

**Crisis management at South African universities: A case of the University of Cape Town
crisis management strategies**



Siyavuya Sinayo Makubalo MKBSIY002

A minor dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree
of Master of Arts in Media Theory and Practice

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2023

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature:

Date:

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to express my most profound appreciation to the Almighty God for seeing me through this journey. There were some challenging moments, but God, you carried me through.

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, who has been my pillar of strength throughout my entire life. Thank you for your sacrifices and support over the years. This one is for you, Mama.

Thank you to my family for encouraging me to pursue this degree and for their unwavering support. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my friends. You believed in me from the very beginning.

My sincerest gratitude also extends to my supervisor, Dr Ron Irwin. Thank you for your support and patience, especially during the challenging moments.

I also want to express my profound gratitude to WellSpring Community Church for their unshakable love and prayers throughout my studies. I could not have done this without you.

Lastly, I would like to thank my grandmother, who nurtured the person that I am. She greatly cherished education. May you continue to rest in peace. I hope I have made you proud, Tulu.

ABSTRACT

In recent years, crises have become frequent in society, affecting individuals, organisations, and institutions. Traditionally, higher education institutions were regarded as protected spaces. However, with the rising cost of tuition that significantly affects students from less privileged backgrounds, higher education institutions have been facing increasing crises in the form of student protests. When these crises have emerged, higher education institutions have resorted to implementing crisis response plans rather than developing crisis prevention strategies. The former can be distinguished from the latter by its focus on short-term resolution, which allows for crisis dormancy. This study examines whether higher education institutions' failure to distinguish between dormant and resolved crises has contributed to a culture of crisis management rather than crisis prevention.

Plagiarism Declaration

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the **UCT author-date convention** for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation in this essay from the work(s) of other people has been acknowledged through citation cited and referenced.
3. This essay is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
5. I have done the word processing and formatting of this assignment myself.
6. I have used a spell and grammar check with a UK language setting before submitting the essay.
7. I have double-checked all proper names and references.

Crisis management at South African universities: A case of the University of Cape Town crisis management strategies	1
COMPULSORY DECLARATION	1
Acknowledgements	2
ABSTRACT	3
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	8
Protest Action	8
Student Protest Action	9
#RhodesMustFall	11
#FeesMustFall	11
#Shackville	13
Research Problem	13
Research Aims and Findings	14
Methodology	15
Limitations	16
Chapter Outline	17
CHAPTER TWO	19
LITERATURE REVIEW	19
The Life Cycle of a Crisis	19
Funding	20
Crises in Higher Education	20
Crisis Management	22
Crisis Communication	26
Crisis Management Strategies	29
CHAPTER THREE	34
Socio-economic Issues	34
Reputation Management	37
Reputation Management	38
CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY	42
Justification for Qualitative Research	44
Sampling	45
Ethical Consideration	47
Data Collection Process	48
Reflexivity in Research	49
Data Analysis	50
CHAPTER FIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS	52
Protest	52
#RhodesMustFall Crisis Timeline:	52
2015 Bremner Occupation	54
2015 #FeesMustFall Crisis Timeline	55

2016 #Shackville Movement	57
2016 #FeesMustFall Timeline	58
Bremner Occupation	62
2017 #FeesMustFall Crisis Timeline	62
Socio-economic Issues	67
Crisis Management	68
Legal intervention: Crisis Management Strategy	70
CHAPTER SIX	74
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	74
Limitations	76
Conclusion	77
REFERENCES	84

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is challenging to keep crises quiet in today's interconnected world (Diers-Lawson, 2017). The advancement of information technology has contributed to the spread of crisis news from one part of the world to the next. The speed at which news travels means organisations need to be prepared for a crisis because of the potential negative impact on institutional reputation. Crisis management literature emphasises the need for institutional focus on planning for disasters and emergencies and preparing responses (Barton, 1994). In South Africa, crises have become a regular occurrence for businesses and the Government. 2014 saw 218 protests in South Africa, with media reports suggesting that South Africa was the protest capital of the world (News24, 2014). Although the claim is hyperbolic, it speaks to a news agenda that is in line with the prevalence of protest action in South Africa. South Africans often use protest action to express and communicate dissent because they believe that it is the only effective channel to be heard.

Protest Action

A key characteristic of a crisis is its unanticipated character (Coombs, 2014). Protest action is a form of individual or collective action aimed at expressing ideas, values, dissent, or opposition. In South Africa protest action has a long history of being used by different social movements to express dissent by threatening the operations of businesses, organisations, or institutions (Struwig, Bohler-Muller, Alexander et al, 2017). One of the most notable and well-known South African protests is the June 16 Soweto Uprising of 1976. This landmark protest was when students marched against the Apartheid Government who were enforcing Afrikaans as the medium of instruction at schools. The march turned violent when several students were killed and injured by the apartheid police (Mafeje, 1978)

In post-apartheid South Africa, protest action is used to express and communicate dissent over various socio-economic issues such as unemployment, poverty, and inequality. In 2010, South Africa experienced the largest public sector strike when one million workers closed down hospitals and schools, demanding a pay increase (Herskovitz, 2007). The crisis severely affected the country's ability to provide for its citizens as well as its reputation.

The government is responsible for providing for its citizens. Since 1994 the government has repeatedly experienced protest action from citizens due to their lack of service delivery. However, it is not only the government that has experienced such protest action. South African businesses have also experienced protest action from employees demanding pay increases.

In August 2012, the South African mining industry encountered one of its worst crises near Marikana when 112 miners were shot and injured and 34 miners were killed (BBC, 2012). The protest began as a labour strike due to failed wage negotiations between miners and the management of Lonmin mine. However, the strike escalated ending in the tragic events known as the Marikana Massacre. The South African Police Service (SAPS) used live ammunition to respond to the striking protestors who were demanding higher wages. The extensive force used by the SAPS to respond to the protesting mine workers caused a high number of deaths and was criticised locally and internationally. Critics of the police argued that there were methods that could have been used to disperse the protesting workers instead of resorting to violent measures.

This reaction to student protest would be in a similar manner to how businesses and the government have experienced protest action in post-apartheid South Africa. Higher education institutions have also experienced protest action from students about issues ranging from the rising cost of tuition and transformation, with students using protest action to express and communicate dissent.

Student Protest Action

South Africa has a long history of student protests (Healy-Clancy, 2017). During apartheid, student-led protests at education institutions focused on dismantling the apartheid system. They voiced their dissent through organised resistance, mass gatherings, civil disobedience, and alliances with anti-apartheid groups. However, in post-apartheid South Africa, student protests confront a different set of struggles. In many countries, education is considered an essential social investment because it is fundamental to development and growth of a country (Yusif, 2020). Since 1994, the South African government has developed policies, such as the Higher Education Act of 1997, which is focused on investing in education to supplant the legacies of apartheid and create a new social order (Department of Education, 2001).

During apartheid, education was separated along racial, geographical, and social lines with the vast majority of students at tertiary institutions being white. Since the new democratic

dispensation there has been a significant increase of black students at higher education institutions. In 1993 black students constituted only 52% of the student body at higher education institutions, and in 2008 this rose to 64% (Badat, 2008). The establishment of the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa, now known as the National Student Funding Scheme (NSFAS), also contributed to the growth of academically deserving students at higher education institutions (Pillay, Bhorat & Asmal, 2021). The government has invested in education and made significant gains in making higher education accessible.

However, although the government has developed policies to promote access to higher education, many students lack access. In August 2012, Tshwane University of Technology's Soshanguve, Pretoria, and Ga- Rankuwa campuses were closed due to safety concerns linked to ongoing campus protests (Mail & Guardian, 2012). Students protested allocations by NSFAS as well as the conditions of residences. In 2014, higher education institutions experienced student protests when the South African Students Congress (SASCO) encouraged students to protest at their higher education institutions to express their dissatisfaction over NSFAS allocation and registration.

SASCO accused NSFAS of prohibiting academically deserving students access to higher education due to their lack of funds (Mail & Guardian, 2014). SASCO also accused higher education institutions of worsening the situation by exorbitantly increasing tertiary institutions' fees. Therefore, SASCO encouraged students to continue to protest at higher education institutions such as the Durban University of Technology, Vaal University of Technology, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, and Mangosuthu University of Technology. University of Johannesburg, University of Limpopo, and University of Fort Hare were among those also encouraged to join in protest action. The 2014 protests at various higher education institutions was the precursor to the growing dissent at the slow pace of transformation at higher education institutions

#RhodesMustFall

In March 2015, after the wake of the 2014 student protests, and just as higher education institutions appeared to enter recovery, UCT encountered a crisis. The crisis began when UCT student Chumani Maxwele threw a bucket of faeces onto the statue of Cecil John Rhodes (Bester, 2015). The #RhodesMustFall movement made national and international headlines, and the protest spread to other parts of the world. Student protestors considered the movement necessary because it sought to address colonialism and racial injustices, and highlight the lack of representation of black and marginalised voices within educational institutions. Student activists also demanded curriculum reform to be more representative of their environment in which the university was located (Bester, 2015). The crisis put a sharp spotlight on the universities' crisis response.

#FeesMustFall

Media reports suggest #FeesMustFall was an unexpected crisis. However, a fuller picture shows that there was growing discontent by student leaders about the lack of funding by the government. This lack of funding prohibits academically deserving students from accessing higher education institutions, and the exorbitant fees charged by higher education institutions add to the counter argument that #FeesMustFall was unexpected.

Scholars encourage institutions to be prepared for a crisis as crises, by their nature, are inevitable. Scholars also encourage institutions, businesses, and organisations to be prepared for crises by assessing risks facing the industry or sector (Coombs, 2007). The 2014 protest by students fuelled by the lack of funding and transformation of higher education institutions was a precursor for the higher education sector. Funding should have been flagged as a potential risk that could evolve to become a crisis.

The #FeesMustFall crisis, similar to the #RhodesMustFall crisis was accompanied by intense media attention, particularly for higher education institutions such as UCT. This attention was due to the institution's reputation as South Africa's and Africa's leading research-intensive institution. The crisis was also accompanied by intense media attention because before the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall crises, the institution appeared to be a protected space from crises. Not since apartheid had the university encountered an intense or prolonged protest action.

The prolonged #FeesMustFall crisis and constant media coverage put the spotlight on the university's crisis management plan. During the #FeesMustFall crisis, protesting students disrupted classes, barricaded university entrances, and caused temporary closures. These measures indicated, to management, their dissatisfaction at the proposed fee (Quintal, 2015). The student's dissent regarding funding exploded when Minister of Higher Education Dr. Blade Nzimande announced a fee increase (Bitzer & De Jager, 2017). The dissent evolved into a full-blown protest when the university of Witwatersrand announced its proposed fee hike for 2016 (Griffiths, 2019). Student dissent quickly spread to other higher education institutions, including UCT.

The 2015 #FeesMustFall protest action lasted several weeks with intense student protests and the postponement of exams, but after these weeks of demonstrations, former president Jacob Zuma announced that there would be no fee hike for 2016 (eNCA, 2015).

Student leaders saw the announcement by the president as a victory in making higher education accessible to academically deserving, but economically disadvantaged, students. However the student satisfaction was short-lived because shortly after, in 2016, the Minister of Higher Education and Training announced that university fees would increase in 2017, capped at 8% (Masondo, 2016). The announcement by the minister engendered a #FeesMustFall revival in 2016. UCT students, together with other students from different education institutions, embarked on protest action to voice their unhappiness at the proposed fee increase. A further demand was made for the fee commission report, mandated in 2015 by former president, Jacob Zuma. This report was crucial in a discussion around higher education fees and the feasibility of free tertiary education.

2016 #FeesMustFall, as with its antecedent in 2015, was characterised by violence and destruction. Student leaders used the same tactics previously used in 2015. They disrupted classes, barricaded the university entrances, and forced the management of higher education institutions to temporarily close these institutions over concerns about student and staff safety. As the demonstrations intensified, higher education institutions announced that fees would increase in 2017, because maintaining fees at 2016 levels would not be feasible.

#Shackville

The lack of funding for academically deserving students and transformation of higher education institutions have been central themes in the #RhodesMustFall and the #FeesMustFall movements. However, another central theme in both movements and in previous protest actions at other higher education institutions is the lack of accommodation for students. In February 2016, the issue of student accommodation became the main focus of a protestors when the #RhodesMustFall movement erected a corrugated iron and wood structure on UCT's upper campus to protest the lack of accommodation for black students (eNCA, 2016). The #Shackville housing crisis was less intense and not as prolonged compared to the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall crises.

However, the protest action by students did generate media attention and once again put a spotlight on UCT's crisis management strategies and further harmed the reputation of the institution.

Research Problem

UCT is one of South Africa's oldest universities and is a prestigious research-intensive institution. Historically it has enjoyed a strong reputation due to its history, academic excellence, and commitment to research. Its reputation attracts many undergraduate and postgraduate students, researchers, academics, and professional staff. However, recent events, beginning with the #RhodesMustFall movement has overshadowed the university's unblemished reputation.

The emergence of movements such as the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and #Shackville have directly challenged the traditional perception of higher education institutions such as UCT being protected spaces from crisis. Instead, these events have created an impression that UCT is a recurrent epicentre of crises. The crises became more frequent after #RhodesMustFall in 2015. Later in 2015 there was the Bremner Occupation, and in 2016 #FeesMustFall. In 2017 there was the re-emergence of #FeesMustFall and the Bremner Occupation. The recurrence of #FeesMustFall triggered concerns about the potential repercussions of UCT's reputation among staff, donors and stakeholders.

In global higher education rankings, UCT has historically fared impressively. In 2014, it was ranked 126th globally by Times Higher Education, which examines indicators such as teaching, research, citations, industry income and international outlook. However, the university's trajectory took a noticeable downturn after 2015 because UCT was entangled in a series of crises.

- In March 2015, the RhodesMustFall emerged.
- Simultaneously, the #Occupation Bremner protest also emerged, adding to the disruption.
- In October 2015, the #FeesMustFall emerged.
- In February 2016, the #Shackville movement brought more turbulence.
- The crisis events continued with another #FeesMustFall eruption in 2016
- In February 2017, the Occupation of Bremner events prolonged the period of unrest.
- In September 2017, the #FeesMustFall re-emerged.

As consequence, by 2022 UCT's global rankings moved down to 183 place, according to the Times Higher Education. Furthermore, the negative publicity associated with these crises prompted critical inquiries into the university's management strategies. Questions arose about the capacity to discern resolved crises from dormant crises.

Research Aims and Findings

UCT's Communication and Marketing Department (CMD) is responsible for promoting, protecting, and enhancing the institution's reputation through a strategic communications programme. This programme includes internal communication strategies, strategic relationship-building initiatives, media liaison, and digital and social media communication (University of Cape Town, 2023a). When a reputational crisis affects the institution, the university, through the department, implements a crisis management plan in response (Coombs, 2014).

Crisis management scholars, such as Coombs (2007), encourage institutions and organisations to implement a crisis management plan before a crisis occurs. This is because crisis management is a process designed to prevent or lessen the damage caused by a crisis (Coombs, 2007). Since the #RhodesMustFall crisis, UCT could be considered to be in a perpetual crisis. Each time UCT has encountered a crisis, the university has implemented a crisis management plan that prioritises resumption of normal operations. Resumption of university operations has been used as an indicator

of resolution, so the resumption of normal operations seems to be pursued at all costs by UCT.

However, such resumption of normal operations fails to address underlying issues that might have caused the crisis to arise in the first place. Thus, crisis management strategies implemented by the university only appear to resolve crises. Extreme and prolonged crises can result in significant damage to property or loss of life. Therefore, institutions are aware of the need to prevent and manage a crisis in order to ensure a return to normal operations (Coombs & Holladay, 2010).

According to Pearson and Clair (1998), crisis management efforts are effective when operations are sustained or resumed. UCT has faced several crises, such as the #RhodesMustFall, 2015 #FeesMustFall, #Shackville, Bremner Occupations and 2016 and 2017 #FeesMustFall movements. Although UCT has been able to resume their academic operations through various crises, repeated occurrence of such events raises questions around the efficacy of the institution's crisis management plans. Though the resumption of normal academic operations may indicate the crisis is resolved, resumed academic operations may in effect only indicate that a crisis is in fact dormant and therefore remains unresolved. Furthermore, the belief that a crisis is resolved when in fact it is dormant is misleading and dangerous because it may create a false sense of security. Such a false sense of security could lull institutions into inaction and failure to learn from the crisis cycle. Therefore, UCT and other higher education institutions must acknowledge that return to academic operations may not necessarily indicate a resolution of a crisis but instead indicate a postponement of the crisis resolution.

This study evaluates UCT's ongoing crises between 2015 and 2019 by examining its crisis management response plan to determine:

- What factors contribute to the University of Cape Town's difficulty in distinguishing between resolved and dormant crises?
- Whether UCT's crisis management strategies between 2015 – 2019 resolved the crisis?
- What strategies could the university implement to prevent crises from resurfacing?
- And what strategies might be implemented to promote a culture of crisis prevention rather than crisis management?

Methodology

Research methodology is a critical consideration when creating a study because data collection needs to be identified in a manner that justifies the result (Rahman, 2016). Therefore,

constructing a research methodology is critical to identify how data will be acquired and to establish an inquiry process without bias.

