

Global influences and local responses: The restructuring of the University of Botswana, 1990–2000

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Abstract. The University of Botswana has not escaped the reform fever currently gripping higher education institutions the world-over. In the late 1980s the University initiated an administrative/management restructuring exercise whose resultant structure was implemented between 1998 and 2000. The exercise, in many respects, was a response to globalization. The emergence, in the past two decades, of a global economy, the massification of higher education, and the globalization of neo-liberal economic thinking have compelled universities to recast their social and economic missions. Consequently, universities have had to restructure within the framework of a global ideology characterized by an emphasis on effectiveness, quality and efficiency. This paper explicates the restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana by locating the exercise within its global and local contexts. It argues that while the resultant structure reflected global influences and trends, it was as much a product of local concerns.

Keywords: collegiality, globalization, horizontal profile, managerialism, monocephalic, neo-liberalism, vertical profile

Introduction

In the late 1980s the University of Botswana (UB)¹ initiated an administrative/management restructuring exercise. The resultant structure was implemented in the period 1998–2000. Academics feel that the new structure has marginalized and alienated them. This sentiment is underscored in the *Report of the Task Group on the Review of the University of Botswana Act and Governance Structures* of 2004 (hereafter the Youngman Report, so named after its chairman) which observes that:

The implementation of the restructuring of the University from 1998 to 2000 and the perceived shift to greater executive power at the expense of collegiality highlight the issue of the role of Executive Management in relation to the governance structures. The decline in the authority and effectiveness of Senate in 1999 can be

seen as a symptom of an unclear management/governance relationship (University of Botswana 2004, p. 14).

The general consensus is that the new structure has shifted the balance of power amongst the various administrative structures within the University, with a tilt towards more corporate management practices. How restructuring precisely achieved this has not been explicated before. This paper is an attempt to do just that: to analyse the restructuring process in both its global and local contexts, how it has led to the systematic erosion of collegiality as captured in the quotation above. In more specific terms the paper addresses the following questions:

1. What motivated the restructuring exercise?
2. Precisely, how has the exercise led to redistribution of power and authority in favour of Executive Management?

These questions are addressed within a conceptual framework that locates the process of globalization at the centre of the restructuring exercise. There is a sense in which the exercise was a response to globally circulating discourses, mediated by local concerns. That is, restructuring at the University of Botswana had two interrelated facets: the global and local.² Ignoring any one of them yields only an incomplete picture of the exercise. As Grewal and Kaplan (1994) have observed, the global and local are different facets of the same phenomenon. Blackmore (1999) avers that the “local exists within the larger, often multinational organizations or education systems, through systems of communication networks, themselves manifestations of the often standardizing processes of globalization” (p. 35). It is argued in this paper that the global and local interacted in productive, dynamic and non-deterministic ways to yield an administrative/management structure that, while reflecting global influences and trends, was also grounded solidly on local circumstances. It is essential to maintain this global–local dialectic (Arnové and Torres 1999; Deem 2001) if we are to appreciate the nature of restructuring in higher education institutions.

The paper is organized as follows. First, I consider the global context in which restructuring at the University of Botswana occurred. Three interrelated forces that have profoundly impacted higher education institutions globally are discussed. The second section discusses three aspects of the local context that induced the restructuring exercise. In the third (and final) section I analyse the process of restructuring itself,

how in the quest for efficiency, quality and effectiveness (three nebulous concepts),³ power and benefits were redistributed within the institution's structures. The role micro-politics of change played in giving shape and direction to the exercise is emphasized.

Globalization and higher education

Literature on the relationship between globalization and higher education abounds (Currie and Newson 1998; Deem 2001; Henry et al. 2001; Chapman and Austin 2002; Currie et al. 2003). No value would be added by a detailed review of the literature. For our purposes it suffices to point out that globalization is a contested and diffuse concept. Different commentators emphasize different aspects of the concept (economic, political, and cultural) depending on their interests. This diversity in the conceptualization of the phenomenon notwithstanding, there is general consensus that technological and communications developments in the past two decades, together with financial and labour deregulation, have led to a growing interdependence and interconnectedness of the modern world. This has ensured an increased flow of goods and services, ideas and people (Castells 1993; Henry et al. 2001) as well as the emergence of a global economy at the centre of which is a heightened importance of knowledge (The Task Force on Higher Education and Society 2000). This has transformed the world economy from being manufacturing-centred to knowledge-centred. As the dominant producer of human capital, education is now the policy key to national prosperity (Brown and Lauder 1997), and is increasingly an important "tool of micro-economic reform" (Dudley 1998, p. 36). Finding itself at the centre of this economic reform agenda, higher education has had to restructure so as to provide "society with a means of reproducing technically exploitable knowledge in the creation of a trained labour force" (Delanty 2001, p. 108).

Briefly, three major developments have put the university under pressure to restructure. First, the rise of the knowledge-based economy has necessitated transformation both of knowledge and its context of production. The advent of the 'new' economy has blurred the divide between knowledge production and knowledge application (Cloete and Bunting 2000, p. 39). This epistemological transformation, described by Gibbons et al. (1994) as the Mode 2 thesis, has transformed the late modern university.

