

CONSIDERING TEACHING ON PAR WITH RESEARCH IN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS: A CASE FOR EPISTEMOLOGICAL PARTICIPATORY PARITY

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Abstract

This paper provides a conceptual articulation of *epistemological participatory parity* in university academic promotions. Nancy Fraser's (2007; 2008) three dimensional conception of participatory parity is used to understand how the balance between teaching and research may (or may not) contribute to; access and outcomes related to academic promotions opportunities (distribution), status and esteem between research and teaching as dominant promotion criteria (recognition) and the relative influence of these criteria in attaining full professorship in the academy (representation). It is argued that recognising teaching on par with research in academic promotions triggers epistemological participatory parity in the rewards and recognition associated with rank progression, which in turn catalyses gender equity in the academy and consequently galvanises other participatory parities between how knowledge is being produced (beyond the current norms of disciplinary research), by whom knowledge is produced (gender) and what knowledges are being produced (Mode 1 versus Mode 2). The activation of multiple participatory parities in higher education policy and practice promises to disrupt the current status quo, which marginalises academic women in relation to their male peers and subordinates teaching compared to research.

Keywords: *teaching and research, academic promotions, participatory parity, epistemology, gender, professoriate*

Introduction

In academia, career advancement refers to the hierarchical system of rank progression. Each step in this system often results in advances in status, improved job security, increases in remuneration and determines in large measure the institutional representation of academics in different the ranks from lecturer to full professor. There are differently nuanced ways in which to ascend this hierarchy, including academic promotion systems, staff appointment systems and peer recognition systems, depending on institutional policy directives, rank progression criteria and individual expectations and motivations. Internationally, the predominant meritocratic system for rank progression to full professor is academic promotion and the two most commonly used criteria are research and teaching (Olsen, 2005; Majcher, 2008; Crawford, Burns and McNamara, 2012, Marini 2016,

Subbaye, 2017a).

Arguably, a widespread view is that research productivity enhances promotion prospects to the professoriate and that teaching is not as important for rank attainment, especially among research intensive universities (Parker, 2008; Chalmers, 2011; Altbach, 2015; Soudien and Gripper, 2016). However this imbalance in the valuing of research and teaching is starting to shift, as many universities (including research-intensive ones) begin to consider teaching in their academic promotions policies (Cashmore, Cane and Cane, 2013; Probert, 2013; Vithal et al, 2013; Vithal, 2016, Subbaye, 2017a).

Universities around the world (US and CND million-man march against student debt, UK-fee increases and protests, SA-decolonisation and fees must fall) are increasingly under pressure to rethink underlying assumptions about the commodification of knowledge, performativity cultures and higher education funding formulae (Brew, 2001; insert more recent refs). To this end, re-establishing teaching as a criterion with currency in academic promotions (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b) and concurrently understanding research as a process of personal and social learning (Brew, 2001) suggest that some university policy makers may be recognising that the knowledge bases (Shulman, 1987) for academic work, teaching and research, are (or should be regarded as) *epistemologically* equivalent.

Consequently, an important implication of this ascendancy of teaching in academic promotions is the potential for establishing parity between research and teaching; as criteria for promotion in particular and, as modes of knowledge production more broadly.

(Re) Framing Participatory Parity in Academic Promotions

According to Fraser (2007; 2008) participatory parity is a three dimensional conception of justice that encompasses the theoretical concerns of distribution (e.g., inequality) and the philosophies of recognition (e.g., status hierarchy) and representation (e.g., political voice) as relatively independent but mutually compatible and co-implicated phenomena. Fraser's (Ibid.) defining characteristics of parity is that parity is a "qualitative condition, of being a peer, of being on par, of interacting with others on equal footing" (Fraser, 2007, p28). Grounded in this connotative meaning of parity, which goes beyond strict numerical notions of equality, distributive justice refers to fairness in terms of access and outcomes, recognition to fairness of status and esteem and representation to equality in terms of political voice and influence (Fraser, 2008). These three conditions, distribution, recognition and representation, are necessary for participatory parity and can contribute to the transformation of social systems by restructuring the underlying generative framework producing the original disparity.