Quantitative data emphasises quantification in data collection and analysis (Rahman, 2016). Quantitative research methodologies attempt to investigate the answers to the questions starting with how many, how much, and to what extent. Qualitative data, on the other hand, produces findings through lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, organisational functioning, and interactions (Rahman, 2016).

While qualitative data is subjective in nature, it is invaluable as a tool to assess and describe the human experience. The benefits to a qualitative research approach, such as direct participant observation for data collection (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011), is that you can attempt to answer how and why things happen. During a qualitative study, researchers interact with participants and processes directly while collecting data and consequently, data collection is subjective and detailed.

In this thesis, the crisis management strategies of UCT from 2015 to 2019 are examined through an empirical study. Having worked for UCT's Communication and Marketing department between 2017 and 2022 I have insider knowledge which comes with the advantage of understanding how the university responded to crises.

Additionally, I used a range of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include six timelines of crises, approximately 50 media statements, approximately 1362 university campus communications, online- based newspapers, blogs, and social media accounts.

The secondary sources comprise of academic peer-reviewed articles and print media. By combining different types of sources, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the crisis management strategies of UCT.

Limitations

Prominent scholars in the field have extensively documented the limitations of participant observation analysis, particularly with regard to objectivity (Kawulich, 2005). This research method has been criticised for its potential bias because the researcher's role as a participant may result in the production of data that favours the group, individual, or process being analysed (Anderson, 2010).

Additionally, ethical concerns need to be addressed regarding how we engage with participants in the study, and informed consent needs to be the goal. Despite the acknowledgement of these limitations, the utilisation of participant observation analysis is the most compelling framework for this study, because of my inside knowledge and access due to my role as a researcher working within the UCT Communication and Marketing Department.

Chapter Outline

Chapter one introduces crisis management in South African universities, focusing on UCT as the case study. The chapter begins with an outline of protest action in South Africa. It further posits that higher education institutions indicate that higher education institutions are no longer crises-free spaces. The chapter also introduces the problem statement and research questions that the thesis aims to address, and outlines the purpose and objectives of the study. Finally, the chapter discusses the study's significance.

Chapter two provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature on crisis management, focusing on UCT. The chapter begins with an overview of student funding in South Africa and how this deficit presents a latent crisis for higher education institutions. Thereafter is a discussion of crisis management and crisis communication, which includes the challenges and best practices for managing a crisis. Finally, the chapter discusses crisis management strategies and provides insight into effective crisis management strategies.

Chapter three outlines how the thesis contributes to the existing literature on crisis management in higher education, specifically in the South African context. It comprehensively reviews the new challenges and risks for higher education institutions such as socio-economic issues, inequality, poverty and unemployment. The chapter also provides insights into why it is important for higher education institutions such as UCT to pay attention to these risks especially from a brand reputation perspective. Brand reputation plays a significant role in attracting prospective students, staff, and donors. Higher education institutions such as UCT find themselves in a heightened competitive environment and ineffective crisis management can harm the reputation of an institution.

Chapter four outlines the methodology used in this study, including the research design and approach, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and data analysis methods. The chapter

also discusses the ethical considerations and limitations to the study as well as the assumptions that inform the research design.

Chapter five analyses the data collected from the UCT case study and evaluates the effectiveness of UCT's crisis management strategies. The chapter also provides broad recommendations for UCT to prevent or alleviate a future crisis.

Chapter six concludes the study and presents practical crisis management strategies that can be implemented based on research findings. The crisis management strategies aim to assist with preparedness and responsiveness to resolve future crises and the resurfacing of crises.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focuses on the theoretical basis for this research and provides insight into the existing approaches and literature developed.

The Life Cycle of a Crisis

In an ideal world, crises such as #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall and #Shackville could potentially be avoided if warning systems were in place. I argue that higher education institutions should be able to perceive the evolution of the crisis beforehand so that they can deal with them effectively.

One line of reasoning for this can be found in Coombs (2017) who argues that crisis does not just happen in a vacuum without a prior indicator. Instead, a crisis comprises precursors— the manifestation of the crisis and the restoration process. According to Coombs (2007), there are three influential classifications of the crisis lifecycle which are found in literature. These are Fink's (1986) four stages of crisis, Mitroff's (1994) five stages of crisis, and the three-stage model mentioned above.

Fink's model (1986) is divided into four stages. The first stage warns of a potential crisis, stage two is the crisis breakout, stage three is the effects of the crisis, and stage four refers to finding signals that ensure the crisis is over.

Mitroff's model (1994) differentiates from Fink's by identifying five stages. The first stage refers to early signal detection. Stage two is concerned with reducing the crisis, stage three is concerned about crisis damage prevention, stage four is the recovery phase, and stage five is concerned with reviewing, critiquing, and learning from the crisis. According to Sarriegi, Torres and Lardizabal, (2009), Fink's and Mitroff's life cycle of a crisis are similar in some ways, but the main difference is the final stage.

Fink's crisis model concentrates on the progress of crises, while Mitroff is focussed on crisis management efforts. The last model is the three-stage approach, and it's the model used in this study to examine the different crises that have taken place at UCT. The pre crisis is the crisis incubation period, during which warning signals emerge before the crisis event. A crisis event

refers to a sequence of events at a crucial time when a decisive change occurs. Post Crisis is when the safety level is restored, and learning and continuity mechanisms are initiated.

Funding

According to Badat (2008), funding for higher education in South Africa has been a prominent and ongoing issue. The issue is largely because of deep social inequalities and because of the legacy of apartheid. Badat (2008) cites apartheid as having had a profound impact on higher education because its policies and laws systematically disadvantaged black people by restricting access to education (Badat, 2008).

In line with this, Thomas (1996) notes that black students were only allowed to attend Bantu Education schools, which received significantly less funding than schools for white students. As a result, black students received an inferior education, with limited access to resources and opportunities for further education. Furthermore, the Apartheid Government limited the number of black students allowed to enrol in higher education institutions and restricted their fields of study.

According to Badat (2008), many universities were also segregated, with black students attending separate institutions or being confined to certain faculties. This inequality led to a significant disparity in the number of black and white students attending university, with black students being severely underrepresented. In post-apartheid, education is regarded as a gateway to a better life through which people have the opportunity to seek opportunities. However, limited NSFAS funding has still made higher education only accessible to a few. According to Mnguni (2020), student protests such as #RhodesMustfall and #FeesMustFall highlights the funding issue and indicates dissent.

Crises in Higher Education

According to Coombs (2007), managing a crisis before it becomes irreversible is crucial for any organisation or institution. Furthermore, Coombs (2007) states that an actual crisis can severely damage an institution's reputation, making pre-crisis prevention and preparation a critical phase in crisis management.

Higher education institutions assess possible risks and threats, and the detection or identification of these signals a possible crisis. This makes the pre-crisis stage the most critical phase in crisis management. It is the phase where institutions locate potential issues or risks and prepare for

these risks becoming a crisis (Coombs, 2014). The pre-crisis stage emphasises prevention and preparation and suggests that crisis managers need to take action to prevent a crisis from emerging.

Higher education institutions in South Africa face various problems and challenges, such as funding, student housing, and salaries. If these issues are not addressed, this could potentially develop into a crisis. According to Kim and Sung (2014), the occurrence of a crisis within a particular industry is an indication of potential risk for other organisations or institutions in the same industry.

Coombs (2014) shifts towards action by suggesting institutions examine damage from a crisis, not only to assess the potential threat posed, but also to define their own degree of control over the situation. According to Boin and Hart (2003), this assessment helps institutions develop appropriate strategies to respond to the issue, preventing it from becoming a crisis. By prioritising prevention and preparation in the pre-crisis stage, institutions can avoid irreversible damage to their reputation and ensure their overall existence.

According to Fearn-Banks (2002), existing literature on a crisis defines it as an event that affects, or has the potential to negatively affect, an institution or industry. It is often an unexpected event, causing uncertainty for a company or institution which causes them to struggle to regain control of their operations (Coombs, 2014). This study employs Jacob et al. (2001) & Farazmand's (2014) understanding of a crisis as an urgent, dynamic situation that rapidly changes and has unpredictable outcomes that can impact society. The #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #Shackville movement, Bremner Occupation and #GBV protests were unexpected crises for UCT.

When the #RhodesMustFall crisis emerged, as a result of UCT student Chumani Maxwele throwing human faeces at Cecil Rhodes statue, the crisis rapidly changed to an intense prolonged crisis. This crisis was supported by students at other higher education institutions in South Africa. Furthermore, the crisis spread internationally, highlighting issues such as transformation and funding at international universities. UCT faced frequent and recurring crises in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 #FeesMustFall crisis, the 2015 and 2017 Bremner Occupation, and #Shackville Movement with some of these crisis events also supported by other higher education institutions.

Crisis Management

According to Abdalla, Alarabi., and Hendawi (2021), a crisis is an event that any organisation or institution tries to avoid because of the negative impact it can have. Bundy (2017) states that different models and approaches have been used in the past to build overall organisational capacity and to anticipate and mitigate future crises.

According to Kim and Sung (2014), effective crisis response can help an organisation manage the crisis and mitigate its adverse impact. On the other hand, poor crisis response can worsen the situation and damage the organisation's reputation. Therefore, it is suggested that organisations should invest in crisis management planning and training to ensure they are well-prepared to respond to crises.

The #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #Shackville movements and Bremner Occupations illustrate that crises are becoming frequent at higher education institutions in South Africa. More importantly, these crises show how momentum can be built and organisations and institutions need to be able to respond. This response to a crisis goes a long way in protecting the reputation of the business, organisation, or institution. Coombs (1995) states that when a crisis arises, an organisation's image is severely affected by the extensive negative news coverage.

According to Coombs (2014), crisis response is a critical aspect of crisis management that requires careful planning, quick decision-making, and effective communication. Coombs (2014) states that when a crisis evolves from the pre-crisis stage to a crisis event, crisis managers must acknowledge the crisis and how the crisis has evolved in order to respond effectively. During this stage managers must follow procedures to lessen the immediate consequences and side effects of the crisis. According to Coombs (2014), managers have to run procedures during the crisis until it is considered to be resolved.

The ongoing crisis events that have occurred at UCT since 2015 have largely been brought about because of socio-economic issues affecting the students. The pattern appears to be that as socio-economic issues such as unemployment worsen, higher education institutions are confronted by the seriousness of the worsening conditions through student protest action. The ongoing protests, and the momentum of such protests, has meant that higher education institutions have been forced to acknowledge students' issues and concerns.

According to Sarriegi, Torres and Lardizabal (2009), crisis acknowledgement by an institution is important in crisis management. Crisis acknowledgement allows for important learning to take place and assists in limiting the reoccurrence of a crisis. Sarriegi, Torres and Lardizabal (2009) also state that failing to acknowledge a crisis could result in an ineffective crisis response.

Hence, acknowledging a crisis is an important step because it allows crisis managers, in the pre-crisis phase, to find the precursors. By doing this they can try to avoid crises or at least try to lessen their impact. According to Tony (2009), in postcrisis, crisis managers need to put in place actions to recover from the crisis. The recovery process is the evaluation of crisis management and preparation for the next crisis. Corrective actions also need to be developed to solve the problems created by the crisis.

#RhodesMustFall called for the removal of the Cecil John Rhodes statue because the protestors believed it symbolised a lack of transformation within higher education (News24, 2015). The #FeesMustFall protests emerged because of the demand for free education. The #Shackville movement highlighted the lack of accommodation for black students.

The above examples highlight the fact that the postcrisis stage is not over when higher education institutions resume academic operations. According to Coombs (2014), the postcrisis is more involved and takes longer to conclude because this stage demands understanding as to *why* the crisis happened in order to mitigate or prevent future recurrence. Coombs (2014) further adds that the acknowledgment of the seriousness of the crisis also needs to take place in the postcrisis stage because it allows for the analysis of the crisis. An important step of crisis management is to conduct an impact evaluation in terms of how the institution performed. The latter may provide direction to improve strategic engagement in the future.

Treurniet and Wolbers (2021) consider information sharing as critical during a crisis. Te (2021) states that before the advent of social media, institutions relied primarily on traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television to communicate during a crisis as well as to frame public perception. Previously, when traditional media was the leading distributor of information, it was easier for higher education institutions to manage public perception.

There are numerous reasons for this. Firstly, traditional media outlets such as television, radio, and newspapers were the primary sources of public information. Secondly, these media outlets

were dependent on cultivating long standing relationships with institutions. Thirdly, institutions were able to exert greater control over the narrative, given the scarcity of alternate sources of media developing counter-narratives. Finally, the speed at which information spread was also much slower before the emergence of social media (Te, 2021). News reports could take several hours or even days to reach a wider audience and this gave institutions more time to formulate a response and gather accurate information before releasing an official statement.

Currently, a significant number of people have access to social media and the potential for people to comment on a crisis is greater. This means that an institutions' chance of managing the narrative and limiting negative perceptions is decreasing (Herman & Chomsky,1988). Institutions no longer have control over the narrative. Previously, institutions such as UCT had built relations with the media to allow for the institutional perspective to predominate in any reporting.

The emergence of social media has stymied this strategy. Institutions do not have the luxury of spending a long time formulating a response because traditional media is no longer the only disseminator of information. Crisis information now spreads quickly, and, what is more, anyone is able to transmit information and appear as a legitimate source. Higher education institutions have therefore relied on traditional media to disseminate their media releases because traditional media was the leading distributor of information.

According to Fearn-Banks (2019), during a crisis an organisation wants to frame public perception. Furthermore, such media statements issued by such organisations typically contain subjective inflections, presenting the organisations' version of the crisis. The first known use of the term "social media" in print is believed to have occurred in 1997 when then-AOL executive Ted Leonsis commented that organisations needed to provide consumers with "social media, places where they can be entertained, communicate, and participate in a social environment" (Bercovici, 2010). Soon after that, the first social networking sites (SNS) started to appear between around the year 2000, during a period dubbed Web 1.0.

Between 2000 and 2010, a period referred to as Web 2.0 (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), social media evolved by allowing users to produce their own content. With the growth and popularity of Web 2.0, consumers would become more knowledgeable, conscious, and demanding. The impact of this has posed a threat to businesses and organisations but also created opportunities for them

to stand out among their rivals. According to Medina and Diaz (2016), social media has changed how public administrations approach strategic communications; social media networks are now considered even more effective tools for managing risk or a crisis than traditional media.

According to Crescenzo (2009), social media and the Internet have made communication easier by cutting delays between organisational transmission and public reception. Compared to traditional media, social networks are agile and quickly provide feedback information; critical elements when dealing with a severe situation (Sandman, 2006; Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith, 2010; Keller, 2011).

Furthermore, according to Erikson (2018), communication during a crisis, before the advent of social media, was more limited and slower because it relied on traditional media. However, with the advent of social media, students protestors were able to share their version of the #RhodesMustFall through the social media pages such as the #RhodesMustFall Facebook page and the hashtag #RhodesMustFall.

According to Golovanova (2017), the emergence of social media has revolutionised and intensified the need for institutions to respond quickly and effectively to mitigate the impact of a crisis and preserve their reputation. Coombs (2014) further states that a gap created through communication inconsistency during a crisis can mean that an institution can lose the fight in framing public perception. According to Palttala and Vos (2012), two-way communication has become a critical feature of crisis management. Institutions need to engage directly with their stakeholders to provide real-time updates and respond to concerns.

Two-way communication facilitates communication, however, it can also make spreading false information and rumours easier, necessitating closer monitoring and verification of information by institutions. According to Golovanova (2017), social media has also raised the stakes regarding institutional scrutiny during a crisis, with stakeholders able to voice their criticisms and concerns publicly. According to Lan (2022), organisations need to effectively navigate the heightened demands of crisis management in the age of social media. They should prioritise maintaining an active and engaged social media presence to ensure they have an established platform to communicate with important stakeholders when a crisis does occur and when the crisis is resolved. Social media's impact on crisis management in higher education institutions has highlighted the need for proactive and adaptable crisis management strategies to effectively manage the evolving communication landscape and maintain the trust of stakeholders. According

to Mair, Ritchie and Walters (2016), effective communication is important during a crisis because it conveys the organisation's position to stakeholders, including the media.

Crisis Communication

Benoit (1997) developed five categories of image repair strategies: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action and mortification.

According to Benoit (ibid.), denial as a category of the image repair strategy can be divided into two forms: shifting the blame or simply denying the event. When an institution employs the denial strategy, they claim either that they are not to be blamed for the crisis, the crisis does not exist, or the fault should be directed elsewhere (ibid.). Coombs (2014), considers it important that when responding to a crisis, organisations and institutions show the public that they are in control of the crisis by regularly updating the public on the developing events from their point of view.

Benoit (1997) argues that provocation is one of the four ways an institution or organisation can evade responsibility. Provocation can occur when the institution claims its action was in response to an offensive act. A provocation is a form of evasion of responsibility. According to Sianou-Kyrgiou (2001), higher education has expanded in many countries throughout the world and led to high levels of participation, but inequality still exists, and in some aspects, it has intensified. Movements such as #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #Shackville and Bremner Occupations put a spotlight on inequalities experienced by students at higher education institutions.

Demonstrations by students and staff at higher education institutions such as UCT aimed to highlight the socio-economic issues students were facing. However, in some instances, the management of UCT responded to the crises by applying for court orders and interdicts to end the protest action on campus. Arguments in the court application acknowledged students' right to protest, but appealed for relief from demonstrations. This was of particular concern because demonstrations were turning violent and protestors were infringing other students' rights to access campus. The institution justified its action by stating that they were provoked by students whose protest had infringed on other students' access to education by barricading classrooms and roads.