Second, the growth in student numbers (massification) has strained universities, challenging them to address much more vigorously the issue of quality: how do you maintain quality in an era of expansion and diminishing resources? This has brought to the fore issues of efficiency and effectiveness. However, Tynjala et al. (2003) caution that the issue of massification of higher education systems should not be “understood purely technically as a reference to the expansion of students, faculty, and higher education institutions” (p. 147). It also involves a growing heterogeneity of students. As Jansen (2002) has noted: “massification has changed the traditional client base of the university with more students demanding education and more mature students seeking life-long learning through continuing education programmes” (p. 509). This, in turn, calls for diverse academic programmes and, perhaps more importantly, new organizational and management approaches, as ways of responding to the changed external environment. Third, massification and increased importance of higher education to the global economy are accompanied by reluctance on the part of governments to fund the sub-sector. This irony arises from the fact that “[g]enerally, globalization is underpinned by neo-liberal discourses relating to the role of the state in the economy, cutbacks in state expenditure, deregulation and liberalization” (Ntshoe 2004, p. 138). Neo-liberal economic policies give “primacy to the market over the state as a societal steering mechanism” (Henry et al. 2001, p. 28). These policies portray education as more of a private than a public good, thus justifying cuts in public spending on education. Reduction in public spending has impacted higher education in very profound ways (Deem 2001). The need for the university to be efficient and effective becomes not only a priority but also a justification for restructuring the organization.

In summary, the three pressures described above have compelled universities to restructure so as to adapt to a situation where more has to be done with less. While universities have responded to these pressures in different ways, depending on their historical, economic and political contexts, there has been, at the same time, policy convergence throughout the world. It is in the nature of globalization to promote simultaneously heterogeneity and homogeneity.

Restructuring: the rise of ‘new’ managerialism?

The combined effects of globalization and neo-liberal economic policies have affected the way publicly funded institutions are managed.

Organizationally, the bureaucratic structures that characterized the post-World War II Keynesian consensus have had to give way to new state structures and new forms of governance seen as more flexible, efficient and effective. Some (e.g., Clarke and Newman 1997; Clarke et al. 2000) have described this as a move towards 'new managerialism', a term Deem (1998) defines as the "adoption by public sector organizations of organizational forms, technologies, management practices and values more commonly found in the private business sector" (p. 47). Trowler (2001) argues that one of the key values of 'new managerialism' is a top-down approach to organizational change and a prioritizing of managerial over professional ideology, that is, "a growth in the numbers of public sector managers and in their power relative to other organizational groups" (Clarke et al. 2000, p. 9).

Thus, the drive for more efficiency and effectiveness in universities has necessitated the adoption of managerial approaches. The manager has grown in importance, challenging the traditional dominance of academics. Thus, what has been termed administrative/management restructuring in universities has by and large entailed redistribution of power – from academics to the Executive Management.

It was in the context of these global policy trends that restructuring at the University of Botswana took place. This is not to insinuate that the exercise was a mimic of the global trend. Although globalization has led to a "convergence in policy and practice throughout [the world]" (Priestley 2002, p. 122), institutions' responses to the phenomenon have differed due to mediation by local cultural, economic and political conditions, a process Green (1999) terms 'glocalization'. Thus, as Giddens (1990) has observed, globalization is paradoxical and contradictory, and for this reason policy responses to it are "neither coherent nor uniformly systematic" (Hyland 1994, p. 33). This point is important to bare in mind in the context of this paper for the simple reason that although restructuring at the University of Botswana was a response to globalization, the ultimate shape it assumed was as much a function of local internal forces as it was of external influences. Herein lies the explanatory potency of the global/local dialectic.

Data and methods

Data collection for the study relied on two main sources: university publications and interviews with key informants. These complemented each other. The restructuring exercise generated a large amount of

documentation in the form of minutes of meetings, consultancy and task force reports. These were analysed to tease out the thinking behind the exercise. What documentary analysis could not provide interviews with 12 key informants did. With the exception of four all the interviews were unstructured and on the informal side. Only those who were closely involved in the exercise (from its conception to its implementation) were interviewed. These included four members of Task Force 1, two Council members, three members of the Academic and Senior Administrative Staff Association and two heads of department and one dean of faculty. Restructuring generated a lot of debate in the University; in departmental and faculty boards meetings. These, together with my personal reflections on the exercise as someone who witnessed the exercise, were invaluable sources of information.

Local context of restructuring at UB

For organizational purposes I classify local pressures for administrative/management restructuring at UB into two: national and institutional. The former comes in two forms; first, public sector reforms that were a response to economic globalization, and second, increased demand for university education resulting partly from implementation of the Basic Education Programme in the early 1980s. The University's response to these two pressures was proactive. Institutional pressure came in the form of a perceived weak, if not immobilized, management structure of the University. I look at each of these pressures in more detail below.

