

ENHANCING QUALITY ACADEMIC PRACTICE THROUGH INTEGRATED INDUSTRY-BASED LEARNING

by

NDUDUZO PHUTHI

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SOUTH AFRICA**

Promoter: **DR P. H. DU TOIT**

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Full names of student: NDUDUZO PHUTHI

Student number: 28521227

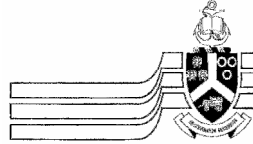
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INVESTIGATOR(S)

Nduduzo Phuthi

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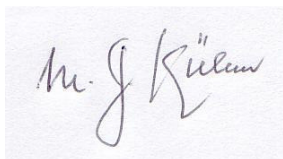
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University of Pretoria
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the thesis titled **ENHANCING QUALITY ACADEMIC PRACTICE THROUGH INTEGRATED INDUSTRY-BASED LEARNING** by **NDUDUZO PHUTHI** was edited for grammar errors by me, Prof. MJ Kühn. The candidate is responsible for implementing the suggested editing.

Yours faithfully



Prof. MJ Kühn

**DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND TECHNOLOGY
EDUCATION**

tinus.kuhn@up.ac.za

Cellular no. 082 303 5415



DEDICATION

To three most enduring and unwavering ladies in my eventful life:
My dear wife Kesi, lively, resolute, courageous and inspiring life partner;
My blossoming daughter Noku, my emotional stabiliser;
My prayerful mother Olive, who showed me into this world.
Also to an exemplary gentleman, Isaiah, my late father,
And to two promising lads, sons Thabi and Mgcini.

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ABSTRACT

Universities in Zimbabwe have universally adopted a full-year integrated undergraduate student workplace-based learning pedagogy following the precedent set in 1991 by one pioneering university, the National University of Science and Technology. In this explorative study I analyse participants' views, reflections and understanding of how the full-year model of workplace-based learning enhances quality academic practices and impacts on short, medium and long-term visions and opportunities for students and other stakeholders. I employed the embedded concurrent mixed methods research design (Creswell & Clark, 2007) using interviews with lecturers, university administrators and industry supervisors, as well as open-ended questions in three matched versions of a questionnaire to students, lecturers and industry supervisors respectively. The same questionnaire provided quantitative data that was statistically analysed.

Interviews were conducted with 24 participants from the university under study, industry and other universities, while 363 university students, 40 NUST lecturers and 34 industry supervisors responded to the respective questionnaires. Students, lecturers and industry supervisors concurred on the coherence between industry experiences and university learning, the beneficial experiences at the workplace, and the relevance of those experiences to society, confirming the expressed view that industry-based learning promoted quality learning and teaching, and enabled students to become work-ready. However there were perceptions of inadequate student supervision and assessment, unsatisfactory student welfare safeguards, inadequate research enthusiasm among lecturers, and the lack of involvement of the whole spectrum of industry categories. There was an underlying regard for lifelong learning enabling societal transformation into the increasingly dominant industrialised culture. Lecturers indicated an appreciation for a holistic orientation to teaching and learning (Taylor, 2009), and were inclined towards adopting the hermeneutic approach to education (Danner, 2002). It is recommended, among other things, to revitalise effective practices through staff development efforts, increasing student knowledge and empowerment, and strengthening collaborative platforms between the university and its industry partners. Chief among the suggestions for future research is the understanding and promotion of student welfare during their placement in the workplaces.

Key Words: workplace-based learning, industry-based learning, quality, engagement, student supervision, assessment, industrial attachment, curriculum coherence, student placement, research-enhanced learning.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	i
ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	ii
CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xiii
CHAPTER 1: THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 The Motivation for and Purpose of the Study.....	1
1.3 Background to the study	5
1.3.1 The Ideal University	6
1.3.2 Historical Background	9
1.4 Research Scope and Focus.....	12
1.4.1 Styles of university-community partnerships	12
1.4.2 Focus of the Study	14
1.5 Objectives of the Study.....	15
1.6 Research Questions	15
1.7 Conceptual Framework.....	17
1.8 Limitations and Constraints	19
1.9 Organisation of the Study	19
1.10 Conclusion	20
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	22
2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 University community engagement functions	23
2.2.1 Universities and their Mission	23
2.2.2 University-community Collaboration	26
2.2.3 The University as a Learning Organisation	29
2.2.4 Company and university roles in facilitating business innovation	30