Social media has made it difficult for higher education institutions to rely solely on the provocation strategy. During the #FeesMustFall events at UCT, news depicted the South African Police Service (SAPS) and private security, hired by the universities, as using excessive force on unarmed students. This negatively affected the reputation of institutions. The stream of pictures and videos of students on social media, posted by activists, journalists and social commentators under the hashtag #FeesMustFall challenged higher education institutions' narrative of students as the aggressors (Mail & Guardian, 2015). Instead, the news depicted higher education institutions as the aggressors. Higher education institutions confronted the student's portrayal of themselves as victims by communicating the financial damage the students had caused. The cost of the students' protest action was highlighted and this aimed to change or challenge the narrative of students being victims.

According to Benoit (1997), an organisation or institution will attack the accuser with the aim of the public questioning the credibility of the accuser. Pictures and videos of police and private security attacking unarmed students portrayed UCT in a negative light. From the point of view of Coombs (2014), crisis management is a crucial aspect of institutional strategy, and a proactive approach is one of the key strategies for effective crisis management.

The proactive approach involves identifying potential crises and systematically analysing the warning signals that enable early detection of a potential crisis and create a system for early identification of potential. Crisis management scholars recognise this approach as a critical strategy for reducing the impact of crises on organisations. According to Fink (2013), proactive crisis management involves identifying a potential crises before they occur and taking measures to prevent or mitigate their impact. This approach focuses on prevention rather than reaction and involves monitoring, identifying, and analysing potential risks and vulnerabilities that could lead to a crisis. The most pressing issues that confront higher education institutions in South Africa are primarily social-economic in character. Income inequality, poverty, and unemployment pose significant risks for institutions, and require particular crisis management.

According to Coombs (2014), a proactive approach by an institution such as UCT would be to identify socio-economic problems such as income inequality, unemployment, poverty as potential crises before these evolve into full-blown crises. Following on from that, it would be prudent for institutions to take steps to prevent or at least mitigate the issues before becoming crisis events. This approach helps institutions to be better prepared and to respond more effectively when such

issues do become crises. By identifying these potential risks and vulnerabilities, institutions can take steps to address them prior to their eruption into crisis. This approach also helps institutions to build resilience, as they can develop plans and procedures to deal with crises, reducing the impact on the institution.

Since 2015, ongoing crises have significantly damaged UCT's reputation. In 2014, the university was ranked 126th in the world and was the number one higher education institution in Africa; by 2022, its overall ranking had dropped to 160th worldwide and in 2023 the university was ranked 167th (Times Higher Education, 2022, 2023).

Crises such as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall highlights how institutional reputation can be undermined. Corporate reputation is not a new phenomenon. According to Coombs (2014) and Holladay (2010), reputation is widely recognized as a valuable, intangible asset. Spence (1973) suggests the roots of this date back to the 1970s when different assessments made by stakeholders of a company's reputation began to be identified. Reputation is currently beginning to be understood as a group of attributes and characteristics of an organisation that are the result of its past actions (Weigelt & Camerer, 1988). According to Jung and Seock (2016), a positive reputation can impact financial performance and customer behaviour. A negative reputation will negatively affect the financial performance and customer behaviour.

According to Rindova et al. (2005), within the university context, reputation is defined as the sum of the impressions received by stakeholders from the communication and interaction they have with the university. Furthermore, according to Chen and Esangbedo (2018), reputation is built through the student's experience with the university. Reputation can also influence student attraction to a university (Plewa et al., 2016). That is why, when a crisis occurs it is important to manage and mitigate it.

However, although a crisis may have a negative impact on the institution, it can also present an opportunity for learning. According to Pearson and Clair (1998), when a crisis occurs, organisations or institutions should prioritise recovery. This prioritisation could sometimes be to the detriment of exploring what caused the crisis. However, according Roux-Dufort (2000) the recurrence of the crisis indicates that an organisation did not learn from the crises. This can also affect trust in the institution from stakeholders.

Gillespie and Dietz (2009) and Kramer and Lewicki (2010), suggest one of the negative implications of crises is damaged customer trust. Damaged customer trust is problematic because there is strong evidence that trust is crucial for the success of an organisation. As explained by Izquierdo and Cillán (2004), Morgan and Hunt, (1994) and Sirdeshmukh (2002) trust is associated with customer loyalty and commitment. Furthermore, according to Kireeva, Slepenskova, Shipunova, Iskandaryan (2018), in the modern economy, higher education institutions are treated equally alike to any other company.

Educational services are offered in a highly competitive environment and such higher education institutions are also operating in this competitive environment and their reputation may be what sets them apart from their competitors. A crisis affects their reputation and decreases trust for the organisation or institution. According to Schwartz (2000), it takes a long time to build a reputation, but merely one accident to impair it. Therefore, ongoing crises at higher education institutions further decrease trust and harm the reputation of the institution. However, importantly, ongoing crises also create an impression that the institution neither resolved the crisis effectively, nor understood the underlying tensions that initially precipitated the crisis. Higher education institutions such as UCT need to identify the underlying issues that give rise to the crisis and implement long-lasting solutions.

Crisis Management Strategies

According to Coombs (2007), in a crisis there are difficult decisions that need to be made. This is why crisis managers should protect reputational assets by examining the Situational Crisis Communication Theory.

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory offers a framework for understanding how stakeholders will react to a crisis in terms of reputational threat. Sellnow and Seeger (2013) explain the type of crisis an institution deals with and explain how crisis history informs the choices crisis managers need to make. During the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #Shackville and Bremner Occupations crises events, the university appeared to be eager to ensure its reputation would remain in good standing. Therefore, the crisis management strategies seemed to be aimed at ensuring resumption of academic operations.

Pearson and Clair (1998) consider crisis management efforts as effective when operations are sustained or resumed. Therefore, it could be argued that higher education institutions often

consider the resumption of academic operations also as an indication that a crisis has been resolved because academic operations are a core function of the institution. Academic operations are often the most visible and tangible aspect of the institution's activities, according to Aldemir and Gülcan (2004). Therefore, their resumption signals to stakeholders that the institution is functioning as it should.

By resuming academic operations, institutions appear to demonstrate that they have made significant strides in managing the challenges posed by the crisis, and are able to move forward with their core mission of educating students. According to Aldemir and Gülcan (2004), higher education is about providing students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to succeed in their chosen fields. Academic operations, therefore, are the core function of a higher education institution. Given the importance of academic operations to higher education institutions, it is no surprise that the resumption of these operations is often seen as an indication that a crisis has been resolved. By resuming academic operations, institutions are signalling that they can once again fulfil their core mission and provide services for their students.

However, sometimes decision-makers do not select the best decision but settle for one that will satisfy minimum requirements. Furthermore, that decision may be temporary, a band-aid solution to repair the image of the institution and move the crisis to the postcrisis phase. According to Coombs (2014), the postcrisis phase in crisis management is what institutions and organisations look forward to because when a crisis occurs it can significantly impact their operations, reputation, and finances and disrupt the organisation, while postcrisis reverses this. Disruptions impact the institution's ability to fulfil its mission and serve its stakeholders. This can lead to losing trust among stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, donors, and the wider community. Institutions spend significant amounts of money during a crisis to address the crisis and its effects. According to UCT (2017), the university spent more than R24 million on private security since 2015. By moving to the post crisis stage, institutions can begin to take steps to restore their reputation and regain the trust of their stakeholders. As a result, institutions are eager to move past the crisis and into the post-crisis stage because this stage signals recovery for an organisation and the resumption of normal activities. But there is a danger of institutions assuming they have resolved the crisis when in fact it is dormant.

As mentioned by Pearson and Clair (1998), one of the most commonly used definitions of a resolved crisis is when the crisis is no longer a threat to the institution's operations or reputation. A crisis is considered resolved when the institution has successfully addressed the crisis, contained its impact, and taken steps to prevent its recurrence. Another definition of a resolved crisis is when the institution has successfully restored its reputation and relationships with stakeholders who may have been affected by the crisis (Coombs, 2014).

It is important to classify a crisis as resolved only when it has been fully addressed and its impact has been minimised. The eagerness to declare a crisis resolved when the organisation has returned to normal operations is dangerous, because it creates a false sense of security and leaves the organisation vulnerable to future crises. Resumption of normal operations without engaging the underlying causes is what creates a dormant crisis. According to Coombs (2014), a dormant crisis is a crisis that has not yet had a significant impact on the organisation. Coombs (2014) further adds that mislabelling a dormant crisis as a resolved one can be a serious mistake for an organisation as the crisis could re-emerge at any time. One of the dangers of classifying a crisis as resolved when it is only dormant is that an institution can be complacent and fail to take the necessary steps to prevent future crises. When an institution considers a crisis resolved it may assume it can handle any future crises. This confidence can lead the organisation to underestimate the severity of future crises or fail to take appropriate action to address them and further damage the organisation or institution's reputation and create a financial risk for the institution.

A crisis can provide valuable lessons for an institution's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the effectiveness of its crisis management strategies (Oleksiyenko, Mendoza, Fredy et al, 2022). However, a resolved crisis can create profound insights into crisis management strategy. Moving too quickly to classify a crisis as resolved because of the return to normal operations can have devastating effects. According to Reynolds and Seeger (2005), post-crisis is a period of post-mortem, assessment, learning and formulating new understandings of risks. Baum and Dahlin (2007), further add that post crisis is the stage when organisations can reflect on their previous experiences and responses.

Crisis management is not a new phenomenon yet there appears to be a lack of understanding of the agreed definition regarding crisis resolution in the higher education sector. UCT's eagerness

to classify crises as resolved rather than dormant is a concern. The return of normal academic operations may signify that a crisis is resolved, but it can also signify that a crisis is dormant. The emergence of the #RhodesMustFall crisis and subsequent crises, such as the #FeesMustFall and #Shackville movement, indicates that crises appear to be classified as resolved when they are in fact dormant. This has resulted in an ongoing crisis situation at UCT. In this way the institution becomes a valuable case study for crisis management within higher education. But it also provides an opportunity to examine not only the university's crisis management strategies but why it is important that the post-crisis stage must have consensus and parameters that clearly define what a resolved crisis is.

Pearson and Clair (1998) state that a resolved crisis is when the crisis is no longer a threat to the institution's operations or reputation and a crisis is considered resolved when the institution has successfully addressed the crisis and taken steps to prevent its recurrence. Higher education institutions such as UCT need to be careful not to assume that the resumption of academic operations indicates the resolution of a crisis because the assumption can lead to ineffective crisis management.

The #RhodesMustFall crisis was a student-led protest movement that began at UCT on March 9, 2015 when students protested at the university's Upper Campus, demanding the removal of a statue of Cecil Rhodes (Bester, 2015). The movement called for the university's decolonisation, a review of the curriculum, and the transformation of the university's institutional culture. Like any organisation or institution, when faced with a crisis UCT was eager to end and resolve the crisis and for the institution to return to normal business operations because a prolonged crisis affects the reputation of any institution or organisation. In April 2015, the university's council agreed to the removal of the statue of Rhodes. As a result, the statue was removed on April 9, 2015, following a ceremony attended by students, faculty, and members of the public the university returned to normal academic operations. the university assumed that the crisis had ended and that it was resolved (University of Cape Town, 2015d). This crisis management strategy of the return to normal academic operations became the criteria which the university used to classify whether the crisis had been resolved. Therefore when other crises such as the #FeesMustFall, #Shackville, or Bremner Occupation emerged, the university was geared to end the crisis quickly and return to normal academic operations.

UCT has faced significant student-led protests since 2015 and its crisis response has arguably been reactive rather than proactive. During the #RhodesMustFall protests in 2015, UCT was criticised for its lack of preparation and slow response to the initial protests. The protests were sparked by a call to remove the statue of Cecil Rhodes from the university's campus (Bester, 2015). The protest action quickly escalated into a broader movement for transformation within the university. Similarly, during the #FeesMustFall protests UCT's crisis response was again tardy. The protests were driven by students' demands for free education and an end to financial exclusion within higher education institutions. UCT is one of Africa's leading research-intensive institutions, and it is important that the university adequately addresses new risks that have emerged before they become a full-blown crisis. Furthermore, UCT's eagerness to classify a crisis as resolved is dangerous because the institution needs to resolve crises before such classification. More importantly however, the university must have a proper criterion for what constitutes a resolved crisis to prevent the recurrence of similar crises in the future. This involves differentiating between dormant crises and a resolved crises. The university's perpetual state of crisis offers an opportunity for the field of crisis management to study and understand the importance of adequately resolving crises to prevent them from resurfacing.

CHAPTER THREE

BENEFITS OF THIS RESEARCH

This chapter presents the benefits of this research study. This research seeks to understand whether poor crisis management strategies can cause crises to go dormant in a way that renders these crises irresolvable.

This question is approached by analysing the crisis management strategies utilised by UCT between 2015 and 2019. The university's reputation as one of South Africa's and Africa's premier higher education institutions attracts prospective students and employees. The recurrent crisis events impede the institution's ability to provide its services effectively and impact their reputation. Both of these elements play a key role in attracting prospective students and renowned researchers.

Socio-economic Issues

According to Mohautse (2014), the apartheid regime created a system of separate development for different racial groups, which led to unequal access to resources, education, and opportunities. According to Bundy (2020), under apartheid the white minority held political power and economic resources while black South Africans and other racial groups were relegated to a lower social and economic status. Black South Africans were forcibly removed from their homes and placed in segregated townships with limited access to essential healthcare, education, and job opportunities (Scheba, Turok & Visagie, 2021). This resulted in a cycle of poverty and limited upward mobility for this group ~~black South Africans~~.

According to Newell and Fryas (2020), the legacy of apartheid is still present in South Africa, with significant disparities between the white minority and black majority regarding wealth, education, and health outcomes. Research indicates that South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world, with the top 10% of the population spending 8.6 times more than the bottom 40% of the country (Al Jazeera, 2022; Statistics South Africa, 2020). In 2006, South Africa's Gini coefficient — which represents the income inequality with a nation with 0 representing perfect equality and 100 representing perfect inequality — was 0.67; and in 2015, South Africa's Gini coefficient stood at 0.65. (Statistics South Africa, 2020). The country's unemployment rate currently sits at 34.4 % and is regarded as one of the highest in the world (Naidoo, 2021). Social commentators have referred to increased unemployment as a crisis because of the high economic and social costs. According to the United Nations Development

Programme (2018), the inability to earn a regular income is closely related to why people end up experiencing and being locked into poverty. Young people in South Africa accounted for about 40% of job losses between December 2008 and December 2010, and the youth unemployment figures increased from 3 004 000 in 2011 to 3 213 000 in 2012 (National Treasury, 2011; Department of Labour, 2012). Furthermore, according to Statistics South Africa, in 2015, 55% of South Africans lived below the poverty line (Statistics South Africa, 2015). For years economists, civil society, and political parties have urged the Government to undertake massive structural changes or the country will experience social unrest.

As stated by Tapscott (2017), since 1994, the country has undertaken massive reforms to address the profound social inequalities of apartheid. Since abolishing apartheid, the government has attempted to address socio-economic issues through indirect and direct policy measures (Levinsohn, 2008). The introduction of policies such as Reconstructive Development Programme (RDP) has resulted in the economy undergoing significant changes. During apartheid, the educational policies generated a skill shortage (Lowenberg, 1997). Post-apartheid, policies such as the RDP were put in place to advance the interests of black people who had been marginalised, and sought to build a democratic and non-racial country.

More than two decades after the introduction of the RDP and other socio-economic policies such as the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) have emerged, as well as policy frameworks to address socio-economic issues such as unemployment and poverty. The unemployment rate and the number of people living in poverty in South Africa remain at very high levels (Al Jazeera, 2022). Unemployment in South Africa is one of the country's most severe problems (Naidoo, 2021). It is considered the root cause of many socio-economic challenges, such as crime, violence, inequality and poverty. The indirect and direct policy measures introduced to address the existing social inequalities have not fared very well.

According to Yusif (2020), education is considered an important social investment because it is fundamental to development and growth of a country but can also lift an individual out of poverty. During Apartheid, higher education was separated along racial, geographical and social lines, with the vast majority of tertiary institutions white; in 1993, black students constituted only 52% of the student body (Badat, 2008). Since the dawn of democracy, the South African government has been creating a new education and training system whose purpose has been to meet the needs of that democratic society (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). Policy developments within higher education aim to democratise the education system, overcome discrimination that once characterised the higher education sector, expand access to

education and training, and improve the quality of education (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). In 2009, the Ministry of Higher Education and Training was created to expand opportunities for post-school education and training through massification (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). Education has been identified as providing a path out of poverty for individuals as well promoting equality of opportunity.

Achieving greater social justice depends on equitable access by all sections of the population to quality education (Waghid, 2014). Students want to further their education at premier institutions such as UCT because education drives social mobility. Good quality education will allow society more rapid economic, social and cultural development and without education, economic growth is impossible, and organisations will not fulfil their potential concerning social development (Waghid, 2014). Despite education being regarded as a transformation agent, it appears more expansion must be done in South Africa's post-school education and training. The system must be expanded to cater for young people who need to be in employment, education, or training.

The growing black middle class has been empowered by the new conditions formed by the arrival of democracy (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). But many people are still poor and education is regarded as a gateway to a better life in South Africa, particularly among black citizens.

When the #RhodesMustFall movement emerged, it was labelled by media reports as a movement fighting to remove Cecil John Rhodes's statue "Student revolt against the statue of Cecil John Rhodes" (Makoni, 2015b). While removing the statue was the initial focus of the #RhodesMustFall campaign, it quickly became clear that the movement was about much more than about the statue. The campaign was a broader call for the decolonisation and transformation of higher education in contemporary South Africa.

Similarly, when the #FeesMustFall and #Shackville crises occurred, there was an incorrect perception that it was just about fees. The #FeesMustFall movement was sparked by the announcement of a fee increase, but the movement was about underlying issues which were much broader and deeper than just the fees (Greef, 2021). At its core, the #FeesMustFall movement was about the worsening socio-economic conditions in South Africa, particularly for the country's black majority. Similarly with the #Shackville movement, the lack of housing in a student context

could be deemed emblematic of the broader housing crisis affecting the country's black majority. All three movements highlighted that many black South Africans were still living in poverty and facing significant barriers to accessing higher education, despite the end of apartheid. The movement also drew attention to the broader structural issues contributing to the ongoing inequality in South Africa, such as high levels of unemployment, inequality, education systems and a lack of affordable housing.

The #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall and #Shackville movements, therefore, were not just about a statue, fees or housing, but also about the broader issues of inequality and social injustice affecting millions of South Africans, particularly black South Africans. And although these crises do not directly incorporate the crisis management strategies of the organisation, they do reflect on these, providing a window into the efficacy of the strategies themselves. UCT has employed crisis management strategies focussed on resumption of university normal operations. While this strategy had the apparent effect of resolution, underlying tensions that caused the eruption of these crises in the first place remain unresolved. This typically creates a dormant crisis rather than a resolved crisis (Coombs, 2010). While the differentiation between dormant and resolved crises exists in the literature, what remains to be assessed is the impact of certain insufficient action in causing a resolved crisis to remain unattainable.

The #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements severely impacted higher education institutions in their ability to provide education to students due to temporary closures. But a closer inspection with regards to the issues raised by students indicates issues raised such as funding, accommodation and transformation are socio-economic issues that the country has been battling to address and are unlikely to be dealt with conclusively by higher education institutions. The crisis management strategies of such institutions therefore need to respond to these new risks by solving the crisis rather than moving the crises to dormancy. The need for this is heightened because social commentators, political parties and economists believe socio-economic issues such as unemployment, inequality and poverty will worsen. Such worsening might well result in the continued manifestation of social movements and the resurfacing from dormancy.

Reputation Management

Higher education institutions now appear to exist in an era of a crisis. In the recent post-apartheid past, crises within higher education institutions were far more infrequent and were often resolved before they evolved as full-blown. As a result, the crisis management strategies were not under the spotlight or scrutiny.

Since 2015, the crisis events that have occurred within the higher education sector, in this case UCT, have put a spotlight on crisis management strategies within the higher education sector, and whether poor crisis management strategies can cause crises to be dormant and render them irresolvable. According to Coombs (2004), crisis managers are encouraged to develop a crisis management plan to implement when a crisis occurs, to protect an institution or crises exists in the literature, what remains to be assessed is the impact of certain insufficient action in causing a resolved crisis to remain unattainable.

The #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements severely impacted higher education institutions in their ability to provide education to students due to temporary closures. But a closer inspection with regards to the issues raised by students indicates issues raised such as funding, accommodation, and transformation are socio-economic issues that the country has been battling to address and are unlikely to be dealt with conclusively by higher education institutions. The crisis management strategies of such institutions therefore need to respond to these new risks by solving the crisis rather than moving the crises to dormancy. The need for this is heightened because social commentators, political parties and economists believe socio- economic issues such as unemployment, inequality and poverty will worsen. Such worsening might well result in the continued manifestation of social movements and the resurfacing from dormancy.

Reputation Management

Higher education institutions now appear to exist in an era of a crisis. In the recent post-apartheid past, crises within higher education institutions were far more infrequent and were often resolved before they evolved as full-blown. As a result, the crisis management strategies were not under the spotlight or scrutiny.

Since 2015, the crisis events that have occurred within the higher education sector, in this case at UCT, have put a spotlight on crisis management strategies within the higher education sector, and whether poor crisis management strategies can cause crises to be dormant and render them irresolvable. According to Coombs (2004), crisis managers are encouraged to develop a crisis management plan to implement when a crisis occurs, to protect an institution or organisation's reputation. According to James, Wooten and Dushek (2014), a crisis event is intrinsically regarded as a negative occurrence. However, it can also present crisis managers, strategists and researchers with a learning opportunity through examining past crisis events and analysing what crisis management was effective and which crises management strategy was ineffective and to

add more knowledge in crisis management.

According to the QS World University Rankings, which features over 1 400 universities from around the world and examines six indicators which are: academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty, student ratio, citations per faculty, international student ratio and international faculty ratio. In 2022, UCT was South Africa's top university, ranked 226, the University of Witwatersrand was ranked at 424 and Stellenbosch University was ranked at 482 (QS Top Universities, 2021). In 2012, UCT was ranked 154. In 2014, it rose to 145, and in 2015, rose again to 141. In 2016, the university dropped to 171; in 2017, the university dropped again to 191. (QS Top Universities, 2023). A similar trend also occurred with the University of Witwatersrand (Wits). In 2012 the university was ranked 363. In 2014 the university rose to 313, but in 2015 the university dropped to 318; in 2016, to 331 and in 2017, to 359. Though there is no proof that the decrease in rankings was linked to the crisis events that took place during 2015 to 2019. It is interesting, however, that academic reputation and employer reputation, two of the ranking metrics that QS Rankings use to evaluate universities, are also metrics likely to be affected by negative public perception. It is, therefore, essential when an organisation or institution is faced with a crisis, it not only seeks to reduce reputational harm, but also learns from the crisis.

Organisational learning may become a determining factor in an institution's survival, the competitiveness, and long-term viability (Barnett & Pratt, 2000; Mitroff, 2005; Ulrich & Jick, 1993). There is greater need in analysing whether the crisis management strategies implemented were effective and resolved the crisis, and, if not, what organisations could learn to resolve such crises effectively.

According to Marcellis-Warin and Teodororesco (2012), reputation has now been recognised as a valuable and strategic asset. Institutional reputation is an intangible value and is the most crucial long-term asset. Marelby and Fernando, (2022) hold that a negative reputation can affect various issues, from university rankings to student admissions, donor funding, and employee morale. Previous rankings were not viewed as essential success metrics. International rankings are now attractive to higher education specialists, the media, the public and prospective students. Therefore, to a large extent, higher education institutions' survival depends on how well they can adapt to the new risks that affect their industry. Because an institution's capability to learn has been linked to its competitive advantage, organisational learning is absolutely imperative.

The #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movement was a devastating reputational crisis for higher education institutions. The protest action, students' confrontations with police officers and the closure of higher education institutions for indefinite periods affected public perception of higher education institutions. Students, staff, parents and stakeholders attributed responsibility to higher education institutions for the crisis. According to scholars Mense, Lemoine, Garretson, and Richardson (2018), globalisation and technological innovations have affected almost every industry, and the higher education environment has not been spared. Globalisation has made the higher education sector more competitive than ever, and institutional image and reputation play an even more critical role in student buying power. In response to this hyper-competitive environment, institutions have to invest more time and money in positioning themselves favourably (Vught, 2008). An institution's reputation influences a student's choice of a higher education institution and how long they stay there. Recurring crises impact a higher education institution's reputation and may cause long-term damage resulting in a loss of public trust or student confidence. That is why higher education institutions also need to evaluate whether their crisis management strategies resolve the crises they face or cause them to be dormant.

The #FeesMustFall crisis was catastrophic for the higher education sector. The damage by protesting students caused irreparable damage to the infrastructure of higher education institutions, and public trust in higher education institutions decreased. Crisis managers and management of higher education institutions were compelled to implement crisis management strategies to mitigate the damage caused. Nevertheless, even with those strategies implemented, #FeesMustFall negatively affected the reputation of higher education institutions. The crisis strategies implemented resulted in the crisis being dormant and resurfacing as the 2016 and 2017 #FeesMustFall, but the crisis also offered crisis management managers essential insights into crisis management.

According to Carley and Harrald (1997), organisational learning is a core mechanism in crisis management. Learning from crises is vital to develop the capabilities required to prevent their occurrence and limit their implications. To prevent the occurrence and contain the impact of crises, organisations must respond swiftly to crises, but organisations also need to transform crisis experiences into actionable learning. This chapter presented the benefits of this research study by examining why the higher education sector and higher education institutions such as UCT need to understand the new risk that socio-economic issues present to the higher education sector. Socio-economic issues such as poverty, inequality and unemployment were risks that

higher education institutions may have yet to be exposed to. The persistence of these issues has resulted in these issues becoming risks that higher education needs to consider in formulating their crisis management plan and strategies. These issues are unlikely to disappear, and the ongoing crisis events affect the reputation of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions also operate under different market conditions than in the past. Therefore, reputation has become an important asset.

UCT is not only the premier South African, but also the premier African higher education institution, and the university plays a significant role in shaping the future of society. Its reputation attracts prospective students and employees. The recurrent crisis impedes the institution's ability to shape society and impacts the institution's reputation. The crisis events do, however, present the university and crisis managers an opportunity for institutional renewal and the field of crisis management with new research and new ideas to manage the new risks presented by socio-economic issues such as poverty, inequality and unemployment. The crises events also allow higher education institutions to improve their resilience and enhance their ability to learn and prepare for future crises

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the various stages of the research, such as data collection and the process of data analysis.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), research methodology is defined by the nature of the research question and the subject being studied. This research study aims to explore and understand the crisis management strategies employed by UCT. The research question guiding this study is: *Can poor crisis management strategies cause crises to become dormant and render them irresolvable?*

This research explores the crisis management strategies employed by the UCT during 2015 and 2019 to manage the crisis events affecting the university.

The researcher used their position as an employee to conduct insider research which meant the researcher was familiar with the department and institution. Because the researcher is an insider researcher, they could be criticised about lacking objectivity, however in conjunction with other methods the researcher used, it was an useful approach to get on the ground knowledge about UCTs crisis management. The timelines that the researcher compiled also add to the validity of the research because they show how events unfolded in real time, and how UCT responded. Furthermore, despite the researcher's role as an insider, the researcher maintained their neutrality by relying on the evidence that was collected in the researchers data.

As a former employee of UCT, working at CMD, the researcher can state with confidence that the communications department, specifically the Media and Social Media Unit where the researcher was based, was responsible for developing and implementing measures to elevate, safeguard, and bolster the institution's reputation.

CMD comprises four units: Brand and Stakeholder, Online Communication, Media and Social Media and Newsroom and Video Production. The Media and Social Media Unit is responsible for communication with the media about university programmes, research, and the activities of

faculties and staff (UCT,2023). The unit works closely with the university's executive management in planning the release of news and information to both the UCT community and the university's diverse external audiences through traditional and social media.

The Media and Social Media Unit, where the researcher was based at CMD, is responsible for compiling media and social media reports, monitoring the reputation of the university, responding to crisis news and flagging potential crises. From 2017 until 2019, the researcher was directly responsible for compiling over 360 media reports, first as media and social media assistant, and then later as the digital and social media assistant. In 2019 the researcher was promoted to digital and social media officer and later acting Head of Social Media. During this time period the researcher responsibilities included overseeing approximately 567 digital and social media reports. As a former employer of UCT that was based in the Media and Social Media, the researcher was engaged in participant observation while being employed at the university from 2017 to 2022.

This research method involved the researcher immersing themselves in the organisational culture and process. The researcher collected data through daily activities such as the compiling and overseeing of media and social media reports, interaction with the environment itself, and the various ad-hoc requests. Such requests involved compiling crisis reports that detailed the timeline of the crises and the apparent cause of the crisis. These reports were compiled to help senior management with their decision making process.

During the researchers time at CMD time, the researcher took field notes to capture observations, reflections, and insights. Furthermore, the different roles at CMD allowed the researcher to have unique access to data sources, including internal documents and communications, often seen by external audiences through media statements and releases. The research question and methodology evolved during this data collection phase. The researchers understanding of crisis communication was refined as the researcher gathered more data and a deeper understanding of the context and issues regarding student protests tied to rising tuition costs, transformation issues and protecting the institution's reputation.

Previous research on crisis management at universities has been from an outsider's perspective, examining the decisions of crisis management strategies of higher education institutions. This is likely due to the difficulty researchers may experience in gaining an insider's perspective.

Therefore, a qualitative research approach was chosen as the methodology because the approach allows the researcher to develop a holistic understanding of the crisis events under study that is as objective and accurate as possible. Data were collected through observation, field notes and exhaustive document analysis. The following section outlines a detailed justification for selecting the specific approaches and methods.

Justification for Qualitative Research

According to Cleland (2017), several books and articles relating to qualitative research detail its benefit in educational research because of its ability to address research questions (Cleland, 2017). The main aim of research is to contribute novel insights and it is not always possible to put their answer of “how” and “why” into numbers. However, getting “how” and “why” or any other “wh-questions” as answers can extend and enrich existing literature, providing such novel insights.

The researchers decision to use qualitative research as the method for this research project was because the study aims to examine the crisis management strategies employed by UCT between 2015 and 2019, and to understand whether the crisis management strategies resolved the crisis events.

However, to do this, the researcher outlined the education environment before the crisis. The literature review highlights the socio-economic issues that may have contributed to the crisis events that affected the university. Weinreich (1996) indicates that qualitative research aims to equip the researcher with the perspective of the target audience members through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with the people under study. Working as an employee at CMD between 2017 - 2019, collecting data through daily activities and interacting with various individuals through the different roles that the researcher held, enabled the researcher sufficient time to collect and analyse a wide range of data sources. As mentioned, the sources included internal documents, reports, emails and other work documents to provide insights into the research question.

Through participant observation, coupled with data sources the researcher gained a holistic understanding of the crisis events and crisis management strategies utilised. All these methods helped the researcher to understand the strategies employed to manage and mitigate the crisis events.

Qualitative research also assists in developing new theories, strengthening current theories, or applying existing ones in new settings (Collins & Stockton, 2018). As illustrated in Chapter three, socio-economic issues such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality were issues that were mainly directed at the governing party through protest actions and demonstrations. Higher education institutions have experienced protest action in the past, prior to social movements such as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. However, the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall seems to indicate a correlative, if not outright causal, connection between worsening socio-economic conditions in the country and increasing student dissatisfaction.

According to Wang and Hutchins (2010), the frequency of crisis events in higher education institutions has recently increased. The 2007 deadly Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University campus shooting, the Texas A&M University bonfire disaster that killed 12 students and injured 27 others, as well as the residence hall fire at Interlaken University that claimed the lives of three students have attracted research on higher education institutions' real life experiences with crisis events. Research in crisis management within higher education has thus mainly focused on either health or violence (Wang & Hutchins, 2010). However, the recent crisis events at higher institutions in the United Kingdom and at UCT indicate that research should focus on inequality, unemployment, and poverty as these pose a new risk for higher education institutions from the traditional risks such as health and violence. Crisis management within higher education is not a new academic discipline but has focused on either health, violence, or disasters within the higher education sector. Furthermore, qualitative research is suggested as the adopted research methodology when there is a recognition that current theories do not adequately capture specific issues or problems. Finally, a researcher can adopt qualitative research because it lets readers know something new.

Sampling

The researcher is a former employee of the higher education institution where the research the study was based. The researcher selected the institution because the researcher has an insider's perspective and firsthand experience and knowledge of the university.

Early in the research design the researcher aimed to approach several tertiary education institutions in the Western Cape in order to be able to compare and contrast higher education

institution's crisis management strategies across the board (at least within a pre-defined geographical region). However, this research design needed to be abandoned for two reasons. When the researcher started to consider the research project in 2017 as a junior employee and how the researcher would collect data, there was a concern regarding being an employee of UCT CMD. The researcher felt that approaching other higher education institutions would render problems with the data. This is because the data acquired would not be uniform because the researcher would only have an insider's perspective of UCT. Any data collected at other higher education institutions in the Western Cape would lack the insider's perspective that the researcher had at UCT and therefore the data would be skewed. The insider's perspective to crisis management strategies the researcher had at UCT were invaluable and a large part of the research and analysis.

Furthermore, other universities would be concerned about marketplace competition and defence of intellectual property. Selecting the institution where the researcher worked allowed for a unique and nuanced understanding of its dynamics, decision-making process and crisis response mechanics. Data from the other universities would not be the same because it could have been affected by other institutions, perceiving the research project as a pretext to understand their crisis management tactics to a marketplace competitor. As a former employee, the researcher had the advantage of access to internal communication and the opportunity to make detailed field notes from personal accounts, historical records and institutional culture, which play a role in crisis management.