In this paper, Fraser's framework for participatory parity is reframed to refer to what may be called epistemological participatory parity. Here epistemological is used to denote 'knowledge-how' and refers specifically to teaching and research as criteria (or knowledge-bases according to Shulman (1987)) for rank progression via academic promotion. Therefore in this paper epistemological participatory parity is used to signify:

- distribution in terms of how the balance of teaching and research criteria may (or may not) contribute to access to academic promotion opportunities and outcomes,

- recognition with regard to the status and esteem afforded to teaching and research in academic promotions policies and,
- representation in terms of the relative influence of teaching and research in academic promotions at various rank levels.

The aim of the paper is to provide a conceptual articulation of epistemological participatory parity by approximating the concurrent and comparable reward and recognition of teaching and research as criteria in academic promotions by drawing from five empirical studies about academic promotion conducted in South Africa (Table 1). Taken together the studies show how teaching features in relation to research in promotion policy across multiple institutions (Subbaye, 2017a); the extent to which access and outcomes in academic promotions were attributable to teaching and/or research (Vithal et al, 2013); which criteria were significant for promotion to which rank (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a); and whether the application of the criteria influenced who benefitted (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b; Subbaye 2017b).

Triggering Epistemological Participatory Parity in Academic Promotions

One way in which epistemological parity may be conceived is through the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). In his examination of the work of the professoriate, Ernst Boyer (1990) argued that current ideas about scholarship were too restrictive and the word itself had become semantically limited to research. What was needed was an expanded and more flexible definition of scholarship. Hence, he called for the recognition of four dimensions of scholarship in theory, practice and ultimately in rewards and recognition systems such as academic promotions. These dimensions of scholarship were discovery (or research), integration, application and teaching.

With regard to teaching, the scholarship of teaching has emerged and evolved to include learning (SoTL) over the years (see the literature review in Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a). While there is little consensus on the size and shape of SoTL as a concept, in recent times SoTL has come to include three main characteristic features and several dimensions of teaching. The characteristic features of SoTL are that it is peer-reviewed, publically shared and reproduced and built-on (Glassick, 2000). The dimensions of SoTL include reflective practice, action-, pedagogic, and/or educational research, quality, innovation, sharing of practise, rewards and recognition, professional development, etc. (Vardi and Quin, 2010; Fanghanel et al., 2015) and more recently, policy review and development (Vithal, 2016).

Specifically, it has been suggested that SoTL is analogous to “Mode 2” type knowledge production in that it is action-based and produced in the context of application (Gibbons et al., 1994; Fanghanel et al., 2015). In South Africa, the NCHE (1996) has suggested that in order to address the demands imposed by the complex needs of South Africa, higher education is expected to move away from Mode 1 knowledge production (the traditional, discipline-based knowledge-production model in universities) to Mode 2 knowledge production which is deemed more responsive to the changing contexts and circumstances of universities (NCHE, 1996). Enlarging the perspective of scholarship in this way allows the current study to postulate *parity of scholarship* in terms of teaching and research. At this point, it should be noted that knowledge is a product of scholarship. Hence, parity of scholarship will be taken further to comment on parity of knowledge and eventually epistemological parity.

[Insert counter-paragraph about scholarship of discovery [research] and knowledge production – Mode 1]

The studies show that, in contrast to universities elsewhere, many South African universities are beginning to recognise teaching as a criterion alongside research for promotion and are doing so for all rank levels including to full professor. This can be observed in those institutions that are more research-focussed. There are mainly two types of pathways in South Africa; single track and multiple-track. Single track pathways require that academics provide evidence of achievement and/or competence for both teaching and research in promotions albeit with different emphases or weightings. In multiple track pathways, promotion is offered via research and teaching tracks. Multiple track pathways (-separate but equal argument-) do little to foster parity of esteem between teaching and research. At the very least single-track promotion pathways enable parity of recognition between teaching and research at each rank level by preserving the status and esteem of these criteria in what is valued for access to academic promotions opportunities (Subbaye, 2017a).

Key elements of how teaching features in the national policy domain resonated with practice in terms of the actual promotions outcomes in the case study in some respects, but were contradictory in others. Firstly, a single-track promotion pathway, which recognises both teaching and research (with different emphases), rather than a dual-track was identified as the dominant approach to academic promotion across all ranks among South African universities (Subbaye, 2017a). The empirical evidence showed that in the single-track pathway most of the applicants were evaluated with excellence in teaching (Vithal et al, 2013; Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a). Moreover, among those who were successful in this pathway, more academics were evaluated with excellence in teaching than excellence in research (Vithal et al, 2013; Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a). Hence, promotion pathways, which simultaneously evaluate more than one criterion, widen access to promotion and broaden opportunities for successful promotion-outcomes at each rank level. Ultimately, this contributes to growing numbers of academic staff becoming eligible to apply for promotion who have greater chances of success based on their individual strengths. This can potentially result in a form of *parity of distribution in academic promotions applications and outcomes*.

Secondly, the dominant way in which teaching is evaluated in academic promotions across South African universities is via teaching portfolios, which encapsulate evidence of multiple teaching criteria (Subbaye, 2017a). This study supports the literature, which argues that broadening the range of teaching criteria allows academics multiple opportunities to demonstrate their achievements in teaching (Darwin, 2012; Miller & Seldin, 2014). Evaluating teaching using the teaching portfolios minimises the biases associated with traditional teaching evaluations and allows for teaching to be evaluated more rigorously. This contributes to the parity of representation of teaching in that the “*voice of teaching is on par*” with research in terms of evaluations for promotion and in influencing promotions outcomes.

Testing this argument in practice, Subbaye and Vithal (2017a) showed that all 10 teaching criteria considered for promotion in one university were found to demonstrate statistically significant relationships with overall teaching evaluations and promotions outcomes. This empirical evidence suggests that recognising multidimensional teaching criteria is an important step in promotion policy intentions in terms of recognising a broader range of teaching activities, which allows for widening opportunities for promotion outcomes. The multidimensionality of teaching in this context is comparable to that of SoTL, which is associated with the recognition of teaching as a domain of scholarship and knowledge (Mode 2). While consensus on the nature and

shape of SoTL remains elusive, Vithal (2016) argues that SoTL's multidimensionality is its strength and that it can be effective in mainstreaming the status of teaching at an institutional level, particularly in academic promotions (Vardi and Quin, 2010). Hence, SoTL also contributes to parity of representation in that teaching can be evaluated as a means for knowledge production (Mode 2) on par with research (Mode 1) in academic promotions.

Thirdly, a disjuncture can be observed between teaching criteria being valued in the academic policy and regulatory documents (Subbaye, 2017a) and those found to be empirically significant from analysis of the actual outcomes in the case study (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a; 2017b). While the national policy landscape foregrounded student- and peer-evaluation as dominant criteria for evaluating teaching (Subbaye, 2017a), which is also documented in the literature from other parts of the world (refs), these criteria were not significant when promotion outcomes were analysed in the case study (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a; Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b). Two criteria – postgraduate supervision and curriculum design – featured as commonly used teaching criteria for promotion to full professor in the policy analysis (Subbaye, 2017a). However, in the case study, only one of these, postgraduate supervision, demonstrated statistical significance for promotion outcomes to full professor (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a).

Moreover, the criterion 'sharing of teaching' featured as statistically significant for promotion to full professor (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a), but was not a prevalent teaching criterion across the policy documents (Subbaye, 2017a). On one hand, the criterion "sharing of teaching" provides further evidence that multidimensional criteria (that take into account the broader areas of academic work beyond research accomplishments and expectations of postgraduate supervision, especially for full professors) open up opportunities for rank progression into the professoriate (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b). On the other hand, more research is required to inform policy development about which criteria are significant for inclusion in academic promotions regulatory documents for different rank levels. Quite importantly, the criterion of 'sharing teaching' is an essential characteristic of SoTL (Glassick, 2000) and suggests that SoTL is beginning to shape the work of the professoriate and is being rewarded in promotions. This is in line with Boyer's (1990) vision regarding the rewards and recognition associated with scholarship.