Public sector reforms

The world economic recession of the 1970s and 1980s had by the mid-1980s caught up with Botswana. Revenues from diamond sales fell, resulting in stockpiling of the 'precious stone'. It was clear by the end of the National Development Plan (NDP) VII (1985/86–1990/91) that government's levels of expenditure would not be sustainable in the next plan period, NDP VIII (1991/92–1996/97): "Because of the tapering off of growth of diamond production and sales, and because of the high proportion that mineral revenues represent in total Government revenues, very little growth in real Government revenues is forecast for the early years of NDP7" (Republic of Botswana 1991, p. 52). The principle underlying planning for the plan period 1991/92–1996/97, therefore, was

to be the deceleration of the rate of expenditure growth. This meant “curtailing development expenditure, with real increases ending in 1992/93, and thereafter reducing real development expenditure by a further 6% pa.” (NDP VIII: 53). NDP VIII forecast gloomy economic prospects, such that there was going to be a need for austerity measures across the entire public sector. The University of Botswana, it seems, took note of the tone set by Government and started preparing for a future scenario of reduced funding from Government. One such step was the workshop “*Preparing for NDP VIII: Strategic Planning for the University of Botswana*”, organized by the University in November 1991. In his opening remarks the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education is said to have forewarned of gloomy prospects ahead: “The uncertainty and threat which would be characteristic of Botswana’s development in the 1990s would mean that more would have to be expected to be done with less resources being provided by Government” (University of Botswana 1991, p. 3).

With this future scenario of austerity measures, issues of efficiency and effectiveness came to the fore. The challenge facing the University therefore was that of maintaining and enhancing the quality of its products with a less generous resource base than it had enjoyed during the 1980s.

There is no doubt therefore that restructuring at UB was initiated partly as a response to neo-liberal economic reforms, which were Government’s response to globalization. It is beyond the remit of this paper to discuss in detail mechanisms through which globalization penetrated economic thinking and planning in Botswana. It suffices to observe that unlike in some sub-Saharan African countries where neo-liberal economic ideas were ‘imposed’ through Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), Botswana’s embracing of circulating global economic ideas was voluntary, coming largely through international policy advice (Siphambe 2003).

Anticipated increase in the demand for university education

It must have been easy for the University to anticipate this development. Introduction of the Basic Education Programme (BEP) in the early 1980s through the 1977 National Policy on Education led to a phenomenal expansion of secondary education. Implementation of the programme saw junior secondary schools increasing from 40 in 1983 to 120 by 1989 (Meyer et al. 1993). Furthermore, projections showed that

between 1991 and 2001 the number of students enrolled in Form V (the final year of secondary education) would increase from approximately 6000 to a predicted 20,000 (University of Botswana 1990, p. 8). Invariably, demand for university education would increase in the years to come and the University would have to be prepared for that increase.

In the light of this concern the University Council in 1990 invited an External Review Commission to provide guidance on an array of issues, including “the restructuring of the current administrative, organizational and academic structures with a view to decentralizing and/or consolidating or merging certain functions in order to achieve effective administration in a rapidly expanding institution” (University of Botswana 1990, p. 4). And, as argued above, the University was aware of the fact that the expansion of the institution was going to occur in an “economic climate which [was] not as propitious as [had] formerly been the case” (University of Botswana 1993, p. 6). Council considered the Review Commission’s report in 1991 and accepted the recommendation to restructure the University.⁴ Senate was authorized to form Task Forces to undertake the detailed work regarding the reorganization exercise. In all, seven Task Forces were established. The one relevant to my analysis here is Task Force 1, whose specific term of reference was to “address all matters relating to the reorganization of the administration” (VCG.2/98, as cited in University of Botswana (1993), p. 2). The Task Force presented its first report to Council in 1992. Council approved the report with amendments and authorized that the restructuring exercise be completed in accordance with the guidelines set out by Task Force 1. In 1993 Task Force 1 presented its second report (with a proposed structure) to Council. In 1998 implementation of the new organizational structure began. The structure could best be described as ‘expanded’: it had 17 Directorates (some with Deputy Directors), each with line managers and ancillary staff. Posts had well-defined duties and responsibilities clearly laid out in organograms and flow-charts. Not only was the organizational structure expanded, new language reflecting managerial tendencies emerged with this structure. Nomenclature traditionally associated with the University (such as Registrar, Bursar, assistant registrar) disappeared from statutes books. In came the language of new managerialism – director, manager, senior management team, strategic planning, and ‘Vice-Chancellor’ was used interchangeably with ‘Chief Executive Officer’. Again, the underlying motivation for deciding to restructure was the concern for efficiency and effectiveness.

The issue of external reviewers (i.e., consultants) is very important because it was one mechanism through which globalization influenced the restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana. Consultancy work has grown into a huge global industry, a development closely related to the rise of academic capitalism in universities (Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Consequently, attention has turned to the consultant as a globalizing agent (Leach 1999; Samoff and Carrol 2002), shaping national ideologies and agendas from international to national to institutional levels. The use of external reviewers (these were not only external to the University, they were also external to the country) was rationalized in terms of “learning from those who have been there before”. It is significant that the two most important committees in the administrative/management restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana (the Review Commission and Task Force 1) extensively used overseas consultants. Consultancy work, therefore, is part of a global system of communication networks through which educational ideas are being globalized. It contributes to the global homogenization and standardization of practices in education.

The collegial system as a constraint

At the same time as external pressures were exerting themselves on the University there also was internal pressure on the institution to relook at its administrative/management structures. In the late 1980s there emerged a general perception that the administrative/management structures had become immobilized, leading to a situation of near-paralysis. Not only was management seen as ineffectual, the Vice-Chancellor (hereafter the 1st Vice-Chancellor), in particular, was viewed as being indecisive. Given this strong perception of organizational inertia some deemed it essential to revamp the University’s structures.