The sample of this research project was also through data sources, media, and social media reports, which gave context to the crisis and answered questions. These questions were around how, when and where— relating to the crisis through a timeline of events. The researcher also analysed email communication, holding statements, crisis incident reports, and work reports. These documents provided the researcher with a dataset to assess past crisis events, their resolutions and the strategies employed. In assessing these data sources, the researcher could see the evolution of the university's crisis responses over time and discern and assess the effectiveness of past strategies. Furthermore, through having access to historical records and internal documentation, the researcher could identify instances where the crisis appeared dormant and still required attention. By assessing the university's crisis responses of the seven crises , the researcher could assess where specific strategies resulted in the successful resolution of a crisis or if the crisis remained dormant. The evaluation of these specific strategies assists in understanding

the university's crisis management capabilities and informs for future strategy development. Looking at historical data and documents enables the identification of recurring patterns or themes before a crisis. The researcher selected the university where the researcher was formerly employed as the researcher site intentionally and aligned with the research objectives. It allowed for an inside perspective, as well as access to essential documents and the ability to address key research questions related to crisis resolution, differentiation between resolved and dormant crises and development of preventative measures.

Ethical Consideration

Given the importance of ethics and conducting research and the challenges around conducting research, universities go to great lengths to protect the dignity and safety of research participants (Dove & Douglas, 2023). The researcher selected participant observation as the primary data collection method despite the absence of interviews or focus groups. The researcher selected the data collection method as the most appropriate for gaining in-depth understanding into institutions dynamics, decision-making process, and crisis response behaviours. While the researcher acknowledges interviews and focus groups can be important methods for data collection, the nature of the topic is sensitive and participant observation offered a more naturalistic setting in which individuals could make decisions without the presence of a formal interview.

Furthermore, this approach also facilitated a deep understanding of behaviours, attitudes and responses within the natural setting of CMD. It allowed the researcher to observe first hand dynamics and complexities that may not be so apparent through an interview or focus group. The decision to use participant observation over interviews and focus groups was not a matter of preference but a result of careful balancing act prioritising the comfort of the participants while still enabling me to gather valuable information into the research questions.

However, ethical consideration was considered to ensure the study was conducted appropriately. To comply with ethical considerations, the researcher informed the institution when they applied for the research study program. Therefore, disclosure of the researcher's intention regarding the research study was deemed appropriate. Furthermore, the researcher also decided that because the researcher had been an employee of the institution, it would be ethical that the decision-makers would not be identified but remain confidential.

As outlined in Chapter one, the researcher hopes this study adds to the sparse crisis management

literature in higher education, specifically focused on South Africa. The researcher also hopes that the findings, although they cannot be generalised, will add value to the higher education sector, enabling higher education institutions to understand new crisis events better.

Data Collection Process

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research emphasises the importance of context in analysing data. The data collection process of this study was conducted over an extended period between 2017 and 2022.

The researcher began working at the institution in 2017, and during this time the researcher was employed at the university where the researcher was enrolled for the Masters degree programme in 2020. 2017 when the researcher began working at the institution marked the inception of the researchers engagement with the research subject and included field notes and observations. 2017-2022 were characterised by ongoing data collection where the researcher observed and documented the evolving dynamic responses within the research context. The researchers unique first hand experience of the inner workings of the university was an integral part of the observed environment, CMD. CMD was the department responsible for developing and implementing measures to elevate, safeguard, and bolster the institution's reputation.

Furthermore, because the researcher was an employee of the institution and part of the crisis communication process and events, this enabled the researcher to establish trust. From 2020 to 2022 the researcher analysed and refined the data collected during their time as field researcher. The extended period also allowed for examination of the data set and the identification of key themes and patterns. Participant observation was the primary data collection method used in the study. It involved the researcher immersing themselves in the daily operations, compiling media and social media reports, composing crisis incident reports, interactions, and decision-making processes at the university.

This role enabled the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the institution policies, processes, and procedures when managing a crisis. The researcher utilised news articles, press releases, and information from the university's website.

While participant observation enabled me to gain invaluable insight into the internal workings of the institution, I considered it important to cross reference and validate the findings with external

data sources. News articles and press releases offered a historical account of key events as well as public perception, enabling the researchers to trace the evolution of the university's response to crisis and recurring themes over time.

The observations were conducted at CMD. The participants used English as the medium of exchange during the meetings; therefore, the information did not require translation. Furthermore, given the researchers role — as employee rather than management, and having no decision-making power — thought processes, ideas, suggestions and insights became more readily available, in that there was no demand for input placed on the researcher. However, the researchers role as employee did place a demand for input on the researcher with respect to implementation of communication policy. A key objective for the department was the brand reputation for the university as well as monitoring digital and social media to gauge the intensity of the crisis.

Reflexivity in Research

Reflexivity plays a crucial role in qualitative research as it involves the researcher's acknowledgement of their positionality and its impact on the research process and findings (Olmos-Vega, Stalmeijer, Varpio, Kahlke, 2022). When researchers have a previous connection to the institution being studied, it is essential to consider potential biases and conflicts of interest that may arise.

In this context, the researchers previous employment at the institution could impact their interpretations of the crisis, and the effectiveness of the management strategies. For instance, personal relationships with the university's management team may influence the researchers interpretation of the crisis management strategies, leading to potential bias. Therefore, it's imperative that researchers acknowledge their backgrounds, context, and any potential bias in the research to ensure as much transparency and objectivity as possible.

While being a former employee of an institution provides unique perspectives and insider knowledge, it can also create bias and compromise research objectivity. For example, preconceived ideas about the institution or its practices may lead to the researcher interpreting the data differently. In addition, relationships with former managers and colleagues may influence the researchers ability to analyse data objectively.

To mitigate these potential biases, a researcher must be aware of their bias and take steps to minimise it. This includes ensuring that research questions are framed to encourage the exploration of new areas and that the research design is robust enough to capture diverse perspectives. Additionally, researchers need to be transparent about their relationships and potential conflicts of interest, taking steps to ensure that their analysis is objective and unbiased.

The researchers previous employment at the institution may provide advantages and disadvantages in the research process. Therefore, balancing leveraging previous experience and relationships, while maintaining a critical and impartial perspective, is crucial in conducting high-quality research. Reflexivity helps researchers acknowledge their positionality and maintain objectivity, ensuring that research findings are reliable and credible.

Data Analysis

Analysing collected data is a critical step in any research project. During this phase, a researcher uncovers patterns, relationships, and themes that can inform the study's findings.

The methodology in this research project is grounded in participant observation which allowed the researcher to immerse themselves in the environment under study by observing and engaging with the participants in their natural environment. The participant observation method combined with an extended timeline allowed the researcher to have a holistic exploration of the research context and depth of research findings. Participant observation used as the data collection method involved continuous engagement and data collection over an extended study. The research timeline and processes characterised by ongoing observation and analysis a thorough approach to understanding the research project. In this particular research project, analysis began with reading through the data collected.

This chapter describes the research process, including selecting UCT as the study of choice, the data collection method used, and the approach employed. The chapter outlines the research methodology, highlighting the steps to gather and analyse the data.

The following chapter focuses on the analysis process and presents the research findings. The chapter details the key themes and patterns, outlines the university's response to the crisis, and offers insights into UCT's crisis management strategies since 2015. By describing the research findings, the chapter provides a deeper understanding of UCT's crisis management strategies by

analysing its response. In addition, it provides essential insights that can be used to inform future research and practice in this area.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The methodology chapter provided an outline of the methods employed in this study and outlined the approach used to collect data. The data collected was analysed to identify potential patterns and relationships and to answer the research question; *Can poor crisis management strategies perpetuate dormancy of a crisis, ultimately rendering such a crisis irresolvable?*

Protest

According to Ballard (2016), protest action has been a vital expression of discontent in South Africa for many years. During apartheid, ongoing student protest was used to demonstrate discontent against the government and its policies that affected the majority of South Africans (Ballard, 2016).

Students took part in ongoing demonstrations against the government in the 1970s and 1980s. They played a significant role in the protests, and their activism was also acknowledged concerning the downfall of apartheid. At UCT, students have used protest action as a form of communication to highlight a range of issues they are unhappy about (Cini, 2019). According to Lucsher (2016), these tactics started in 2015 with the #RhodesMustFall protest, when students called for the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue. What follows are seven crisis timelines from UCT that serve to show how each crisis unfolded.

#RhodesMustFall Crisis Timeline:

9 March 2015: Chumani Maxwele threw human faeces onto the statue of Cecil John Rhodes at UCT which sparked protests (Bester, 2015).

10 March 2015: The UCT Student Representative Council (SRC) denied involvement in the protest but endorsed the call to remove the statue (University of Cape Town Student Representative Council, 2015).

12 March 2015: UCT released a statement supporting peaceful protests and encouraging constructive dialogue on societal issues, including symbolism, race, and transformation (Kruger, 2015b).

18 March 2015: UCT announced plans to initiate discussions on transformation issues (Price, 2015b). UCT also proposed an accelerated process for a rapid decision on the removal of the statue through discussions and debates (Price, 2015b).

20 March 2015: During a speech addressing the statue's removal by UCT vice-chancellor Max Price, students stormed the Bremner building (Kamaldien, 2015).

24 March 2015: UCT invited students and staff to attend a #TransformUCT assembly to express their opinions on the Rhodes statue and broader transformation issues (University of Cape Town, 2015e).

27 March 2015: UCT announced that the Senate had voted to remove the statue (News24, 2015).

8 April 2015: UCT council voted to remove the Rhodes statue (Mail & Guardian, 2015).

9 April 2015: At a special council meeting UCT announced the statue's removal (Mail & Guardian, 2015).

18 May 2015: UCT announced that it will grant amnesty to protesting students (Price, 2015f).

26 May 2015: UCT announced that they had signed an agreement with the Rhodes Movement students occupying Avenue, and the university had applied for a court order (Price, 2015e).

The #RhodesMustFall crisis timeline started on 9 March 2015 when a UCT student named Chumani Maxwele threw human faeces onto the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, sparking protests (Bester, 2015). The UCT Student Representative Council (SRC) denied involvement in the protest but endorsed the call to remove the statue on 10 March 2015 (University of Cape Town, 2015). On 12 March 2015, a statement was released acknowledging the crisis by announcing that a dialogue was held, supporting peaceful protests and encouraging constructive dialogue on issues such as decolonisation and transformation (Kruger, 2015b).

On 18 March 2015, the university announced plans to initiate a discussion on transformation issues and proposed an accelerated process for a rapid decision on the statue's removal through discussions and debates (Price, 2015b). On 20 March 2015, students stormed the Bremner building during a speech addressing the statue's removal by UCT vice-chancellor Max Price (Kamaldien, 2015).

On 24 March 2015, UCT invited students and staff to attend a #TransformUCT assembly to express their opinions on the Rhodes statue and broader transformation issues (University of Cape Town, 2015e). On 27 March 2015, UCT announced that the Senate had voted to remove the statue. (News24, 2015). On 8 April 2015, the council voted to remove the Rhodes statue, and on 9 April 2015, UCT announced the statue's removal, which was decided at a special council meeting (Mail & Guardian, 2015).

On 18 May 2015, UCT announced it would grant amnesty to protesting students (Price, 2015f). On 26 May 2015, UCT announced that they had signed an agreement with the Rhodes Movement students occupying Avenue (Price, 2015e).

The #RhodesMustFall crisis timeline highlights the intense debate and discussion around the statue of Cecil John Rhodes and broader transformation issues at UCT. The protest highlighted various issues, such as decolonisation and transformation within higher education. Mere months later, UCT was managing another crisis when the #FeesMustFall movement began with students demanding free education (Jansen, 2017).

The #FeesMustFall crisis was not confined to UCT alone. Other higher education institutions throughout South Africa also faced the same crisis. But since the #RhodesMustFall crisis emerged, other crises have since emerged, impacting the institution. As the university was managing the #RhodesMustFall crisis another crisis was unfolding, the 2015 Bremner Occupation.

2015 Bremner Occupation

21 March 2015: Protesting students occupied Bremner in support of calls for the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue (Kekana, 2015)

10 April 2015: Students continued to occupy the Bremner building and UCT provided an update regarding the occupation (Price, 2015h).

26 May 2015: UCT announced that they had signed an agreement with the Rhodes Movement students occupying Avenue, and the university applied for a court order (Price, 2015e).

However, after the Bremner Occupation, the 2015 #FeesMustFall crisis emerged in September

2015.

2015 #FeesMustFall Crisis Timeline

September 2015: South African Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, announced an increase in university fees for 2016 (Nzimande, 2015).

October 2015: Wits University in Johannesburg announced its proposed fee increase for 2016, which sparked protests at other universities (eNCA, 2015).

18 October 2015: UCT released official communication to staff and students via the VC Desk that acknowledged the critical issues brought to light by recent student protests. They also emphasised the need for respectful and lawful behaviour (Petersen, 2015a)

19 October 2015: UCT announced the suspension of activities on lower, middle, and upper campuses following protest action (Kruger, 2015a). UCT announced that a High Court interdict had been granted that would prevent protestors from interfering with university business, Acting VC Professor Petersen added that he hoped protestors would adhere to the court order (Petersen, 2015b).

20 October 2015: UCT announced the campus was inaccessible due to protest action. They updated the campus community regarding protest action, and announced campus closure from Wednesday 21 October 2015 (Petersen, 2015c).

22 October 2015: Protests continued on UCT's upper campus, with students blockading the main entrance to the university (Malgas & Fisher, 2015). UCT announced further campus closure on Thursday, 22 October. They also announced the VC's meeting with the president to discuss fee increases and the postponement of exams until further notice and campus closure on Friday, 23 October, (Price, 2015g).

24 October 2015: the university provided an update on examinations to be written from Tuesday 10 November 2015 (University of Cape Town, 2015a).

29 October 2015: UCT shared an update about recent critical developments at the university

(University of Cape Town, 2015g).

30 October 2015: VC Max Price holds a press conference giving an update on the current situation facing UCT and the higher education sector (University of Cape Town, 2015i).

1 November 2015: UCT released a statement regarding the interdict and police presence on campus (Price, 2015d).

6 November 2015: UCT provided an update on development on the campus, particularly the march by UCT workers who were asking to be insourced (Kruger, 2015d).

7 November 2015: UCT announced two significant agreements: UCT and NEHAWU agreed that the university would insource six outsourced services. There would be a 0% increase in fees for academic tuition and housing for all students from the African continent at UCT in 2016 (Price, 2015c).

8 November 2015: UCT gave an update regarding exams going ahead (Amoore, 2015).

9 November 2015: UCT updated the resumption of academic activities on campus and exams going ahead uninterrupted (Calata, 2015).

The announcement by the South African Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, proposing a fee increase for university fees in 2016 sparked protests at universities across South Africa, particularly UCT. Before the protest action erupted at UCT, the university acknowledged recent protest action, but also stressed the need for respectful and lawful behaviour (Petersen, 2015a). On 19 October 2015, UCT suspended activities on lower, middle, and upper campuses following protest action. Shortly thereafter they obtained a court order against the protest action on campus (Kruger, 2015a; Petersen, 2015b). The following day, campus activities resumed, but protests continued. On 22 October, students blockaded the main entrance to the university, and UCT announced the closure of the campus until further notice (Malgas & Fisher, 2015).

The protests sometimes turned violent, with clashes between students and police. On 26 October, UCT announced the suspension of academic activities. On 22 October, the UCT Executive announced the suspension of academic activities and the closure of all UCT campuses. Students

continued to protest (Price, 2015i). On 31 October, UCT's VC Max Price updated the current situation facing UCT and the higher education sector (University of Cape Town, 2015i). Then, on 7 November, UCT announced two significant agreements: UCT and NEHAWU agreed that the university would insource six outsourced services, and there would be a 0% increase in fees for academic tuition and housing for all students from the African continent at UCT in 2016 (Price, 2015d). On 9 November, UCT announced the resumption of academic activities on campus with exams going ahead uninterrupted (Calata, 2015). While a semblance of normalcy had seemingly been restored the #Shackville movement then emerged, necessitating further crisis management response from the university.

2016 #Shackville Movement

4 February 2016: UCT released a statement detailing that on the evening of 1 February 2016, a group of approximately sixty people, led by RMF, entered Avenue House, the offices of Student Housing and Residence Life at UCT. This group occupied the building and prevented staff from continuing with their duties. (Petersen, 2016a). After deliberation, the group vacated the property on 4 February 2016. In a statement, the university called the occupation unlawful and unacceptable. Later on 4 February 2016, UCT released another statement responding to a post by RMF on their Facebook about a scheduled meeting with university management (Petersen, 2016c).

6 February 2016: UCT released a campus update on accommodation, citing an unexpected surge resulting in the university having to accommodate around 100 students in temporary housing (Petersen, 2016d).

9 February 2016: UCT gave an update on private security on campus.(University of Cape Town, 2016e).

15 February 2016: The #RhodesMustFall movement erected a shack on campus to highlight the housing issues (Malgas, 2016).

16 February 2016: The university provided an update on the accommodation shortage and the challenges they faced from the RMF movement (Petersen, 2016d). The university later communicated its commitment to a safe study work environment (Price, 2016)

17 February 2016: The university provided an update on what was happening on campus, which was mainly protest actions such as burning paintings and a UCT bus (Petersen, 2016b).

24 February 2016: UCT released a statement regarding ensuring the campus remained open for debate (Price, 2016b).

29 February 2016: UCT released further communication about a decision made to cancel the Varsity Cup match between UCT and University of Pretoria (Hatton, 2016a).

The incubation period for the #Shackville movement started on 1 February 2016, when students entered Avenue House, the offices of Student Housing and Residence Life. This move prevented staff from continuing with their day-to-day duties. (Petersen, 2016a). The university employed private security on campus and shortly after the crisis erupted. The #RhodesMustFall movement erected a shack on the UCT campus to highlight the issue of housing shortages (Malgas, 2016). On 16 February, the university provided an update on the current accommodation shortage and the challenges they faced from the RMF movement (Petersen, 2016d). The university also communicated its commitment to providing a safe study work environment. However, on 17 February, the protest continued on campus, with protestors burning paintings and a UCT bus (Petersen, 2016b). On 24 February, the university released communication about the further communication about the crisis emphasising the importance of ensuring the campus remains open for debate (Price, 2016b). On 29 February the university made a decision to suspend the Varsity Cup match due to protest action (Hatton, 2016a).

After the emergence of two proceedings crises, #RhodesMustFall and #Bremner Occupation, a theme began to emerge wherein students resorted to protest as a communicative tool to articulate their grievances and concerns. When the #FeesMustFall movement emerged again in 2016 the pattern was confirmed, students resorted to protest action as a form of communication.

2016 #FeesMustFall Timeline

12 August 2016: The Council on Higher Education concluded that a 0% fee increase would be unsustainable and recommended an inflation-related increase for South Africa's universities in 2017 (Bendile, 2016).

19 August 2016: Two universities were forced to close down following student protests about the proposed fee increase (Makoni, 2016a).

25 August 2016: Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan was reported as saying South Africa could afford to cover university fees for students from poor backgrounds if corruption could be addressed (Pillay, 2016).

6 September 2016: UCT announced that it was going to present at the Fees Commission. A group of students disrupted the Fees Commission hearing and blocked UCT vice-chancellor Max Price from leaving the venue (Kruger, 2016e).

15 September 2016: Protest action begins at UCT. In a university-wide communication, UCT shared information regarding a group of about 200 protesters – including UCT workers, students, and students from other universities – moving between various buildings on the lower campus and Main Road between Rondebosch and Observatory (Hatton, 2016c). The university also announced that Campus Protection Services was monitoring the group, and the priority was the safety of people on campus. Protest action earlier in the morning temporarily disrupted the Jammie Shuttle service, which is the bus transport for UCT.

16 September 2016: UCT announced that classes were suspended (Hatton, 2016d).

18 September 2016: UCT announced that on Monday 19 September, lectures would be suspended (Hatton, 2016b).

20 September 2016: UCT announced the suspension of classes, lectures, and tutorials on 20 and 21 September (Kruger, 2016b)

21 September 2016: UCT announced the suspension of campus activities from Thursday, 22 September - Sunday, 25 September (Kruger, 2016b).

22 September 2016: UCT VC invited staff, students, and parents to join a picket at parliament on 22 September (Price, 2016c).

23 September 2016: The VC announced that he would be having a meeting with staff on 23 September (Kruger, 2016e).

25 September 2016: The VC announced to the campus community that classes had been suspended from Monday, 26 September, to Sunday, 2 October 2016 (Price, 2016d).

28 September 2016: A university wide communication was shared about the campus being closed and classes being suspended due to protesters on campus and demonstrating unlawfully (Kruger, 2016f).

2 October 2016: The VC announced that the campus would reopen and operation would resume with necessary security precautions (Price, 2016i).

4 October 2016: The VC thanked the UCT community and stated that the campus remained open despite some disruptions, and that most university operations continued (Price, 2016k).

5 October 2016: UCT gave an update on the setting of fire on campus by protesting students and announced the campus was closing until Friday 7 October (Kruger, 2016c).

6 October 2016: The UCT VC announced the way forward to completing the academic year (Price, 2016a).

7 October 2016: The UCT VC announced that UCT had decided to suspend classes and close all UCT campuses on Monday, 10 October 2016 (Price, 2016e).

10 October 2016: UCT announced that they had decided to extend the suspension of classes and the closure of all UCT campuses to Tuesday, 11 October 2016 (Kruger, 2016d).

12 October 2016: UCT announced that the university would be closed on Thursday and Friday, 13-14 October 2016 (Price, 2016h).

14 October 2016: UCT announced plans for completing the 2016 academic year (Price, 2016g).

15 October 2016: UCT announced further details on completing the 2016 academic year. Protest action continued and the university continued to give updates regarding campus activities (Price,

2016j).

25 October 2016: UCT applied for an interdict against protesting students, which was granted. SAPS arrested some protesting students (Price, 2016f).

1 November 2016: UCT updated the university community about the resumption of academic operations and said that the exams scheduled would begin on 7 November (University of Cape Town, 2016d).

In August 2015, the Council on Higher Education announced that a 0% fee increase would not be unsustainable for higher education institutions, but instead recommended an inflation-related increase for higher education institutions in South Africa (Bendile, 2016). The announcement by the Council on Higher Education set in motion the 2016 #FeesMustFall crisis. Soon after, protest action began at some higher education institutions across South Africa. According to Makoni (2016a), as the protest began some higher education institutions were forced to close down due to protests around the proposed fee increase (Makoni, 2016a).

The protests began to intensify when students disrupted the Fees Commission hearing at UCT, where UCT VC, Dr Max Price had presented (Kruger, 2016e). In a university-wide communication the university announced that protest action had begun at the university on 15 September, leading to the decision to suspend classes (Hatton, 2016c). On 25 September, UCT announced that classes would be suspended from 26 September to 2 October, and on 3 October, the campus reopened with necessary security precautions (Price, 2016i). However, protests continued, and on 5 October, UCT announced that the campus would be closed (Kruger, 2016c).

Besides the university's efforts to keep the campus open and to return to normal academic operations. The protests continued, and on 25 October, UCT applied for an interdict against protesting students. This interdict was granted, and some protesting students were arrested (Price, 2016f). On 1 November, UCT announced the resumption of academic operations and the decision for exams to begin on 7 November (University of Cape Town, 2016d).

By the end of 2016, the university had grappled with a total of four distinct crises, namely the Rhodes Must Fall movement, two instances of the Fees Must Fall protests, and the Bremner Occupation. Each of these crises had significant consequences for the institution's reputation and necessitated the university engagement through media statements and university communication to the wider public and campus community. The recurrence of these crises underscored the persistence of student grievances, which remained unaddressed and unresolved. The emergence of the further

fifth and sixth crises, Bremner Occupation and #FeesMustFall signified the university's continued struggle with an enduring state of a crisis.

Bremner Occupation

29 March 2017: The UCT executive met with about 100 students to discuss academic exclusions and financial exclusion issues. UCT agreed there was a need to review all academic exclusions and to alert the students to apply individually to initiate the review process (PoliticsWeb, 2017). At the end of the meeting, a group of about 30 people decided to occupy the Mafeje Room in the Bremner building (PoliticsWeb, 2017).

1 April 2017: UCT updated the university community regarding the continued occupation of the Bremner Building by students (University of Cape Town, 2017k).

4 April 2017: UCT began the legal process to remove students from the Mafeje Room in the Bremner Building (University of Cape Town, 2017c). The occupation of Mafeje Room in Bremner ends (University of Cape Town, 2017c).

On 29 March 2017, UCT executives met with student leaders to discuss a way forward regarding academic and financial exclusions. The meeting ended with protestors occupying Bremner building until a resolution was found regarding the exclusions (PoliticsWeb, 2017). After failed negotiations between the protestors and the UCT executive, the university began formal legal proceedings to remove protestors from Bremner. Soon after the university began formal proceedings and the occupation ended (University of Cape Town, 2017c).

2017 #FeesMustFall Crisis Timeline

3 October 2017: Protest action began at UCT (University of Cape Town, 2017e).

4 October 2017: UCT shared an update regarding how five people, including students, disrupted several classes on upper campus (University of Cape Town, 2017e).

13 October 2017: UCT converted its rugby fields into exam venues, with access being controlled by campus security, private security and police (Saal, 2017).

24 October 2017: UCT VC appealed for the release of the Fees Commission report on the feasibility of free higher education (Price, 2017a).

25 October 2017: UCT called to keep the university open and for the release of the fees report. UCT denied claims that the university had been shut down. Protesting students attempted to shut down the university. UCT announced that the university remained open and functional despite the shutdown attempt (University of Cape Town, 2017d).

26 October 2017: UCT announced the suspension of classes and lectures on 26 and 27 October. UCT shared a statement on social media denying claims that the UCT Financial Aid Office was withholding financial aid (University of Cape Town, 2017i). UCT also announced that they were seeking an urgent interdict in the Western Cape High Court against the unlawful protest action that had taken place on campus since Tuesday 24 October 2017 (University of Cape Town, 2017h).

28 October 2017: UCT announced that due to safety concerns, they had extended the suspension of some face-to-face lectures on main, middle, lower, and Hiddingh campuses (University of Cape Town, 2017j).

30 October 2017: UCT approached the Western Cape High Court seeking interdictory relief concerning unlawful protest action, and the matter was heard on an urgent basis. The court granted an interim interdict, effective immediately (Singh, 2017).

31 October 2017: UCT announced all classes to resume on Wednesday, 1 November 2017 (University of Cape Town, 2017b).

2 November 2017: UCT announced that exams were going forward despite attempts at disruption, that the campus would remain open, and that all test venues would be protected. Campus Protection Services, private security, and the South African Police Service (SAPS) would work together to contain the situation (University of Cape Town, 2017g).

4 November 2017: UCT announced that the university had resolved to complete the academic year (Price, 2017b).

21 November 2017: UCT announced that exams were underway (University of Cape Town, 2017f).

In October 2017, the #FeesMustFall crisis erupted at UCT. Protesting students disrupted several classes on Upper Campus (University of Cape Town, 2017e). By 13 October, UCT converted its rugby fields into exam venues, with access controlled by campus security, private security, and police (Saal, 2017).

On 24 October, the UCT VC appealed for the release of the Fees Commission report on the feasibility of free higher education (Price, 2017a). On 25 October, UCT called to keep the university open and for the release of the fees report, denying claims that the university had been shut down (University of Cape Town, 2017d). Protesting students attempted to shut down the university, and UCT announced that the university would remain open and functional despite the shutdown attempt.

On 26 October, UCT announced the suspension of classes and lectures on 26 and 27 October, denying claims on social media that the UCT Financial Aid Office was withholding financial aid (University of Cape Town, 2017i). UCT also announced that they were seeking an urgent interdict in the Western Cape High Court against the unlawful protest action that had taken place on campus since Tuesday, 24 October 2017 (Singh, 2017). On 28 October, UCT extended the suspension of face-to-face lectures due to safety concerns.

On 30 October, UCT approached the Western Cape High Court seeking interdictory relief concerning unlawful protest action, and the court granted an interim interdict, effective immediately (Singh, 2017). On 31 October, UCT announced that all classes would resume on Wednesday 1 November 2017. On Thursday 2 November UCT announced that exams would go ahead despite attempts at disruption (University of Cape Town, 2017g). Campus remained open, with test venues being protected by Campus Protection Services, private security, and the South African Police Service (SAPS). On 4 November UCT announced that the university had resolved to complete the academic year, and on 21 November, UCT announced that exams were underway.

Defining Resolved Crisis: Initial Data Analysis

One of the critical things the researcher sought during the initial reading of the data was UCT's definition of a resolved crisis.

This information was crucial because it provided a basis for evaluating the data on decision-making since the crisis's inception in 2015. Meaningful and systematic analysis of the data would note the criteria that UCT uses to define a resolved crisis. The researcher read through the data on the various crisis events at UCT since 2015, examining patterns and relationships between the events.

The analysis phase commonly involves identifying patterns and relationships to draw insights and conclusions from the data. A notable pattern that emerged was the persistent crises related to funding, accommodation, academic exclusion, and financial exclusion. The continuous student protests and strikes since 2015 indicate these issues remain a challenge for the university. Additionally, while protests may initially revolve around student funding, they can escalate into broader crises. This underscores the significance of comprehending the contextual framework in which problems arise and the potential for ripple effects across various areas within the institution.

In addition to identifying patterns and relationships between the crisis events, the researcher also noted the crisis management strategy of the institution. The university's reputation is essential to the institution, and protecting that reputation is central when a crisis occurs. Therefore, the crisis management strategy and response centred around protecting the institution's reputation during crisis events. Crisis communication during the first crisis event was not regular or consistent. However, as the university managed other crises, following #RhodesMustFall, the communication there after, was more consistent and regular. The researcher also observed that the institution consistently took action to minimise the duration of the crisis periods. The university addresses crises in a discernible pattern. This pattern ostensibly comprises two stages. First, the university attempts openness and reconciliation, attempting to engage with the protesting students on the substantive issues raised. A second stage is triggered when an agreement seems unreachable. It is at this point that court orders or interdicts are sought to ensure a return to normal operations.

The initial data analysis provided insight into how UCT has managed its ongoing crisis since

2015 and examined the factors that have contributed to its decision-making regarding its crisis management strategy. The researcher drew insights and conclusions from the data by identifying patterns and relationships between the crisis events and analysing the decisions taken to resolve each situation. As explained by Aldemir and Gülcan (2004), academic operations are often the most visible and tangible aspect of the institution's activities. For UCT, when academic operations are disrupted by an issue that has evolved into a crisis, it harms the institution's reputation, which the university aims to safeguard. Therefore, the university's immediate action to engage with the students in order to return to normal academic operations. If that does not work, court orders and interdicts have been the go-to for the university. UCT is forced to safeguard itself when academic operations are disrupted by protest. The university administration first tries to negotiate with students to end the protest, and if that fails it turns to the use of a court interdict. The return to academic operations by the university may stop the negative publicity because the crisis has stopped.

Nevertheless, the persistent crises resulting from the temporary pause rather than the resolution of the initial turmoil negatively impacted the university's reputation. This continuous crisis creates the perception that the university is consistently facing turmoil. UCT prioritised returning to normal operations and ending the immediate crisis rather than addressing the root causes that gave rise to the ongoing problems. This suggests that there may be tension between short-term solutions and longer-term strategies for managing situations.

Since 2015, crises have persisted, characterised by student protest actions utilised to emphasise grievances and disrupt academic activities. Movements like #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and #Shackville have brought attention to various issues that students face, such as funding, financial exclusions, accommodation, and transformation. However, even with the disruptions caused by protesting students, higher education institutions such as UCT have managed to return to normal academic operations after the crises. This cycle of resumption of normal operations led to universities misinterpreting their crisis management strategies as being effective. Yet crises re-emerging after the resumption of normal operations indicates that these original crises were anything but resolved. On the contrary, these were arguably examples of dormant, rather than resolved, crises.

Socio-economic Issues

According to Machika and Johnson (2015), socio-economic issues such as poverty and inequality affect many students while studying towards a degree or diploma as well as affect their academic success. Machika and Johnson (2015), further note how important it is for higher education institutions to be aware of the impact such conditions have on the student experience. Consequently, there is potential for new risks for higher education institutions in this context.

Demonstrations by students highlight the challenges students face in accessing education and the limitations imposed on them by socio-economic barriers such as poverty, inequality and unemployment. The students' demonstrations have also highlighted the environment in which higher education finds itself, which is being the target of anger and frustration by protesting students whose future is affected by socio-economic barriers such as poverty, inequality and unemployment.

According to Statistics South Africa (2015), many experience poverty. Poverty is a significant challenge in South Africa, with many people living below the poverty line. According to Prego (2019), education is regarded as a social agent that can improve socio-economic conditions. Many students want to attend higher education institutions such as UCT but need help because many live in poverty. NSFAS, a government initiative aimed at providing financial assistance to students from low-income families, aims to break this cycle of poverty. However, according to Mhlongo (2018), NSFAS has struggled to provide adequate funding to academically deserving students, resulting in many students dropping out of universities or not attending higher education institutions. When students are unable to attend a higher education institution because of lack of funding, frustration accompanied by realisation of being trapped in a vicious cycle, can be expected.

Unemployment is also closely linked to poverty (Cloete, 2015). The country's high unemployment levels mean many graduates struggle to find jobs after completing their studies. This situation has also led to a growing sense of frustration among students who question the value of their education and the investment they have made. In addition, many graduates work in jobs that do not match their qualifications or career aspirations, resulting in a broader societal skills deficit. According to Knight and Kingdon (2004), the high unemployment rate in South Africa affects the labour market in ways that include salaries offered to graduates. An oversupply of labour, leads to lower wages offered to graduates, worsening the inequality gap. Hundenborn (2009), notes that South Africa has one of the

highest levels of income inequality in the world.

Most of the population in South Africa is living in poverty and only a tiny percentage is enjoying a high standard of living. Abed and Acker (2021), contend that this situation significantly impacts the education sector, as students from disadvantaged backgrounds struggle to access quality education due to financial and related barriers. Inequality in the education sector is also evident in the quality of education provided. Many schools that serve disadvantaged communities need more resources to provide quality education, resulting in a widening gap between the rich and poor regarding access to quality education (OCED, 2021). The impact of poverty, unemployment, and inequality on higher education institutions in South Africa is evident.

Crisis Management

Socio-economic issues such as poverty, unemployment and inequality were precursors for the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #Shackville movements, and Bremner Occupations. The protest action that took place at higher education institutions such as the Tshwane University of Technology in 2012 as well as the 2014 protest action that took place at various institutions such as Durban University of Technology, Vaal University of Technology, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, and Mangosuthu University of Technology, encouraged by SASCO were about a range of issues such as accommodation and student funding. (Mail & Guardian, 2014) This was the pre-crisis incubation period where warning signals emerged before the crisis events. As the warning signals transitioned from pre-crisis to crisis events, disrupting normal university operations, institutions were compelled to recognise the crises and enact crisis responses.

UCT's crisis response strategy was geared toward protecting institutional reputation and resolving the crises as quickly as possible. When the #FeesMustFall crisis occurred, news articles were published about the crisis (headlines like "Students vow that Rhodes will fall" were not uncommon) and social media conversation about the crisis under the hashtag #RhodesMustFall also emerged (eNCA, 2015). The university released a media statement entitled "*Rhodes statue protests and transformation*" to attempt to take control of the narrative and frame public perception (Price, 2015b). Such action would show that the university is trying to resolve the crisis, but these kinds of exercises in perception management fell short in that media statements is the university's communication were inconsistent. UCT released its first media statement on 9 March 2015, and its next statement was on 12 March 2015. Silence from the university created a void and was filled by

news articles questioning why students had decided to protest by throwing faeces at the statue of Rhodes (Bester, 2015). As the days and weeks passed, and the crisis prolonged, the university's reputation suffered due to the constant negative media attention. National and international coverage around the protest action, with articles titled "Rhodes statue must go says UCT students" and "Ex-SRC leaders say Rhodes must go" arguably had a detrimental impact on university ranking (Fredericks, 2015; Bester, 2015).

The university's response continued to try to frame public perception in their favour and to take control of the narrative by showing that they were committed to resolving the crisis. This was marked by releasing media statements such as "Progress in discussing the removal of Rhodes statue", "UCT Senate vote in favour of moving Rhodes statue", and "UCT Council votes in favour of removing Rhodes statue" similar response strategy was also employed by the university during the 2015 Bremner Occupation and #Shackville movement (Price, 2015i; eNCA, 2015c; University of Cape Town, 2015d). At this point media articles titled "UCT students to continue to Occupy Bremner" and "Shackville erected at UCT to protest lack of housing", appeared (Etheridge, 2015; eNCA, 2016).

There was an immediate response by the university, creating public perception that they are committed to resolving the crisis. This phase included media statements such as "Update on Rhodes statue and occupation of Bremner Building" and "UCT committed to a safe study and work environment" (Price, 2015; 2016). The university crisis response of attempting to take control of the narrative has been a constant thread throughout the crises at UCT under the period of study. Observation of the crises does however illustrate that UCT's crisis response strategy for the 2015, 2016 and 2017 #FeesMustFall crises to be slightly different. This was due to insights from the #RhodesMustFall and Bremner Occupation. The media releases, statements and updates for the #FeesMustFall compared to the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall were regular, timely and consistent. On 19 October 2015, protest action began at UCT, and media organisations started reporting about the protest. On the same day, the university also released communication with an update, "All activities cancelled on Upper, Middle Lower Campus at UCT" (Kruger, 2015a). But, the university's response strategy during the #FeesMustFall crisis was similar to the #RhodesMustFall, and Bremner Occupation, in that it was still geared at protecting the reputation of the institution by depicting a university working hard to resolve the crisis.

This was illustrated through media statements such as “VC call for differentiated fee structure”, “The way forward to completing the 2016 academic year”, “UCT executive and student groupings sign agreement” and “Further details on UCT-student agreement” (Calata, 2017; Price, 2016a; University of Cape Town, 2016i; University of Cape Town, 2016a) the university’s media releases illustrated that the university was trying to resolve the crisis, but when it appeared that discussion and engagements with protesting students were failing, and that protest was continuing on campus, court orders and interdicts would be sought to alleviate tensions and resume normal operations. This would almost always be done in a way that failed to engage with underlying issues and would thus create a dormant crisis.

Legal intervention: Crisis Management Strategy

Research into UCT crisis management strategies shows that court orders and interdicts have become an increasingly common crisis response strategy employed by the university to manage their ongoing crises. During the #RhodesMustFall and 2015 Bremner Occupation, the university did not respond to the crises through court orders or interdicts, but with the #FeesMustFall crises, #Shackville movement and 2017 Bremner Occupations, the university did utilise court orders and interdicts to assist in the resumption of academic operations.

Analysis of the #FeesMustFall crises, collectively, suggests a sharp difference between intent and effect, relating to court orders and interdicts. While the university perceived court orders and interdicts as a tool to ensure resumption of normal operations, those sympathetic to students circumstances as a result of poverty and inequality may have perceived the court order and interdicts as borderline authoritarian in character, and as having the effect of silencing dissenting voices. Their deployment undermined trust and cooperation between the protesting students and management, which is needed to resolve a crisis. By using court orders and interdicts, the university exacerbated tensions and made finding a long-term solution to the crisis difficult.

The university’s use of court orders and interdicts as a crisis management strategy was also reactive by the university instead of proactive. The university was reacting to the ongoing and sometimes violent protest reported by the media, such as “UCT suspends all operations over threat to the safety of staff and students” (TimesLive, 2015). However, the university’s reactive crisis management strategy was not addressing the underlying issues fuelling the crisis, such as poverty, inequality and unemployment. Instead, the university sought to impose its authority over

the situation by imposing restrictions on the behaviour of those involved, as seen in “Appeal court ruling sets parameters for a protest at universities” (Mail & Guardian, 2016).

UCT’s crisis response strategy appeared to be effective in resolving the crisis. This notion that the crisis was resolved was demonstrated in the communication sent by the UCT VC in 2015, “Letter to 2015 UCT students”. The communication by the university detailed how pleased the VC was that the university could complete the academic calendar (University of Cape Town, 2015). Yet a few months later, in 2016, the #Shackville movement occurred and the #FeesMustFall. In 2016, towards the end of the year, similar to 2015 the university released communication “Further details on UCT-student agreement” detailing that though it was challenging year for the university with protest action, they were able to finish the academic calendar and write exams even with the protest action of 2016 (University of Cape Town, 2016a). However, in less than 12 months later, the 2017 #FeesMustFall movement occurred.

Similarly in 2017 again, the university released its “Year-end message” detailing how the university fared against difficulties, yet students were able to write their exams (University of Cape Town, 2017). According to UCT communication, its crisis management strategies between 2015 and 2019 had been successful, because protest action were suspended and normal operations had resumed, as signalled by the completion of the exams. But the university’s criteria for a resolved crisis may have been short- sighted. Crisis management strategies that can cause crises to be dormant offer a short-term crisis management strategy or solution. University operations resumed, and the academic year was completed — as was the case for UCT in 2015, 2016 and 2017 — but the crises continually re-emerged. The court orders did not resolve the crisis, they simply placed the crisis into dormancy. Generally, court orders tend not to resolve crises but rather contribute to escalating already tense situations.

According to Masipa (2018), socio-economic issues such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment are issues that are highly unlikely to disappear. And though higher education institutions such as UCT are not expected to solve these issues (as they are issues Government should address through policies), they also affect higher education institutions such as UCT. As a result, UCT and other higher education institutions need to have crisis response strategies that identify these issues prior to them manifesting and not implement short-term crisis response strategies moving crises to dormancy because this contributes to the recurrence of these crises, as interdicts and court orders have stopped the crisis without resolving it. This underscores the potential for court orders and interdicts to

occasionally exacerbate heightened situations by generating additional resentment among students and stakeholders, as demonstrated in “UCT to lay criminal charges against protesting students” (Tandwa, 2016).

Court Orders

South Africa has a history of having an authoritarian government and using court orders and interdicts as crisis management strategies was perceived as heavy-handed and authoritarian by students. The apprehension of at least nine students at the University of Cape Town during ongoing protests over tuition fees (Qukula,2015). Fuelled tensions between the management of the university and protestors. The court order and interdicts also creating a sense of mistrust and resentment, but they also created a false sense of security. The suspension of protest action was mistaken for a resolution of the crisis. However, according to Pearson and Clair (1998), a resolved crisis is one that does not occur again. The false sense of security contributed to the idea that the issues raised had been resolved when they had in fact become dormant. Campus reopening, through court orders pushed by the university, management into the mistaken notion that all crises had been resolved. According to the Institute for Public Relations (2007), an organisation needs to release updates on the recovery process, corrective actions or crisis investigation, when the crisis has been resolved.

Another important observation that emerged from the study is how higher education institutions such as UCT use court orders and interdicts to end a crisis. This fuels a kind of “arms race” where students must anticipate for this kind of resolution. For example, in 2015 and 2016, UCT applied for court interdicts to arrest students in violation of an earlier court order. This action discredited the university’s claims of an open campus — claims made in university communication (University of Cape Town, 2016). Claims similarly challenged by fact, were those concerning lack of access control, but these however would be offered as evidence of the university’s inability to prevent interdicted students from entering campus.

Instead of relying on court orders and interdicts as a crisis management strategy, higher education institutions such as UCT must look for more constructive and proactive crisis response strategies. This may involve engaging with all parties involved in the crisis, understanding their concerns and perspectives, and finding ways to address the underlying issues fuelling the conflict.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#RhodesMustFall was a prolonged crisis that damaged the institution's reputation. However, the crisis event offered important insights to implement in future crises. According to Lee (2021), taking control of the narrative of a crisis enables the institution to shape public perception and minimise negative consequences. It also allows the institution to protect its brand, which could take years to recover. During the #FeesMustFall movement, UCT was accused of a range of missteps and injustices, prompting the university to recognise the importance of providing its community with regular updates. However, this was also perceived as an attempt to control the narrative and protect the institution's reputation. After the #RhodesMustFall event, there were more regular, timely, and consistent updates by the university during crisis events in 2015, 2016, and 2017. This critical learning from the #RhodesMustFall crisis is what UCT should adopt regarding the crisis management strategy regarding court orders and interdicts.

A court order is not an effective crisis management strategy, but rather contributes to the reoccurrence. In essence, a court order is a failure to resolve the crisis. According to Bundy (2016), organisational learning is an essential step in crisis management because it allows an organisation or institution to take teachings from previous crises and adapt them to future crises in order that they do not make the same mistakes. Most importantly, organisational learning also presents an opportunity for the institution to reflect on their current crisis management strategy and assess its effectiveness in order for their crisis management strategy to be more effective when dealing with a new crisis.

During 2015 #FeesMustFall UCT announced that it had applied for a court interdict and that police would be on campus to arrest students violating it. Shortly thereafter, UCT released follow-up communication that exams would be going ahead. On 9 November, the university confirmed the unimpeded resumption of academic activities and exams (University of Cape Town, 2015). Media houses such as eNCA also reported that exams had begun ("UCT exams go ahead despite protests,") also giving stakeholders the impression that the crisis had been resolved after the exams had been completed. The VC sent out communication on 24 December "Letter to 2015 UCT students" noting that although 2015 was a challenging year apart from one disruption to an exam, all exams ran as scheduled (Price, 2015). Therefore, university operations could be

resumed, with a December graduation going to take place.

Similarly, on 25 October 2016, the university announced it had been granted an interim court order, and anyone violating it would be arrested. The university explained that this was done to protect its operations and for the university to conclude the academic year and proceed with examinations (University of Cape Town, 2016). On 21 November, UCT announced that exams had begun on 7 November, no disruption had occurred, and that exams were expected to be completed on 25 November. When exams were completed, the VC communicated to 2017 prospective students and parents that despite the protest action in 2015 and 2016, UCT should be their top choice (University of Cape Town, 2016).

Again in 2017, the same instance occurred after continued protest action disrupted academic operations. UCT, as they did in 2015 and 2016, announced they would be seeking an interdict (University of Cape Town, 2017). The interdict was granted, and soon after, UCT announced that academic operations would resume, that exams would be going ahead despite attempts at disruption and that the university would be completing the academic year (University of Cape Town, 2017). After that the university announced that they would be forging ahead with the academic year. Late in the year, the VC released a statement noting how 2017 was also challenging, but that both teaching and exams had been rendered despite disruption by protests (University of Cape Town, 2017).

UCT has been proven to have difficulty distinguishing between a resolved and dormant crisis. Ostensibly this seems due to the university having a short-term focus on crisis management, where immediate challenges are addressed rather than underlying causes. For example, in 2015, when the #FeesMustFall occurred, the university's immediate priority appeared to be the resumption of academic operations; the completion of its academic year, and the successful completion of exams (University of Cape Town, 2015). When this appeared to be threatened by the ongoing student protest, the university turned to the courts to apply for an order to stop student protest. The university repeated this strategy in 2016, and again in 2017. Completion of the academic year and of exams was mistaken for resolution, building a permission structure for the university to disengage from even attempting resolution of the underlying issues. However, student protest would continue from 2017 through to 2023, the year of writing for this dissertation. Because the underlying causes of the conflict still exist, ongoing crisis results. The latest student protest against financial exclusion took place in February 2023. Again, the

university resorted to court interdicts, and again these proved successful enough to allow for resumption of normal academic operations (University of Cape Town, 2023).

The court interdicts create a false impression crisis being resolved. However, the university needs a greater understanding of what constitutes a resolved crisis. According to Pearson and Clair (1998), a resolved crisis is when the crisis is no longer a threat to an institution's operations or reputation and when the institution has successfully addressed the crisis, contained its impact, and taken steps to prevent its recurrence. UCT's approach to a resolved crisis needs to be revised because resuming academic operations through court orders or interdicts does not resolve the crisis. Instead, it is merely a short-term solution that does not address the underlying issues that caused the crisis. Unfortunately, this approach that the university has adopted will continue to result in the ongoing crisis period the university finds itself in time and time again, leading to further disruptions and negative consequences for the reputation of the university.

Limitations

The central methodology for this study was participant observation, which gave an in-depth insight into the institution's practices, processes, and patterns. According to Shin and Miller (2022), participant observation is a research technique that entails the researcher becoming fully enmeshed in the community or group they desire to examine, monitoring their interactions, and recording their findings. In addition, because the researcher was a former UCT employee, she had firsthand experience of the organisation, which shed light on the institution's crisis management tactics.

Participant observation is a valuable research technique for understanding complicated circumstances, but it has limitations (Kawulich, 2005). For example, the possibility of bias, which can occur when a researcher is a member of the community they are examining, is a significant constraint. In addition, when a former employee researches their former employer, preconceived notions and power dynamics may influence the observations and analysis, compromising objectivity. Consequently, this would make it more likely that the researcher might overlook or minimise some aspects of the organisation's practices, which will affect validity.

The poor generalisability of the results is another area in which participant observation falls short. The context of higher education in South Africa and UCT was the explicit focus of this study. As

a result, the conclusions drawn may only be relevant to a few higher education institutions in South Africa or elsewhere. Furthermore, because each institution has its own culture, customs, and crisis management procedures, the findings cannot be generalised to other higher education institutions globally.

Researchers must consider these limitations when evaluating the results and coming to conclusions from the study (Zaidi & Ross, 2019). In order to supplement the knowledge gathered from participant observation and provide a complete understanding of crisis management in higher education, future studies may include additional research methodologies such as surveys or interviews. Future studies could also examine how well various crisis management techniques work in higher education institutions and how institutions can enhance their crisis management procedures.

Ultimately, this study provides relevant knowledge regarding the crisis management strategies employed by UCT since 2015. However, recognising the research methodology's drawbacks, such as potential bias and reduced generalisability, is vital.

Conclusion

In today's interconnected world it is challenging to prevent news of a crisis from spreading (Diers-Lawson, 2017). In addition, the advancement of information technology has contributed to spreading crisis news from one part of the world to the next. The speed at which crisis news travels means organisations need to be prepared now more than ever for a crisis because of its potential negative impact on their reputation. Therefore, scholars advise best practices for organisations to prepare for crises because crises are inevitable (Coombs, 2007).

Investing in education is widely recognised as essential for social development and economic growth. In line with this, the South African government has implemented policies, such as the Higher Education Act of 1997, to address the legacies of apartheid and create a new social order. According to Badat (2008), education was previously separated along racial, geographical, and social lines, with most tertiary-level students being white. Since then, the number of black students in higher education institutions has significantly increased (Badat, 2008). However, despite the Government's efforts to promote access to higher education through policies and establishing the National Student Funding Scheme (NSFAS), many students still do not have

access to higher education (Mhlongo, 2018), leading to frustration at the situation. In South Africa, protest action is used to express dissent towards the ruling party as well as various socio-economic issues such as unemployment, poverty and inequality. In recent years protest action has also been utilised by students at higher education institutions to highlight a range of issues they are dealing with.

In 2014, SASCO encouraged student protest at higher education institutions to express dissatisfaction with the allocation and registration process of the NSFAS (Mail & Guardian, 2014). SASCO also accused higher education institutions of exacerbating the situation with exorbitant fees. This led to protests at several universities, including Durban University of Technology, Vaal University of Technology, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, and Mangosuthu University of Technology (Mail & Guardian, 2014). The protests emerged as a result of growing dissent over the slow pace of transformation at higher education institutions.

In March 2015, following the 2014 student protests, and as higher education institutions appeared to be recovering from the unrest, UCT was confronted with a crisis. UCT student Chumani Maxwele made national and international headlines when he threw a bucket of excrement at Cecil John Rhodes statue highlighting transformation issues at the university. While some media reports dismissed the protest action as vandalism, student protestors deemed it necessary to highlight institutional racism, inadequate transformation, and the lack of access to tertiary education and student housing that the statute represented (Smith, 2015; Bester, 2015).