An increasing number of traditional universities with high research productivity were found to be recognising teaching for promotion to full professor. This steering towards the valuing of teaching in the highest ranks of the academy can be attributed to several factors. These include increasing sector-wide growth in both the size and diversity of academic staff and in student numbers as well as the increased public attention being paid to teaching and learning outcomes by national oversight bodies (Subbaye, 2017a). Ironically, associate professors aspiring to be promoted to full-professors felt that teaching should not feature as a criterion for promotion to this rank (Subbaye, 2017b). Here, professorial identity was linked to achievements in research productivity and this may explain the persistent hegemony of research as an academic promotions criterion (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b). Nonetheless, the equal footing of teaching and research for promotion to full professor (the highest academic rank in South Africa) in the case study point to a *parity of representation in the professoriate* where teaching accrues the same status and esteem as research in academic promotions outcomes.

The literature shows that issues of academic promotion are central to the concerns and debates related to the relative values of teaching and research in contemporary universities. In addition, higher education sectoral

factors such as the industrial workload model in Australian universities, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in UK universities and National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings in South African universities, etc., tend to favour ~~research~~ and are often directly associated with promotion criteria at these institutions. However, taken together, the findings from the studies being examined suggest that promotion policies which recognise teaching simultaneously and equally with research and evaluate teaching using multidimensional criteria (beyond student and peer-evaluations – Darwin, 2012; Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a) broaden opportunities for successful promotion outcomes, especially for women into the professoriate (Barrett & Barrett, 2011; Subbaye and Vithal 2017b).

In terms of the dimensions for epistemological participatory parity, the findings from the five studies show that the recognition of both teaching and research challenges the norm of valuing only research. In addition, this recognition widens access and promotions outcomes for more academics with strengths in different aspects of scholarship, contributing to distribution that is more equitable across all ranks. The multidimensionality of teaching evaluations and the nature of SoTL has influence in transforming and extending the work of the professoriate and is creating a space for *how* teaching is being granted equivalent representation in the highest academic rank (where teaching is as influential as research). In this way, the participatory parity dimensions of recognition, distribution and representation of teaching and research in academic promotions exemplifies how epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions can be activated.

The veracity of the movement towards epistemological participatory parity can be tested further to reflect back on institutionalised value patterns of categories of people and the qualities associated with them. In this case, the category is gender and the qualities are masculine and feminine.

Catalysing Gender Participatory Parity in the Professoriate

The ascendancy of teaching as a criterion in academic promotions has major implications for accelerating gender parity in the senior academic ranks. The current unequal numbers between the sexes in the professoriate are well documented (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b). The reasons are many and varied. Vithal et al (2013) quantified the extent of gender inequity when only research is recognised for academic promotion. Other researchers have shown that targeted interventions and women- friendly policies for rank progression can increase gender equity (Mama, 2003; Teferra & Altbach 2003; Barrett & Barrett, 2011; Winchester & Browning, 2015; Paulus, 2016). In supporting and adding to the literature, institutional promotion structures such as promotion policy which takes into account a broader range of criteria, specifically teaching, were found to contribute to women's growing representation in the academy (Vithal et al, 2013) and more importantly in the professoriate (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b).

More specifically, increases in women's promotion success rates were linked to the recognition of both teaching and research (Vithal et al, 2013) and irrespective of promotion outcomes, women achieved higher scores for their teaching portfolios than men (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b). While there were no significant differences by gender when evaluating research, the inclusion of teaching resulted in gender-based differences in the overall teaching evaluation (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a/b?). The literature shows that women academics are more likely to have higher teaching workloads than men (Brink, 2010; Aiston, 2011; O'Meara 2015). Hence, the gender-based difference in the teaching evaluation points to the stereotype that in universities

teaching is manifestly a feminine quality. However, this stereotype does not mean that teaching is essentially women's work. Instead, it points to the view that research and teaching, which form the basis for academic promotion, need to be critiqued and challenged as gendered traits. In equalising opportunities for women academics, their participation in research across disciplines is important.

It follows that achieving gender parity is not just about efforts directed at increasing the number of women in the academy, but also about valorising work with "feminine" qualities on par with work that has "masculine" qualities (viz. research) which is evident in single-track promotion pathways that value both research and teaching for promotion. However, the sustained use of multiple promotion pathways used at some universities in South Africa (Subbaye, 2017a) with teaching- tracks as a means for promotion could "feminise" the professoriate and hence, is not a move towards parity between the sexes or between research and teaching (as argued earlier). With the implementation of teaching-tracks there is potential for friendly fire (with unintended consequences which are harmful to those the policy is intended to support) where teaching becomes essentialised as women's work and/or enacted by those occupying the junior ranks of academia. The valuing of teaching at the expense of research may result in more women rising in the ranks of the academy, but not in increasing recognition of their work as university teachers. Women's mere numerical representivity in the professoriate amounts to tokenism and is a form of misrecognition. More women plus feminised work would result in "feminisation" of the professoriate. In the long term, such feminisation (in the current neoliberal context in which universities operate) may result in the devaluing of academic work, further entrenching unequal opportunities for the social esteem of women.

Or vice versa, the valuing of research at the expense of teaching, contributes to cementing the hegemony of men in the higher ranks, and institutionalising historical patterns of the insubordination of teaching to research. A curious nuance here is that using multiple track promotion pathways currently result in undermining the recognition of university teaching regardless of whether a teaching or research track is applied. Stated differently, multiple promotion pathways that delink teaching from research have a tendency to emphasise the subordinate nature of teaching in relation to research. Maintaining the equal stature between teaching and research is important for South African universities, especially for those institutions that are research-focussed (traditional universities), in meeting the demands for student progression which has been linked to social redress and transformation.

Overcoming the insubordination of teaching in relation to research without valorising feminine qualities?

While professors are predominantly recognised for their roles as highly skilled researchers, their expertise as mentors who share and shape the experiences of junior colleagues was under-valued by institutions, as evidenced by the relatively few universities that recognise this element of professorial work in promotion policy (Subbaye, 2017a; MacFarlane 2012). Furthermore, professors perceive research as the core of their professional identity (Subbaye, 2017b; MacFarlane, 2011a; MacFarlane 2011b). It can be argued that current policy and professorial identity value masculine qualities of research (regardless of the sex that occupies the rank). However, the case study showed that, when it is taken into account, 'sharing teaching experiences with others' influenced promotion outcomes to full professor (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017a). This is indicative of how valuing criteria embodying feminine qualities alongside masculine qualities contributes to promotions outcomes. The implication is that epistemological parity in academic promotions also creates opportunities for

parity of recognising and representing the *gendered-qualities* of academic work.

The Joint Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART, 2010) found that, ‘Trends suggest that the substantial increase of women among junior teaching and research staff will continue in the future. Women are still more likely to be teachers than researchers, and remain a minority of full professors ... as well as in managerial and academic posts. This “glass ceiling” creates barriers to equality of opportunity, provokes career frustration, reduces dedication to institutional mission, and deprives institutions of full utilisation of valuable leadership resources. The situation calls for proactive institutional and national policies to encourage greater equality of opportunity’ (CEART, 2010).

Hence women’s ways of doing research (for example in the form of SoTL (or Mode 2)) and its contribution to their numbers in the professoriate (Subbaye and Vithal, 2017b), their declarative affinity for teaching (Subbaye, 2017b) and the collaborative values of full professors have the potential to expand on who produces knowledge, how knowledge is being produced and what knowledge is produced - beyond the narrow, competitive confines of disciplinary research dominated by men and masculine qualities. Women have the potential to disrupt existing epistemologies given the ways that women do teaching and conduct research.

Ultimately, this would transform the knowledge production status quo in the academy by facilitating numerical equity in the number of women professors as well as valuing feminine qualities (for example sharing) of academic work. Considering teaching on par with research suggests that epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions has the potential to activate gender participatory parity in the professoriate. In activating gender participatory parity in the professoriate, women need to be equally supported to succeed in research and men need to be encouraged to take greater responsibility for teaching.