2.2.5 University Effectiveness and Relevance in Society.....	32
2.3 University service learning	36
2.3.1 Contested definitions of university service learning.....	36
2.3.2 Cooperative Education.....	43
2.3.3 Cooperative Learning	44
2.4 Learning theories and principles aligned to service learning.....	44
2.4.1 Learning Theories and Principles	45
2.4.2 Constructivist Learning.....	46
2.4.3 Hermeneutic Circle of Curriculum Theory and Practice	47
2.4.4 Outcomes-based Education.....	48
2.4.5 Self-directed and Self-regulated Learning	49
2.4.6 Thinking and Learning Styles.....	51
2.4.7 Competence-based Education and Training	53
2.5 Quality implications of university service-learning.....	54
2.5.1 Student Assessment in Experiential Learning	54
2.5.2 Quality Management in University Education	56
2.5.3 Quality Indicators (and benchmarks) in Higher Education	59
2.5.4 Quality through knowledge and its application	62
2.5.5 Transformative Learning	63
2.6 Conclusion	66
CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCESS.....	68
3.1 Introduction.....	68
3.2 Research Paradigm and Underpinning Assumptions.....	69
3.3 Research Methodology and Design	72
3.3.1 Case study research method.....	73
3.3.2 Mixed methods research methodology	75
3.3.3 The concurrent embedded mixed methods design.....	76
3.3.4 Limitations of mixed methods research.....	79
3.4 Population and Sample	80
3.5 Data Collection	82
3.5.1 Research instruments	83
3.5.2 Development of the three-tier model of university-industry collaboration	105
3.6 Data Analysis	109
3.6.1 Qualitative data analysis	109
3.6.2 Quantitative data analysis	110
3.7 Justification for the Research Approach	111
3.7.1 The quality of research methods	112

3.7.2 The quality of mixed methods	114
3.8 Challenges and Practical Constraints.....	117
3.9 Ethical Issues	118
3.9.1 Trust and respect of participants.....	119
3.9.2 Access	119
3.9.3 Informed consent	120
3.9.4 Anonymity	120
3.9.5 Confidentiality	121
3.9.6 Safety and consequences of participation.....	121
3.10 Conclusion	121
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	123
4.1 Introduction.....	123
4.2 Findings and their Importance	123
4.3 Findings from Interview Data.....	123
4.3.1 Participation and response rate in interviews.....	124
4.3.2 Interview data: emerging themes.....	125
4.4 Findings from Questionnaire Data.....	166
4.4.1 Participation and response to data	166
4.4.2 Analysis of background information	166
4.4.3 Factor analysis	170
4.4.4 Categorical questionnaire items.....	174
4.5 Emerging perspectives of quality through service learning.....	195
4.5.1 A NUST perspective of quality academic practice.....	195
4.5.2 An industry perspective of quality academic practice	197
4.5.3 A perspective of other universities	198
4.6 Conclusion	199
CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATIONS AND REFLECTIONS.....	201
5.1 Introduction.....	201
5.2 Perceptions of Quality and Best Practices	202
5.2.1 Quality academic practice and holistic human development.....	203
5.2.2 Quality as relevance.....	203
5.2.3 Quality academic practice in respect to accountability and transparency.....	205
5.3 Learning and Knowledge Development	206
5.3.1 Learning and work.....	207
5.3.2 Theory and Practice	208
5.3.3 Higher learning and creativity	209

5.3.3 Experiential learning.....	210
5.3.4 Fit-for-purpose strategy	210
5.4 Research-enhanced Practices	211
5.4.1 Academic research.....	212
5.4.2 Need for Action Research.....	212
5.5 Community engagement and development for quality enhancement.....	213
5.6 Transformation.....	215
5.6.1 Cultural transformation.....	216
5.6.2 Social transformation.....	216
5.6.3 Industrial transformation.....	216
5.7 Goal-directed Action and Critical Thinking	218
5.7.1 Setting and nurturing goals.....	218
5.7.2 Critical theory and critical thinking.....	219
5.7.3 Acting decisively	220
5.8 Building a Legacy: The Future Beckons	221
5.8.1 Learning for life.....	221
5.8.2 Passing the baton	222
5.9 Conclusion	222
CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	224
6.1 Introduction.....	224
6.2 Summary of the research process	224
6.3 Reflections on Research Questions and Findings	226
6.3.1 The nature and quality of academic practices.....	226
6.3.2 The pedagogy and its perceived relevance	227
6.3.3 Shared conceptions and visions	227
6.4 Summary of issues emerging from findings	228
6.4.1 Quality is relative but unmistakable	228
6.4.2 Industry-based learning has the ingredients for quality practice	229
6.4.3 Institutional approaches determine adherence to a quality culture	229
6.4.4 The university-industry relationship.....	230
6.5 Implications of the study.....	230
6.5.1 Policy and practice.....	231
6.5.2 Research.....	232
6.6 Conclusions and recommendations.....	232
6.6.1 Conclusion I.....	233
6.6.2 Conclusion II	233
6.6.3 Conclusion III	234