However, to argue that the Vice-Chancellor was indecisive does not tell us much. A more sophisticated explanation for the inertia is needed. The explanation lies, I suggest, in the collegial system as both an enabling and a constraining structure. This position necessarily invokes the structuration postulate (as propounded by Giddens 1976, 1979), which posits that “the course of social history results from mutually constituting agent choices and structural dispositions” (Scholte 2000, p. 91). Actors (be they Vice-Chancellors or teachers) do not act in a sociological vacuum. Their actions are simultaneously enabled and constrained by the context or structures within which they

operate. Thus, structures and agents are mutually constitutive. Explanations that give primacy to one aspect of the dualism fail to appreciate the mutuality of the two. Structuration theory is, therefore, useful in exploring human action/inaction in given situations. How then can the theory help us analyse the perceived immobility of University of Botswana management structures under the 1st Vice-Chancellor? To answer this question I need to look at the management structure that obtained before restructuring. This is how the structure has been described:

The management model at the University of Botswana could be clearly characterized as a combination of academic collegiality intimately sharing power with an administrative bureaucracy. In such a model the bureaucracy traditionally functions as a civil service with the ultimate authority being firmly placed in the hands of the academics through their membership to Senate (University of Botswana 1991, p. 22).

Under the collegial system it is agreed generally that decision-making is based on a broad understanding of participation and consultation, with the academics firmly in control, although the group can hardly be said to be homogeneous. However, it would appear that it was the belief of the architects of the restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana that, given external pressures of austerity measures, this model was inimical. It constrained timeous decision-making because it was inflexible, so the argument went. One constant criticism of the 1st Vice-Chancellor's leadership style was that he 'over-consulted'. This dissatisfaction with the collegial model is succinctly captured in the contribution of one of the participants in the 1991 University of Botswana *Strategic Planning Workshop*:

One of the major changes to occur in management [is] the movement away from a consensus model of management towards a more executive style. If universities [are] to be responsive to change and to be able quickly to change as a result of the external environment, they [have] to be able to move away from the consensus model of government (where the tenured professional academic staff [are] allowed to regulate resources through collegial means) to executive styles of management which [allow] them to be adaptive and flexible. This is an essential first step in a period of economic restraint and cut-backs (Littlewood 1991, p. 5, emphasis in the original).

The constraining nature of the collegial system is alluded to also in the Task Force 1 report. It justifies restructuring in terms of the “need to develop a structure that enhances the leadership role of the Vice-Chancellor”, an implicit acknowledgement of the fact that the structure obtaining then constrained the Vice-Chancellor’s action. The report goes further to note that there is a “need to strike a balance between participation, consultation, collegial decision-making, and timeous decision-making” (University of Botswana 1993, p. 8). Although these sentiments paint a picture of a powerless Vice-Chancellor, in reality the position wielded considerable power. The Review Commission saw this very power as constraining on the Vice-Chancellor: “the present structure is far too unbalanced and places too heavy a burden and day-to-day responsibility on the Vice-Chancellor” (University of Botswana 1990, p. i). It was a case of one being constrained by the power they wielded. This paradox, I argue, arises out of the “monocephalic” (Neave 1998) institutional design (where the Vice-Chancellor heads both the academic and administration streams) obtaining at the University of Botswana. This makes the VC’s position ambiguous, an observation that was made at the Strategic Planning Workshop: as Chairperson of Senate (s)he has to be “responsive to his (sic) academic colleagues as chairman (sic) of Senate, while at the same time being head of the bureaucracy by virtue of his position as Chief Executive Officer” (University of Botswana 1991, p. 22). (S)he has also to contend with demands from Council. Even the strongest of characters may be overwhelmed by the demands placed on them by such a system. Thus, the system was constraining. It had to go.⁵ As I argue below, the entire restructuring exercise was aimed at eroding the collegial system.

The discussion above sets the context for the question I address in the next section: precisely how did the restructuring exercise shift the balance of power in favour of the Executive Management? This is a vexing question, one that has generated numerous conspiracy theories, some bordering on racial prejudice. But conspiracy theories are just that. They lack explanatory potency. I eschew these theories when addressing this question, in favour of more enlightened interpretations of events. These are interpretations grounded on an understanding of change as a political activity involving issues of power, control and legitimacy.

Restructuring as redistribution of power and control

Clark (1983) proposes that institutional governance be understood in terms of two related dimensions: the vertical and horizontal profiles. These profiles are basically about distribution of power and authority in an organization. Though somewhat dated, these profiles provide a heuristic device for understanding how the locus of power shifts in times of restructuring. In the context of universities, the 'vertical profile', according to de Boer and Denters (1999), refers to the "relations between centralized and decentralized systems. In a fully centralized system, one or more governing bodies at the central level are empowered to take 'all' the decisions for the whole organization" (p. 223). A distinguishing feature of universities, in Maassen and Van Vught's (1994) view, is the diffusion of decision-making power throughout the organization. That is, powers in universities are distributed differentially over different organizational layers/levels, the latter constituting the vertical profile of the organization (departments, faculties, middle-level management, and senior management teams). As Currie et al. (2003) observe, "changes of functions and roles at one level affect balances of power at the other levels within the system" (p. 81). In the collegial system power is held in the hands of academics through the committee system. If one wanted to disempower academics (in the vertical profile) these committees would be targeted for reform. In the 'horizontal profile' powers are distributed between two or more bodies on the same level. Examples of such bodies are Council, Executive Management and Senate. Here also changes in the functions of one body affect the balance of power in the whole system. As noted earlier in the paper, Senate wields considerable power and authority in the collegial system. Thus Senate is a likely target of attempts to reform the collegial system.