On par with men as peers - Increasing the numerical distribution of women, their recognition as professors and representation as knowledge producers

From a national perspective, policies regarding gender equality and employment equity in South Africa are pervasive. Researchers argue that women’s rising numbers in higher education are precisely the consequence of these policies (Bhana and Pillay, 2014). Nevertheless, this is not enough. More is needed (Shackleton, Riordan & Simonis; 2006). Promotion policies catering for single-track promotion pathways that recognise a range of criteria contribute to better promotion outcomes for women and is one way to facilitate their rank progression (Vithal et al, 2013). Therefore the intersection of gender-, equity- and promotion- policies, together will contribute to the trend of a more even distribution of women (on par with men) at each rank level. In this way, gender and equity policies are seen as steering values that inform policy that regulate the practice of promotions. Promotions policy and practice thus become co-implicated phenomena. They occur simultaneously and are not coincidental (Davis, 2008).

Women’s numerical distribution and representation in the academic ranks will start to become more mainstream into the future. In particular, recognising teaching on par with research for promotion to full professor has a twofold effect. The first is the valorising of academic work with feminine qualities at the highest academic rank and the second is the diversity of ways of enacting scholarship. Women will influence the shape and direction of knowledge production and move towards becoming “insiders” in the professoriate. At the very least, the representation of women as professors will be on par with men in terms of parity of status and esteem

accrued to the rank. Together, the numerical distribution of women, their recognition as professors and representation as knowledge producers will result in gender participatory parity in the professoriate and within the academy at large. Simply put, gender participatory parity for academic women would encompass parity of participation comprising women's distribution in the academic ranks, recognition for academic work and ultimately representation *in the knowledge (re) production* enterprise of universities. This is in line with broader international initiatives including the UNESCO 1997 Recommendation and transformation policies for higher education in South Africa (Subotzky, 2003; Soudien, 2008).

Activating multiple parities in higher education

Recognising teaching on par with research activates epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions. Broadening the promotion criteria to include teaching widened access to promotion opportunities and contributed to successful promotions outcomes for more academics. This was achieved because a broader range of promotion criteria takes into account the different aspects of scholarship. The characteristics of SoTL (and the concomitant recognition of the multidimensionality of teaching) were influential in extending how knowledge is produced (beyond the current norms of disciplinary research) and what knowledges are produced (Mode 1 versus Mode 2).

In turn, epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions catalysed opportunities for gender participatory parity in the professoriate. The synthesis showed that access to academic promotions underpinned women's vertical distribution in the academic ranks. The valuing of teaching on par with research contributed to their recognition in the professoriate, which signified their representation (in numbers and in qualitative terms) of being on par with their male peers in terms of knowledge production.

Another feature of epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions suggests the potential parity of recognition between Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge production. This type of parity is in line with the NCHE's (1996) recommendations regarding the need for Mode 2 knowledge production in South Africa, which is deemed more responsive to the changing contexts and circumstances of universities and society. In addition, epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions creates opportunities for parity of recognising and representing the qualities of academic work, for example, by valuing the condition of collaboration (sharing teaching) on par with competition (independent research) in the professoriate. This has implications for the consideration of other subordinate criteria such as community engagement and leadership or service.

This paper shows that recognising teaching in promotion to full professor is beginning to shift the dominant cultural norms and values of the academy. Currently accepted practices, cultures and discourses are androcentric, with research prevailing as the locus of knowledge production. However, through growing recognition of teaching in academic promotions an emergent (and simultaneous) phenomenon is the subtle re-shaping and transformation of the higher education environment.

Epistemological participatory parity in academic promotions is starting to influence *what* knowledges are produced, *how* knowledge is being produced and *who* produces knowledge. Consequently, the custodians of decisional power – *who* and *how* they exercise decisions in the academy – are also changing. The activation of multiple participatory parities in policy and in practice are challenging current norms, changing dialogue and encouraging prudential deliberation in epistemic communities such as the South African academy.