6.6.4 Conclusion IV	235
6.7 The Learning Journey: End or Beginning?	236
6.8 Conclusion	237
REFERENCES.....	239
APPENDICES	249
APPENDIX I – Activity plan	249
APPENDIX II – Consent letter for lecturers	250
APPENDIX III – Consent letter for organisations and institutions	251
APPENDIX IV – Indemnity letter for institutions and organisations	252
APPENDIX V – Student cover letter and questionnaire	253
APPENDIX VI – Lecturer cover letter and questionnaire.....	258
APPENDIX VII – Industry cover letter and questionnaire	263
APPENDIX VIII Interview schedule for university administrators	268
APPENDIX IX – Interview schedule for NUST lecturers	269
APPENDIX X – Interview schedule for industry	270
APPENDIX XI – Interview schedule for other universities	271
APPENDIX XII – The model	272
APPENDIX XIII – Permission letters	273
APPENDIX XIV – Anonymity and coding.....	276
APPENDIX XV - Analysis grid for interview content analysis.....	277
APPENDIX XVI – Questionnaire data summaries	278
APPENDIX XVII – Determination of factors	281
APPENDIX XVIII - Analysis of factors	284
APPENDIX XIX - Analysis of IA benefits to students.....	288
APPENDIX XX – Analysis of additions, comments, concerns, explanations	290
APPENDIX XXI - Course Outline	291

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1	Four Styles of Community-University Partnerships	12
1.2	Forms of higher education industry partnerships in South Africa	13
1.3	Conceptualizing university-community partnerships	17
2.1	Types of Community engagement	27
2.2	A conception of service learning	41
2.3	Organising many forms of constructivism	47
2.4	Assessment strategies for experiential learning	55
2.5	Three elements of learning	64
3.1	Relationship between personal knowledge and public knowledge	71
3.2	Mixed methods methodology model	76
3.3	The embedded concurrent mixed methods research design	77
3.4	Respondent triangulation	80
4.1	Student Respondents according to Faculty and Gender	167
4.2	Student respondents according to age and duration of previous work experience	167
4.3	Lecturer Respondents according to Faculty and Gender	168
4.4	Lecturer Respondents according to Faculty and highest year level taught	169
4.5	Lecturer respondents according to age and duration of PWE	169
4.6	Industry Respondents by Location and Company size	180
4.7	Relationship between the research theme, statistical factors and sub-factors	173
4.8	Comparative opinions on contribution to student learning	174
4.9	Comparative opinions on engagement with SMEs	177
4.10	Comparative opinions on whether the current IA programme needs change	179
4.11	Combined rankings of IA benefits by students, lecturers and industry	182
4.12	Consolidated Student, Lecturer and Industry Additions by category	184
5.1	NUST and world-class status: push and pull forces at work	214
6.1	Learning for competence	237

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	University participation in company development	31
Table 2.2	The array of higher education benefits	35
Table 2.3	Benefits of service-learning to students	40
Table 2.4	Six assumptions of quality in higher education institutions	60
Table 3.1	Research study characterisation	73
Table 3.2	Comparison of processes in qualitative and quantitative data	78
Table 3.3	Proposed participants and respondents	81
Table 3.4	Research data collection matrix	89
Table 3.5	Activities in the industry-based learning model	109
Table 4.1	Proposed and actual interview participants and respondents	124
Table 4.2	Comparative formats of degree programmes	147
Table 4.3	Questionnaire response rate	166
Table 5.1	Integration of themes from qualitative and quantitative data	201



LIST OF ACRONYMS

AL	Action learning
ASL	Academic service learning
CBET	Competence-based education and training
CC	Curriculum coherence
CL	Cooperative learning
CCFO	Critical cross-field outcome
CZI	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
DOE	Department of Education
EWP	Education with production
FAS	Faculty of Applied Science
FCIS	Faculty of Communication and Information Science
FIT	Faculty of Industrial Technology
FOC	Faculty of Commerce
HEI	Higher education institution
HEQC	Higher education quality committee
IA	Industrial attachment
IBL	Industry-based learning
LP	Learning processes
LSE	Large scale enterprise
NAMACO	National manpower advisory council
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
OBE	Outcomes-based education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PGDHE	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
PWE	Previous work experience
QL/QUAL)	Qualitative
QN/QUAN)	Quantitative
R&D	Research and Development
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
SDL	Self-directed Learning
SME	Small and medium scale enterprise
SRL	Self-regulated learning
SAS	Statistical analysis software
TQM	Total quality management
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
VTE	Vocational and technical education
WBL	Workplace-based learning
WRL	Work-related learning
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education
ZIMDEF	Zimbabwe manpower development fund
ZINTEC	Zimbabwe integrated teacher education course
ZNCC	Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce