through training, knowledge and skills transfer from the university to graduates, and their marketing efforts enable them to fulfil their social

responsibility. Further, visible professional and human development prove their aims of social responsibility being met (Filip 2012). However, there are arguments that universities have not responded to the world's demands but have positioned themselves in their immediate worlds. Though universities attempt to make their offerings competitive (Marzo, Pedraja and Rivera 2007), they seem to have re–designed services to suit identified market segments (Butera, 2000). On the other hand, the entrepreneurial university (Clark 1998) sells its services in the knowledge economy, thus producing academic capitalism, defined by Slaughter and Leslie (1997, 12) as a situation "where university employees are employed simultaneously by the public sector and are increasingly autonomous". They are academics who act as capitalists from the public sector but are state–subsidised entrepreneurs.

Thus, it is evident that prospective students are regarded as customers or markets to justify the commodification of educational services, and knowledge becomes a product for individuals to consume. Buckley and Hurley (2001) argue that the ultimate product of universities is student learning and research outputs. This argument reflects the definition of a product as a process. Arguably, the type of product is subject to another process, namely, consumption. The ingredients for graduates as products include many stakeholders. First, there are enrolled students and education itself. The education is produced by scholars who might not be part of the institution where the student is registered. The scholars follow a curriculum designed by the university in consultation with various stakeholders, including parents, funders, academic institutions, government, the public, and businesses (Khanyile 2018).

To navigate this complex landscape, universities must maintain a steadfast commitment to pursuing knowledge, critical inquiry, and advancing society's well–being. They should resist the temptation to prioritise market demands at the expense of intellectual rigour and social impact. By embracing a holistic view of education that encompasses economic values and ethical, cultural, and civic dimensions, universities can ensure that their commodification of knowledge remains aligned with their broader societal responsibilities. In this way, universities can navigate the tension between the commodification of knowledge and societal responsibility, ensuring their transformative potential remains harnessed for the more significant benefit of individuals, communities and society.

GLOBALISATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Marginson (2007, 35) states, "higher education is undergoing distinguishable transformations".

Furthermore, these transformations include globalisation and internationalisation, mass participation and vocational credentialing; business–like administration and internal product and performance regimes; quasi–market competition between institutions; and the part marketisation of teaching and research and services. These managerialist ideas, embedded in a neo–liberal conception of globalisation, have specific implications for higher education in the sense that they have the potential to limit contribution to future public administration research and graduate products to serve as public servants. Public managers and civil servants should be evaluated by economic criteria, ethics, and integrity.

The influence of "neoclassical economics and neoliberal political thought has resulted in calls for university budgetary restraint, downsizing, privatisation, and deregulation" (Goldspink 2007). Radice (2013) contends that neoliberal thinking influences universities to equip students with high–level work skills to prepare them to join the ruling elite. Whilst globalisation might be seen as the symbiosis of economic and cultural changes (Marginson 2007), higher education is transformed by these changes. Because the impact of communication associations on a global scale increases the potential for intellectual practices outside the university setting, globalisation has resulted in the emergence of new organisational forms and practices in knowledge production (Marginson 2007).

While the terms *globalisation* and *internationalisation* are often used interchangeably, internationalisation refers to the integration of international and intercultural practices and procedures into those of local universities (Barber, Eddy and Hanson 2018; Marginson, 2017:236). Maringe (2010) argued that globalisation had accelerated internationalisation within universities. Althagafi (2017) contends that in the globalised world of the twenty–first century, internationalisation is one of the most significant forces shaping higher education. While internationalisation has always been part of the life of universities (Scott 2000), Urbanovič and Wilkins (2013) argue that the internationalisation of strategies in systems and institutions results in the global homogenisation of policies and practice and individuality is lost.

Globalisation can be described as a geo–spatial process of increasing interdependence and merging in which worldwide or pan–regional actions are encouraged (Marginson 2007). According to Makanyeza (2015), globalisation has increased the flow of goods and services across national boundaries. Students in higher education are regarded as customers of the "global knowledge industry" (Newson 2004, 227), forcing university leadership to adapt to global market requirements. The dynamic processes of globalisation draw on local, national and global aspects

of the education market and increase levels of competition as new players enter the "industry" (Andrews, Gal and Witheridge 2018; Marginson and Rhoades 2002). Marginson (2007) argues that higher education in South Africa has been engulfed by globalisation, but this should not be viewed as detrimental because South Africa is part of the global society. However, local and global stakeholders' needs must be "glocalised" and "heterogenised". In other words, local, regional and individual requirements must be addressed while they comply with international standards.

Several academics see glocalisation as an alternative paradigm to the deficit model of internationalisation in higher education. Glocalisation is seen as a respectful and appropriate response to the needs of a changing higher education demographic. It encourages and empowers stakeholders to collaborate toward a more sustainable future and focuses on enhancing the quality of learning for local and global learners. Mutual understanding is expected to result from shared values at a deep level of academic and social engagement. Within glocalised discourse, individual and group stakeholders reflect upon socio–economic and political concerns from their local perspectives while considering their global ramifications.

Higher education glocalisation promotes a positive learning experience through cultural respect and appreciation of cultural values. This could enable universities to produce graduates who can understand various situations and are employable by global conglomerates. The need for universities to understand their stakeholders and gather more inputs from multiple sources is more critical than ever. Enders (2004) argues that internationalisation contributes to rethinking the social, cultural and economic roles of higher education and its position in national systems of higher education.

DISCUSSION

The conception of universities has transformed, moving from being perceived as communities of scholars to workplaces. John Henry Newman envisioned universities as communities that fostered knowledge sharing and experiences among students from diverse backgrounds. In contrast, the notion of a university as a "home of learning" united scholarly education with worldly pursuits for centuries. However, there has been a notable shift towards viewing universities as workplaces and social organisations comprising academics, professionals, and managerial staff. This transition reflects the industrialisation of education and the organised division of labour within universities.
Disappointing results and negative consequences of government reforms inspired by new managerialism or functionalist ideas have recently stimulated Public Administration scholars to

develop alternative approaches to governance.

In the modern era, universities confront substantial challenges that demand comprehensive reforms to their traditional structures. The proliferation of new managerialism, corporatism, neoliberalism, McDonaldisation, entrepreneurialism, massification, decolonisation, and other ideologies and practices has significantly influenced the essence of universities. This paper explores the impact of marketisation and internationalisation, propelled by globalisation, on the higher education sector. Moreover, it examines the perspectives of esteemed scholars who have contemplated the notion of a university from philosophical and educational standpoints.

The rise of neoliberal thought has contributed to reshaping higher education, with marketisation becoming a central focus – wherein neoliberalism advocates for transferring economic activities from the public to the private sector, promoting competition and commodification. Universities have not been exempt from this trend, as privatisation and increased reliance on market–driven principles have become prevalent. The financialisation of higher education, encompassing revenue generation from multiple sources and the introduction of tuition fees, has become an integral part of the business–oriented approach to university management.

The intertwining dynamics of knowledge, power, and financial imperatives challenge the traditional understanding of universities as sites of intellectual practice and academic excellence. The pursuit of new knowledge and the fostering of intellectual activities have historically defined the essence of universities. However, the increasing presence of new managerialism and marketisation has introduced financial considerations that shape university decision–making processes. Balancing the pursuit of knowledge with the demands of financial sustainability poses significant challenges for public higher education institutions.

The current landscape of higher education in South Africa reflects the influence of neoliberal trends, with state managerialism aligning itself with market forces. This convergence has prompted discussions about adopting entrepreneurial practices and business approaches within universities. While the permeation of business values and practices can be observed, strategic planning and organisational development in university environments often neglect a business–oriented perspective. Nevertheless, the idea of universities operating as healthy profit–making entities or commercial enterprises has been advocated. Historical results also highlight the competition between independent and private universities, leading to market saturation.

The challenges faced by the higher education sector are fueled by domestic and international competition. As universities strive to enhance their competitiveness, they increasingly adopt

marketing principles and approaches based on co–created value. However, the rise of marketisation can undermine the ability of publicly funded and governed universities to deliver socially just outcomes. Instead of being agents of social change, universities have been criticised for prioritising corporate–style managerialism and income maximisation. This shift contradicts the notion of universities as institutions responsible for societal contributions and should not engage in activities that detract from their social role. While knowledge of the market and effective marketing strategies can be part of university practices, the trend towards academic capitalism, privatisation, and accountability has drawn criticism. The convergence of decreasing state funding, entrepreneurial behaviour, and increasing regulations have led to fluctuating social contributions from universities. The prevalence of education marketing with universities striving to become competitive brands has reached significant proportions.

As universities embrace entrepreneurialism and market–like behaviour, governments have introduced market principles in university governance to shape competition. Stakeholder engagements have become the norm in higher education governance, emphasising the need for universities to enhance their entrepreneurial leadership style. While there are potential benefits to pursuing income–generating opportunities amid diminishing state financial support, handling this transition with finesse is crucial.

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in society by providing training, knowledge, and skills transfer. While universities strive to be competitive and adapt their services to market demands, the emergence of the entrepreneurial university reintroduces the concept of academic capitalism. This shift leads to the commoditisation and commodification of education, where prospective students are viewed as customers, and knowledge becomes a consumable product.

CONCLUSION

This conceptual paper identifies complexities in propelling universities to a higher fitness landscape in producing public administration research. This is because a public university now fends for itself as it influences distinctive segments of the economy and militates against origins for public administration. This academic discussion delves into the multifaceted challenges universities face in the contemporary era and explores the consequent reforms that have shaped their evolution.

This paper draws on the insights of renowned scholars and investigates the historical origins of universities and their diverse models. Furthermore, it explores the shifting perceptions of

universities as communities of scholars to workplaces, highlighting the implications for their roles and responsibilities in society. It further emphasises the need for effective management strategies to navigate the evolving higher education landscape and fulfil universities' unique purpose. Examining the concepts of new managerialism, corporatism, neoliberalism, McDonaldisation, entrepreneurialism, massification, and decolonisation, this paper analyses their influence on the core essence of universities. The transformative forces of marketisation and internationalisation, propelled by globalisation, have emerged as significant drivers of change in the higher education sector.

The contemporary challenges universities face, and ongoing reforms have shaped their evolution and raised questions about their fundamental nature. Thus, the ever–evolving landscape of universities necessitates a comprehensive examination of the intricate relationships between knowledge, power, and financial imperatives. The influences of neoliberalism, marketisation, decolonisation movements, and managerial practices have redefined the roles and responsibilities of universities. Successfully navigating these complexities requires understanding of the historical context, the diverse conceptualisations of universities, and the impact of financial imperatives on academic pursuits. Universities can adapt and thrive in an increasingly complex higher education environment by critically engaging with these dynamics. By embracing these challenges, universities can fulfil their potential as extraordinary institutions that contribute significantly to society and prepare graduates for a rapidly transforming world. Effective management is essential for universities to adapt and respond to the demands of a dynamic society while staying true to their core purpose.

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