Implications for galvanising epistemological participatory parity in higher education

The ascendancy of teaching in academic promotions is disrupting the hierarchal relationship between teaching and research and challenging the hegemony of research by activating opportunities for epistemological participatory parity. In promotions, such parity has implications for how knowledge is conceived, constructed and transmitted, namely, epistemological transformation in universities (Hall, 2006). Using Hall's (2006) definition of epistemological transformation, Soudien (2008) proposed a broader interpretation of transformation (for social justice) which comprised three elements, 'policy and regulatory compliance; epistemological change, at the centre of which is the curriculum; and institutional culture and the need for social inclusion in particular' (p. 36).

This paper argues that epistemological participatory parity extends the conception of 'epistemological change' beyond the focus on curriculum to include how valuing the current knowledge-bases of South African universities (teaching and research) has implications for policy and institutional culture. Hence, the interpretation of transformation in higher education is broadened to include epistemological participatory parity in signifying the three dimensions of justice:

1. parity of distribution in the resources related to teaching and research,
2. recognition of teaching on par with research in socio-cultural spheres and,
3. equal representation of teaching and research as Modes of knowledge production.

Limitations of the conceptual framework

This paper focussed on examining academic promotion policies from South African public universities and promotions outcomes from one large, research-intensive public university. It would also be useful to compare teaching in academic promotions and promotion outcomes across multiple research-focussed universities, across different types of universities as case studies and in private universities. This paper focused on the institutional arrangements between teaching and research as evidenced in promotions policy and outcomes. It was not intended to address disciplinary differences in this relationship, nor did it address in-depth the nature of the relationship between teaching and research. Rather, the relationship between the criteria and academic promotions were the focus.

Recommendations for future research

It is recommended that studies be conducted to explore if and how epistemological participatory parity manifests in other university reward and recognition systems such as performance management and tenure-track. Furthermore, the notion of epistemological participatory parity could be extended to examine the inclusion of other prevailing criteria used for academic promotions in different contexts.

This study focused on how epistemological participatory parity is exhibited in promotions applications and outcomes. An examination is also required of how it is enacted in promotion processes and procedures. Given the expansion of the higher education sector in South Africa and the concurrent demands for social redress, future comparative studies could explore how these factors are shaping the role of higher education in societies with development needs. More specifically, how are universities adapting (or not) traditional conventions of rank progression to become more responsive and relevant to society? At many universities, performance

management and academic promotions are intrinsically related. Future studies could examine this relationship and explore its influence on university cultures.

By broadly applying the dimensions of participatory parity, distribution, recognition and representation, to ranking systems, studies could explore whether or not university rankings contribute to widening or narrowing the gap between universities in the global South versus those in the global North. Finally, as more women rise through the ranks of the academy, more research is needed on their lived experiences of rank progression, particularly in university executive leadership positions.

Concluding remarks

While teaching is gaining ascendancy as a criterion in academic promotions policy across South African universities, the concurrent recognition of both teaching and research challenges the dominant norm of valuing only research, especially at research-led universities by activating epistemological participatory parity. In doing so, this concurrent recognition widened access to rank progression opportunities, enhanced the promotability prospects of more academics (especially women) with strengths in different aspects of scholarship and contributed to a more equitable gender distribution across all ranks.

The multidimensionality of teaching evaluations and the nature of SoTL were shown to have transformative potential to re-envision the profile of the professoriate. Creating spaces where teaching is as influential as research in the highest academic rank (full professor) defies the prevailing cultural norms and values of the academy, which are androcentric with research normalised as the locus of knowledge production.

Universities, especially research-led institutions in South Africa, need to reposition themselves to creatively confront and address contemporary challenges regarding student performance, decolonisation, and curriculum reform and race and gender equity, among others. Hence, this paper argues that recognising teaching on par with research in academic promotions triggers epistemological participatory parity in the rewards and recognition associated with rank progression, which in turn catalyses gender equity in the academy and consequently galvanises other participatory parities between how knowledge is being produced (beyond the current norms of disciplinary research), by whom knowledge is produced (gender) and what knowledges are being produced (Mode 1 versus Mode 2). The activation of multiple participatory parities in higher education policy and practice promises to disrupt the current status quo, which marginalises academic women in relation to their male peers and subordinates teaching compared to research.

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