These two profiles were essentially the targets of the restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana. Two related processes were set in motion to alter the balance of power in favour of Executive Management: the vertical profile was altered by reviewing the structures themselves (by introducing new management levels), and the horizontal profile through the review of University statutes. Together, the two processes ensured a shift from the bureau-professional order (whose erosion is lamented by the Youngman Report of 2004) to the managerial order. I turn now to each of these processes to demonstrate how they exactly altered the balance of power in the system.

Restructuring the vertical profile: expanding the administrative cadre

As already stated, a striking feature of the revised organizational structure that was implemented in the period 1998–2000 was the expanded administrative cadre. But how did it happen that an exercise that set out to explicitly come up with a leaner and streamlined structure ended up producing a bloated one? The structure has caused consternation, even among Task Force 1 members, who argue that what they had proposed was a ‘leaner and meaner’ structure which rather than concentrate power at the centre would have devolved it to the lower layers of the vertical profile. Bare in mind the concern that the upper echelons of the old structure were over-burdened with responsibilities. It was only logical to propose a structure that devolved power and responsibility. Indeed, the restructuring exercise had as one of its main aims the decentralization and devolution of power and responsibilities from the executive to lower levels: “[There is] need for increased delegation of authority and responsibility by senior managers, accompanied by acceptance of accountability for their performance and the performance and actions of sub-ordinates” (University of Botswana 1998, p. 2). The rhetoric of decentralization and devolution was a potent one – by promising ‘empowerment’ of the ‘grassroots’ it minimized resistance to the reform. Minimized resistance, however, could lead only to the further concentration of power at the top.

It is reported that Council at its August 1998 meeting to consider the final draft documents on restructuring questioned the expanded nature of the proposed structure. The Executive is said to have deflected this concern by arguing that it was a futuristic structure. By 1998 it had become clear that University enrolment was going to increase faster than had been projected at the conception of the restructuring exercise. An expanded structure, Executive Management is said to have argued, would obviate the need for another restructuring exercise in the foreseeable future. Council acceded.

I believe the reasons for the expanded structure are subtler than this. I would like to submit that the genesis of the structure could be traced to one fateful event in the restructuring exercise – the assumption of duty by a new Vice-Chancellor (hereafter the 2nd Vice-Chancellor) in February of 1998. This event, in my view, marked a turning point, a discontinuity in the entire process of restructuring. She not only inherited an incomplete exercise, she also inherited a prolonged if not stalled exercise. This is important to keep in mind if we are to appreciate the actions of the new

regime vis-à-vis the restructuring exercise. When the 2nd Vice-Chancellor took over only Director level posts of the new organizational structure had been developed. Task Force 1 had smartly shied away from addressing the organizational and administrative structure below the level of Director. The view of the Task Force was that this was work to be done by members of the administrative departments that would be undergoing restructuring. It was the 2nd Vice-Chancellor's regime which was to preside over the latter process. This was an opportunity for the new regime to move the process in its own desired direction. Such is the nature of the process of change. It is never a simple and linear process as portrayed in change models informed by the ideology of technical rationality. Policy change is a "cyclical and iterative process that occurs in different contexts" (Helsby 1999, p. 23). At each point in the cycle change is contested and struggled over. Though a cycle, it is one characterized by ruptures, gaps and discontinuities, each of these offering fresh opportunities for policy reinterpretation and recreation. New actors in a process of change bring their own values, perspectives and ideologies that may change the course of events. Thus change is not a neutral, technical and rational undertaking. It is a political activity. It should not, therefore, be surprising that at its completion the restructuring exercise had achieved only the exact opposite of what it had intended to achieve. Ironically, it was the proposal for a 'leaner and meaner' structure by the regime of the 1st Vice-Chancellor that was the incubator of the current expanded organizational structure.

The lean and mean structure proposed initially threatened powerful vested interests. It was perceived by some in the administration as a veiled attempt to purge the administration of what it considered 'undesirable elements'. To these individuals, the language that accompanied the proposal – 'forced retrenchment', 'exit packages', and 'forced severance', confirmed that the threat was real. Perhaps what irked this group most was the attempt to 'professionalize' the administration, that is, the attempt to increase the "level of formal qualifications that [were] required to hold a position as university administrator" (Gornitzka and Larsen 2004: 463). This must have threatened those who had only first degrees and those without degree qualifications who had risen through the ranks to middle-level management positions. It was in their interest that the restructuring process should stall, and it did stall between 1994 and 1996. In the view of one of the affected administrators, the 1st Vice-Chancellor was aware of the power of the group but seemed powerless to do anything about it. The group, the interviewee stated, had in a

series of meetings with the Vice-Chancellor, expressed its disquiet with restructuring, and had lobbied powerful politicians to intervene on its behalf. Whether the latter did so or not is not clear. In the views of those who were closely involved in the restructuring exercise the Vice-Chancellor was aware of the political sensitivity of the exercise and that it was constraining him, hence the perceived organizational inertia. Most probably the political sensitivity of the exercise was an important consideration in Council's choice of an outsider (a white American woman) to succeed the 1st Vice-Chancellor; that unencumbered with institutional politics the outsider would be able to resuscitate the exercise.

The analysis offered above is supported by subsequent developments under the 2nd Vice-Chancellor. Upon assumption of duty she adopted a 'hands-on' approach to the restructuring exercise, unlike her predecessor. For example, she immediately decided that the consultant engaged by the University in 1997 to advise and assist in the finalization of work on restructuring (and whose remit was to advise on job measurement and evaluation; and development of appropriate grade and pay structure) "should work with and report to a Senior Management Group consisting of the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellors". She decided also that the *modus operandi* for the implementation – deploying and redeploying of personnel within the new structure was to be "*decided by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellors*" (University of Botswana 1998, p. 4, emphasis added). Although this 'hands-on' initiative was meant to ensure smooth and timeous decision-making, it also marked the first step towards concentration of power in the Executive, an indelible mark of her reign. The reason for this swift shift towards executive powers is not very clear, and it is the one that has spawned an array of conspiracy theories. However, it is possible on the basis of her subsequent leadership style to make informed speculations on this swift shift, mainly that; she must have been briefed on the "stalled" restructuring exercise; the situation desperately needed rescuing, and; that it needed decisive and bold leadership. Perhaps more importantly, it could be that she understood very well the role of internal politics, especially the way they adversely affected the restructuring exercise and the general operations of the University. Judging by the way she approached the stalled exercise, she must have concluded that the first thing to do to resuscitate the exercise would be to engage in a confidence and consensus-building exercise. The unfinished restructuring exercise offered her a 'golden' opportunity. How then did she exploit the opportunity, and with what consequence?

A strategy sensitive to internal politics had to be developed. Rather than a 'lean and mean' structure and the use of career-threatening language, the 2nd Vice-Chancellor's regime opted for an expanded and all-inclusive structure. Concessions were made. The threatening language of 'exit packages', 'redundancies' and 'forced severance' was dropped. The concessions are captured in the document: *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Revised Organizational Structure of the University of Botswana*, approved by Council in August 1998:

The University will absorb existing staff into the new structure through a process of redeployment, give preference when positions are advertised to existing staff when qualifications and experience are equal to others and, provide appropriate training as necessary to effect an effective and efficient organization.

There will be no compulsory retrenchment, redundancies or forced severance arising out of the implementation of the new organizational structure of the University (University of Botswana 1998, p. 1)

In fact, not one person lost their job. The result: an expanded structure. It is for this reason that I contend that the lean and mean structure proposed by Task Force 1 was the incubator of the expanded structure we have today.

By breaking with the commitments of the old regime the new regime undoubtedly endeared itself to staff and won their confidence. The 'settlement' must have been very reassuring to those who had reservations about the restructuring exercise. But the 'basking' did not last long – the 'settlement' created another battle frontline. The expanded organizational structure shifted the balance of power on the vertical profile. Two basic vertical layers emerged as distinct and pronounced (though related) layers: the Senior Management Team (the Vice-Chancellor and his/her Deputies), and a Middle Management layer of Directorates. The coming into being of these layers has neutralized the power academics had under the collegial system. Power has now shifted to the centre. My interest is in the changed relationship between academics and middle management.

Newson (1992) opines that one effect of an expanded middle management in universities is the deprofessionalization or marginalization of faculty. This is achieved through the proliferation of cross-institutional and non-disciplinary academic support units (Henkel 1997). These units take power away from the academic and specialist base and render decision-making subject to institutional rather than academic definitions. The process of taking power away from academics is a

discursive practice. The academic base has to be discursively reconstructed as deficient and therefore in need of therapeutic attention. To illustrate this argument I take the case of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD), one of the Directorates which resulted from the restructuring exercise. The Centre is responsible for teaching and learning, academic programme review and research – all activities that traditionally have been carried out by academics. Although only an academic (of a rank not below that of Associate Professor) can lead it, its other personnel may often be drawn from amongst administrators. And though it is presented as a support unit, in practice it generates policy for the University, ranging from review and development of academic programmes to the promotion of new methods of teaching, areas that traditionally fall within the purview of the academics. Thus the Directorate has usurped the powers and responsibilities of academics since it has the powers to redefine departmental teaching and programme development agendas. In short, the work of academics is being redefined with “management [assuming] more organizational space and visibility in running the enterprise” (Gumport 2000, p. 78). The initiative is shifting from departments/faculties to the Centre. This has caused resentment among academics to policy proposals (brought to them for their ‘input’) from the Directorate since such proposals are seen as encroaching in areas best understood by academics. The shift in the balance of power described above, from academics to administrators, is succinctly captured in Rhoades’ (1998) twin concepts of academics as “managed professionals” and administrators as “managing professionals”.

Whilst restructuring ‘empowered’ the expanded middle management vis-à-vis academic departments and faculties, it at the same time made sure that the authority of the former was, nonetheless, limited. All the Directors are on contract employment. Except for the Vice-Chancellor and his/her Deputies, contract employment for middle management (unless an employee was an expatriate) was unknown prior to restructuring. Contract employment resonates with the discourse of productivity – that people employed on contract terms tend to be more productive than those enjoying the ‘security’ of a ‘permanent and pensionable’ dispensation. However, there is more to it than just productivity; it enhances the position of the Executive vis-à-vis middle management. To appreciate this let us revisit the concept of ‘monocephalic’ (where the Vice-Chancellor heads both the academic and administrative hierarchies of the institution) mentioned earlier on.

Constitutionally, every employee of the University of Botswana is accountable to the Vice-Chancellor either directly, or indirectly through his/her Head/supervisor. With respect to Directors, the Vice-Chancellor presides over consideration of their appointment and contract renewal. This gives him/her greater flexibility over these employees. Thus, contract employment (and the attendant job insecurity) is a regulatory mechanism that enhances the position of the Executive. Thus, while it is argued that middle level management has disempowered academic staff, it is also recognized that it (Directors in particular) had to pay a price for its 'empowerment', in the form of job insecurity and, presumably, increased levels of stress. There is a sense therefore in which winners were at the same time losers.

However, job insecurity was compensated for by very attractive remuneration packages. Some directors attract salaries equivalent to those of full Professors. Managers on average earn salaries that are higher than those of lecturers. This has irked academics who, in addition to being overworked, feel shut out of the system. All this makes the shift in balance of power real. Not surprisingly, this has led to the contestation of the concept of 'core business' of the institution. Before restructuring there never was any lingering doubt as to who embodied the 'core' values of the institution. It was the academics. Administrators 'supported' them in the execution of the 'core' mission. One can trace the overt manifestation of this contestation to the 1999 University staff strike over pay. Academics and senior administrative staff (Deputy Directors and Managers) went into the strike as a single group under the banner of their Association, the Academic and Senior Administrative Staff Association. The strike 'forced' Management to the negotiation table with staff. A new salary structure had to be developed with input from all the stakeholders. This, among other things, involved the setting of priorities as an initial step. The Academic staff was quick to point out that the salary structure had to reflect the fact that academics embodied the 'core' values of the University. Administrators strongly contested the idea that some people were at the core and some were not. Perhaps the expanded structure that had just been implemented had convinced them that they too were just as important to the institution as academics. Again, the change of their nomenclature from 'non-academic' to 'support' staff, resulting from the restructuring exercise, might have convinced them that there was nothing 'non-academic' with them, after all. If there were a core, then we all belonged to it, they argued. All of a sudden what had

always seemed sacrosanct and non-contestable, the core, had become a rallying point for both academics and administrators in their bids to out-manuever one another. Administrators must have felt vindicated by the outcome of the salary negotiations. But the chasm between the two remains to date. I turn now to the second mechanism through which power was redistributed from faculty to the centre: the statutes review exercise.

Restructuring the horizontal profile: the statutes review exercise

University Statutes are more than just rules and regulations guiding operations of the institution. They embody power and are devices for distributing that power amongst the various governing bodies of the university. It is these bodies that constitute the horizontal dimension of the institution.

From the onset of the restructuring process it was recognized that the exercise had to go hand-in-hand with a review of the statutes and committee system, the latter constituting the academics' locus of power and authority (University of Botswana 1998, p. 4). A Working Group on the Revision of the University of Botswana Statutes was established in 1995. A draft was submitted to Senate in December 1996, which referred the draft to the various structures of the University for comments and observations. In November 1997 and February 1998 a Senate Reference Group considered the draft statutes. Note that the latter date coincided with the departure from office of the 1st Vice-Chancellor. In the true spirit of her hands-on approach, the 2nd Vice-Chancellor, upon assumption of duty, revised the draft statutes with the assistance of the Working Group. Review of the statute on Senate is considered below to illustrate the manner in which the exercise augmented managerial tendencies.

Senate reforms

The locus of academic authority in universities modeled on the British system is the Senate. As I have stated earlier in the paper, it is in this body that the collegial system has its basis. A radical reshaping of Senate could result in either the erosion or enhancement of the collegial system. Invariably, this body is a significant target for efforts to redistribute power in a university. The general view (one also reflected in the Youngman Report) is that the position of academics in the reformed

Senate was weakened. As the analysis below demonstrates, indeed the number of academics in Senate was reduced considerably and that of administrators/managers increased. But whether this translated necessarily into a weaker voice of academics in Senate is far from clear.

In the old statutes membership of Senate comprised the Vice-Chancellor (as Chairperson), Deputy Vice-Chancellors, all Deans of the Faculty, Professors (including Associate Professors), Heads of Institutes, Heads of Academic Departments, the Librarian, one member elected annually by each Faculty Board, and two students elected annually by and from the Student Representative Council. The Registrar was the Secretary of the Senate.

But who in Senate was/is an academic and who was/is an administrator/manager? To answer this question it is necessary first to make a distinction between what Deem (2003) terms “manager-academics” and “academic-managers”. The latter refers to career managers while the former refers to those “academics who take on management roles in higher education institutions, whether temporarily or permanently” (Deem and Brehony 2005, p. 232). The two groups combined are what we refer to as administrators in this paper. The increased prominence of academics in management has led to a pronounced divide between manager-academics and those academics not in management roles (Deem and Johnson 2000). The statutes review exercise at UB moved deans of faculty into management roles. It is therefore clear that in the old statutes it was the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Institutes who were manager-academics. Thus, academics (deans, heads of department and professors) comprised the overwhelming majority in Senate. Undoubtedly, the Senate was the locus of academic authority and power. However, given its size the Senate was costly and unwieldy. There was general agreement that Senate needed to be reformed in order to make it smaller and more efficient, but there were sharp differences on how to accomplish this. When finally the draft statutes were submitted to Council for approval at its meeting in August 1998, the composition of Senate had drastically changed: Heads of Academic Departments had been removed; each Faculty was to send two representatives, one of whom had to be a Professor or Associate Professor. In came some of the Directors: Research and Development, Academic Services and Deputy Director of Affiliated Institutions. Thus while the number of academics was reduced, that of manager-academics and academic-managers grew. Given that the Senate is the academic decision-making body of the

University, the position of academics in the revised Senate (at least as far as the 'number game' is concerned) was weakened, a development that irked the Task Group on the Review of the University of Botswana Act and Governance Structures (2004):

Senate should have a more strategic role than hitherto and should be a key location for the integration of academic, financial and physical planning. The principle of shared governance is the key to the relationship between Senate and the Council. Senate membership must, therefore, be changed to reflect this. This should be done through extending the present membership to include key actors in the academic field, namely heads of academic departments and other academic posts (p. 5).

The principle of shared governance involves the "recognition of the professional competence and expertise of the faculty, as well as that of the administration, in the University's decision-making process" (California State University at Los Angeles, as cited in McGuinness (2002), p. 91). In the current statutory provisions, the Executive comprises a "control block" in the Senate, an indication of a shift of power from the academics to administrators. This has led to incessant complaints from academics that the decreased number of Professors in Senate has removed a critical review of decision-making and that Senate is no longer accountable to Faculties. Also strange from the perspective of heads of department is that their departmental programmes and issues are deliberated upon by a group of people that is essentially removed from the experiences of the departments.

The reform of Senate considered above is just one of the statutes that were targeted in the restructuring exercise's endeavour to disempower academic staff. There are others, such as the statutes on the Staff Appointments and Promotions Committee (SAPC) and appointment of Deans. In both these the voice of academics was weakened.

We may summarize this section by pointing out that restructuring involved redistribution of power along both the vertical and horizontal profiles of the University. It has resulted in the erosion of collegiality and a strengthened hand of Management. In particular, the expanded "administrative profession is, implicitly and explicitly, challenging the traditional dominance of the academics in institutional affairs" (Massen and Cloete 2002, p. 28). I have argued that these developments have led to a widening 'social distance' between academics and the administrators, with the former feeling marginalized.

Conclusion

This paper attempted an explication of the administrative/management restructuring exercise at the University of Botswana by locating the exercise in its global and local contexts. It has argued that the resultant structure was a product of the interplay between global and local forces. It has been demonstrated how administrative/management restructuring at the University of Botswana had an impact on the balance of power and authority in the institution and how this has in turn marginalized academic staff. Thus, far from being a benign exercise, restructuring was a micro-technology of power redistribution coated with the sugary language of cost-saving, streamlining, efficiency and effectiveness. This is language that appeals to common sense. But common sense arguments are productive, as Morley and Rassool (2000) point out; “common sense arguments constitute a potent form of hegemonic cultural capital (i.e., that to which we all must adapt) serving to provide stability to new regimes of truth” (p. 170). In the context of this paper the “new regime of truth” that needed legitimating was the bureaucratic, managerial structure. By using the language of efficiency and effectiveness, restructuring minimized resistance to the emergence of the new regime of truth. Efficiency and effectiveness were presented as politically neutral and non-controversial terms, and yet it is clear that they involve important power dynamics. One might ask: Effectiveness for what? In the context of our discussion, effectiveness would be defined in terms of the ability of Management to make decisions timeously with a minimum of the delays normally associated with the consensus model. Clearly, discourses of efficiency and effectiveness as justification for restructuring at UB concealed the political and ideological motive of the exercise, the realignment of Management – Faculty relations. To achieve this required first a discursive repositioning of the existing collegial system as ineffective and inefficient. This “discourse of derision” (Ball 1990) started with the institution of the University Review Commission, Task Force 1 and the Strategic Planning Workshop of 1991, just to mention a few. All these, implicitly and explicitly, ‘derided’ the collegial system and called for its dismantlement. The bureaucratized and managerial structure that ultimately was implemented was a realization of the ‘discourse of derision’.

It remains to be seen what these changes mean for the work of academics. This paper raises a number of questions that demand the attention of researchers: How has staff reacted to the rise of manage-

rialism? What can be done to ameliorate the situation? What are the implications of the low morale amongst staff for knowledge production in view of the central role the University plays in national development and competitiveness in a globalized economy? These, and many other, questions will soon demand answers from us.

Notes

1. The University of Botswana is the only higher education institution in the country (if by this is meant a degree-awarding institution). An Act of Parliament established it in 1982.
2. Although only two levels (global and local) are distinguished here it is acknowledged that the picture is more complex than this. In fact it is more useful to talk of multiple (global, regional, national and local) levels. Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) 'glonacal' heuristic is an acknowledgement of these multiple levels of interactions.
3. These concepts are complex, contested and often multi-dimensional. Though often presented as value-free, the concepts are "saturated with power relations" (Morley and Rassool 2000, p. 182). For detailed critiques of the concepts, see Welch (1998); Hoppers (1994).
4. For a detailed description of the initial stages of the restructuring exercise, see Ingalls (1995).
5. For a detailed critique of the collegial system, see Task Force 1's *First Report to Council on Revised Organizational Structure* of 1992. The report called for the dismantling of the committee system and 'derides' effectively the consensus-based model of operation.

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