The #RhodesMustFall and Bremner Occupation crisis brought to the fore UCT's crisis management strategy due to the constant national and international media coverage. The crisis management strategy appeared to be effective as protest action stopped on campus, and as Bremner Building was vacated by protesting students, allowing normal university operations to be resumed. However, the university would soon be grappling with another crisis in the form of the 2015 #FeesMustFall protest. The 2014 protest action encouraged by SASCO at various other higher education institutions appeared to be a precursor to the higher education industry. Student leaders, in 2014 had expressed their growing discontent about the lack of government funding, exorbitant fees, and the limited access to higher education institutions by academically deserving students who could not afford fees.

The #FeesMustFall crisis, like its predecessor crises, the #RhodesMustFall and Bremner Occupation drew intense national and international media attention and put a sharp spotlight on the university's crisis management strategy. According to Greef (2021), during the protests, students disrupted classes and caused temporary closures of higher education institutions to protest against proposed fee increases. Mavunga (2019) adds that the dissent quickly spread to other higher education institutions, leading to weeks of demonstrations and exam postponements.

As with any other organisation, higher education institutions seek to quickly resolve a crisis, since a prolonged crisis can harm their reputation and finances. Furthermore, higher education institution crises often significantly impact the academic mission and according to Simpson, Fincher and Hafler (2007), academic operations are often the most visible and tangible aspect of the institution's activities. Ending a crisis and returning to normal academic operations is essential to higher education institutions, from the point of view of minimising damage. Since 2015 the university has spent more than R24 million on private security (Mail & Guardian, 2017). After much debate and protest action the Cecil Rhodes statue was removed, protest action stopped and the university resumed normal academic operations. Notwithstanding its apparent success at suspending protests, the university's chosen crisis management strategy of seeking court orders led to the false perception of resolving the crisis.

Sarriegi, Torres and Lardizabal (2009) believe it is important that an institution acknowledges a crisis because it allows for important learning and assists in limiting the reoccurrence of a crisis. Acknowledging a crisis also allows for the institution to do a critical assessment of how the crisis came about. Was the crisis management strategy effective in resolving a crisis? Did it acknowledge underlying issues that could have led to the crisis limiting its reoccurrence (Bundy, 2007)? Non-acknowledgment of a crisis also means that the institution is unable to learn what it did well and what it did not.

The occurrence of the #FeesMustFall crisis, followed by the #Shackville movement, Bremner Occupation, and the recurrence of #FeesMustFall illustrates the danger of failure to learn from previous crises. An ongoing crisis period is created for the institution or industry. The ongoing crisis illustrates that the sense of security created with the stopping of these crises was ultimately a false one. And further that, a return to normal academic operations was impossible without acknowledging the issues raised by students during the crisis. Fully addressing the underlying issues that initially prompted the crisis and preventing their going dormant was, in fact, the only

means to resolution.

It is, however, sometimes easier for higher education institutions such as UCT to avoid resolving the underlying issues that cause a crisis. Institutions might especially resign themselves to leaving these issues unaddressed, given the complex socio-economic nature of the issues themselves. Furthermore, these problems are pernicious and need to be addressed by the Government as they are rooted in the country's history, and would require significant investment of resources and to address. The solution to the crisis may take time to implement. Additionally, resolving such deep-rooted socio-economic issues appears to require collaboration and cooperation among multiple stakeholders, including government, the private sector, civil society, and the general public, which can be challenging.

South Africa, is grappling with various socio-economic challenges, including high levels of inequality, unemployment, and poverty (Masipa, 2018). These issues are deeply rooted in the country's history of colonialism, Apartheid, and economic exclusion and would require significant efforts to address (Masipa, 2018). However, it is challenging to address these issues because they are often interconnected and reinforce one another, creating a vicious cycle that is difficult to break. For example, high levels of inequality can contribute to high levels of poverty and unemployment (Dabala-Norris, 2015). Furthermore, high poverty levels can lead to limited opportunities for economic mobility. Therefore, resolving deep-rooted socio-economic issues that cause issues to evolve into crises is tricky and requires sustained efforts over the long term (United Nations Development Programme, 2018). In South Africa, higher education institutions face significant challenges related to inequality, unemployment, and poverty (Barnes, 2021). However, despite the challenges, it is crucial for higher education institutions to not avoid the underlying issues that cause crises such as #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall or #Shackville. Avoiding the issues underlying these can lead to a cycle of crises that continues to impact the institution's reputation and operations.

This is why crises are considered adverse events due to their negative impact. However, crises also present learning opportunities. When an organisation faces a crisis, it can be an indication that something is not working as it should. Therefore, higher education institutions such as UCT should see a crisis as a learning opportunity to analyse what went wrong and why and to take steps to prevent similar crises from occurring. UCT could reconsider its concept of crisis resolution and thus become less vulnerable to future crises brought on by student protest. For

instance, UCT has faced numerous student protests since 2015, with the university often responding through court orders and interdicts to control the situation. While these tactics may provide a short-term solution to the crisis, these measures fail to provide long-term resolution by failing to address the underlying issues that led to the protests. As a result, the crisis may be dormant rather than resolved, and there is a risk that it may reoccur in the future because a resolved crisis has been effectively addressed in a way that prevents it from ongoing.

UCT has struggled with ongoing crises. To prevent this from happening, the university needs to implement strategies that focus on long-term solutions and prevention rather than quick fixes. One approach that UCT can take is to acknowledge and address the socio-economic issues that underlie many of the university's crises. This would be done by developing effective long-term crisis communication strategies not only when crises occur, communicating about what the institution has done for disadvantaged students, earmarking available funding, over a longer period, in anticipation of a crisis, and developing year-round crisis communication strategies.

To prevent dormant crises from resurfacing, UCT needs to understand the characteristics of a dormant crisis. Coombs (2014) classifies a dormant crisis as a crisis that has not yet had a significant impact on the organisation, but the crisis exists and can emerge anytime. This can create a financial risk for the organisation or institution reputation.

According to scholars, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) focuses on companies' duty and commitment to ethical and positive business practices (Eisingerich, Rubera, Seifert, & Bhardwaj, 2011; Jeon & Baek, 2016; Skarmas & Leonidou, 2013). Furthermore, research reveals that consumer perceptions about a brand committed to CSR initiatives can generate positive business outcomes, including enhancing consumer trust (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). As a result, more companies focus on CSR as a strategic component of their businesses (Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2018). Scholars Eisenegger and Schranz, (2011) further add that CSR has become an effective approach to minimise the effects of a crisis. However, only some companies adopt this as a crisis prevention strategy. Furthermore, if businesses utilise their CSR efforts correctly, they can mitigate negative impact (Cho & Kim, 2012; Klein & Dawar, 2004; Vanhamme & Grobбен, 2009). Kim, Dirks and Cooper (2009), further indicate that a company's CSR efforts or message can result in lower attributions of crisis responsibility. According to Vanhamme and Grobбен (2009), research into CSR indicates that a company's CSR history may positively impact crisis

management. Furthermore, Vanhamme and Grobben (2009) add that consumers perceive a company's CSR claims as more credible if their intentions for CSR practice are conveyed before the crisis. Furthermore, CSR may also help companies to steer clear of crises altogether because they can also help identify risks.

According to UCT (2023d), social responsiveness is central to the university's work as an engaged institution. The university's social responsiveness is achieved through its core work of teaching, research and service to society (University of Cape Town, 2023d). A long-term solution and crisis prevention strategy is for the university to communicate its social responsiveness projects. This would be through its teaching, research and service as well as its partnerships with local communities, non-government organisations and government agencies. This would need to be done all year round and would need to highlight how the university is focused on using its research, teaching and service to the community to address socio-economic challenges. This strategy can help the university build a positive community reputation and create goodwill among its stakeholders and the public.

If consumers perceive a company's CSR as credible, they may become advocates of the company or institution when a crisis occurs due to a company CSR campaign or efforts. UCT therefore should consider developing a crisis communication plan to demonstrate the university's work through its social responsiveness projects to address some of the crises' underlying causes and promote social change.

However, preventing dormant crises at UCT requires a multifaceted approach with consensus on what a resolved crisis is. Long-term solutions should be prioritised over quick fixes and short-term solutions, the socio-economic issues, such as poverty, unemployment and inequality should be acknowledged. All such measures represent new risks for the university. As a result, UCT could create a culture of crisis prevention rather than crisis management and build a more resilient and sustainable institution.

UCT is a renowned research-intensive institution in Africa, attracting many students, academics, researchers, and professional staff. However, the frequent crises since the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall and #Shackville movements have harmed the UCT's reputation. The ongoing crises at UCT call into question the school's crisis management plans and highlight the need for

greater clarity regarding the difference between resolved and dormant crises. In order to promote a culture of crisis prevention rather than crisis management, this research study highlighted the variables behind UCT's difficulties in differentiating between resolved and dormant crises. Further, this study has also suggested measures to prevent dormant crises from returning. By resolving these problems, UCT can enhance its standing as the preeminent research-intensive institution in Africa.

REFERENCES

- Abdalla, M., Alarabi, L. & Hendawi, A. 2021. Crisis Management Art from the Risks to the Control: A Review of Methods and Directions. *Information (Basel)*. 12(1):18. DOI:10.3390/info12010018.
- Abed, S. & Ackers, B. 2021. Social transformation interventions at South African public universities. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*. 22(4):870-890. DOI:10.1108/IJSHE-03-2020-0085.
- Al Jazeera. 2023. *South Africa most unequal country in the world: Report*. Available: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/10/south-africa-most-unequal-country-in-the-world-report> [May, 16, 2023].
- Aldemir, C. & Gülcan, Y. 2004. Student Satisfaction in Higher Education: A Turkish Case. *Higher Education Management and Policy*. 16(2):109-122. DOI:10.1787/hemp-v16-art19-en.
- Alexander, D. 2005. Towards the development of a standard in emergency planning. *Disaster Prevention and Management*. 14(2):158-175. DOI:10.1108/09653560510595164.
- Amado Mateus, M. & Juarez Acosta, F. 2022. Reputation in Higher Education: A Systematic Review. *Frontiers in Education (Lausanne)*. 7 DOI:10.3389/feduc.2022.925117.
- Amoore, H. 2015. *Exams*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-08-campus-announcement-8-november-examsupdated-12h22-20-november-2015> [May, 17, 2023].
- Anderson, C. 2010. Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education; Am J Pharm Educ*. 74(8):141. DOI:10.5688/aj7408141. Article 19.
2016. *The Right to Protest: Principles on the protection of human rights in protests*. Available: https://www.article19.org/data/files/medialibrary/38581/Right_to_protest_principles_final.pdf [April,22,2023].
- Aspers, P. & Corte, U. 2019. What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research? *Qualitative Sociology; Qual Sociol*. 42(2):139-160. DOI:10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7.
- Badat, S. March,21,2008. Redressing the Colonial/Apartheid Legacy: social equity, redress and Higher Education admissions in democratic South Africa. *Conference on Affirmative Action in Higher Education in India, the United States and South Africa*. 19-21 March 2008.
- Barnes, L.K. 2021. Challenges South African youth face in education and their quest to eradicate

- issues of the past. *Alternate Horizons*. (1) DOI:10.35293/ah.vi.3540.
- Barnett, C.K. & Pratt, M.G. 2000. From threat-rigidity to flexibility - Toward a learning model of autogenic crisis in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*. 13(1):74-88. DOI:10.1108/09534810010310258.
- Barton, L. 1994. Crisis Management: Preparing for and managing disasters. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*. 35(2):59-65.
DOI:10.1016/0010-8804(94)90020-5 Available:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0010880494900205>.
- Baum, J.A.C. & Dahlin, K.B. 2007. Aspiration Performance and Railroads' Patterns of Learning from Train Wrecks and Crashes. *Organization Science (Providence, R.I.)*. 18(3):368-385.
DOI:10.1287/orsc.1060.0239. BBC. 2012a. *South Africa's Lonmin Marikana mine clashes killed 34*. Available: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-19292909>[May,14,2023].
- Bendile, D. 2016. '0% University fee increase for 2017 will be unsustainable'. Available: <https://ewn.co.za/2016/08/13/Council-on-Higher-Education-recommends-inflation-related-increase-for-universities> [May, 17, 2023].
- Benoit, W.L. 1997. Image repair discourse and crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*. 23(2):177-186. DOI:10.1016/S0363-8111(97)90023-0.
- Bercovici, J. 2010. *Who coined social media? Web pioneers compete for credit*.
Available: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2010/12/09/who-coined-social-media-web-pioneers-compete-for-credit/?sh=49801ace51d5> [July,3,2023]
- Bester, J. 2015. *Protesters throw poo on Rhodes statue*. Available:
<https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/protesters-throw-poo-on-rhodes-statue-1829526> [April,22,2023].
- Bitzer, E. & De Jager, E. 2018. The views of commerce students regarding "free" higher education in South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 32(4) DOI:10.20853/32-4-2436.
- Boccia, F., Manzo, R. M., & Covino, D. (2019). Consumer behavior and corporate social responsibility: An evaluation by a choice experiment. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 26(1), 97– 105.
- Boin, A. & Paul 't Hart. 2003. Public Leadership in Times of Crisis: Mission Impossible? *Public Administration Review*. 63(5):544-553. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3110097>.
- Bundy, J., Pfarrer, M.D., Short, C.E. & Coombs, W.T. 2017. Crises and Crisis Management: Integration, Interpretation, and Research Development. *Journal of Management*. 43(6):1661-1692.

DOI:10.1177/0149206316680030.

Calata, A. 2015. *Important start to exams*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-09-important-start-to-exams>[May, 17, 2023].

Calata, A. 2017. *VC calls for differentiated fee structure*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-30-vc-calls-for-differentiated-fee-structure> [May, 17, 2023].

Camarero Izquierdo, C. & Gutiérrez Cillán, J. 2004. The interaction of dependence and trust in long-term industrial relationships. *European Journal of Marketing*. 38(8):974-994. DOI:10.1108/03090560410539122.

Carley, K.M. & Harrald, J.R. 1997. Organizational Learning Under Fire: Theory and Practice. *The American Behavioral Scientist (Beverly Hills)*. 40(3):310-332. DOI:10.1177/0002764297040003007.

Cini, L. 2019. Disrupting the neoliberal university in South Africa: The #FeesMustFall movement in 2015. *Current Sociology*. 67(7):942-959. DOI:10.1177/0011392119865766.

Cho, S., & Kim, Y. C. (2012). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a halo effect in issue management: Public response to negative news about pro-social local private companies. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 22(4), 372– 385.

Cleland, J.A. 2017. The qualitative orientation in medical education research. *Korean Journal of Medical Education; Korean J Med Educ*. 29(2):61-71. DOI:10.3946/kjme.2017.53.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K.(.R.B.). 2011. *Research methods in education*. 7th ed.London ;: Routledge. Available:

Coombs, W.T. 2014. State of Crisis Communication: Evidence and the Bleeding Edge. *Research Journal for the Institute for Public Relations*. 1(1) Available: <https://instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/CoombsFinalWES.pdf>.

Coombs, W.T. 2004. Impact of Past Crises on Current Crisis Communication: Insights From Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973)*. 41(3):265-289. DOI:10.1177/0021943604265607.

Coombs, W.T. 2007. Protecting Organization Reputations During a Crisis: The Development and Application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*. 10(3):163-176. DOI:10.1057/palgrave.crr.1550049.

Coombs, W. T. 2007. *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing and Responding* 2nd ed. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore: Sage,

Coombs, W.T. 2010. Parameters for Crisis Communication. In *The Handbook of Crisis*

- Communication*. 17-53. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444314885.ch1>.
- Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1992). *Doing qualitative research: multiple strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crescendo, S. 2009. *Is the next Alfred Hitchcock in the cub*
- della Porta, D. & Cini, L. 2020. *Contesting Higher Education: Student Movements against Neoliberal Universities*. Bristol: Bristol University Press. Available: .
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2005. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Available: .
- Department of Education. 2001. *Education in South Africa: Achievements since 1994. Officials of the Department of Education and the Education Policy Unit of the university of the Witwatersrand*. Available: <http://historicalpapers-atom.wits.ac.za/> .
- Department of Labour. *Job Opportunities and Unemployment in the South African Labour Market*. Available: .
- Diers-Lawson, A. . 2017. *Crisis Communication*. In Oxford University Press. Available: .
- Dove, E.S. & Douglas, C. 2023. Ethics governance in Scottish universities: how can we do better? A qualitative study. *Research Ethics Review*. 19(2):166-198.
DOI:10.1177/17470161221147801.
- Dzimińska, M., Fijałkowska, J. & Sułkowski, Ł. 2018. Trust-based quality culture conceptual model for higher education institutions. *Sustainability (Basel, Switzerland)*. 10(8):2599.
DOI:10.3390/su10082599.
- Eisenegger, M. & Schranz, M. 2011. *Reputation Management and Corporate Social Responsibility*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. DOI:10.1002/9781118083246.ch7.
Available: https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/wileyhcocr/reputation_management_and_corporate_social_responsibility/0.
- Eisingerich, A. B., Rubera, G., Seifert, M., & Bhardwaj, G. 2011. Doing good and doing better despite negative information? The role of corporate social responsibility in consumer resistance to negative information. *Journal of Service Research*, 14(1), 60– 75.
- eNCA. 2015a. *President Zuma announces no fee increase for 2016*. Available: <https://www.enca.com/south-africa/president-zuma-addresses-protesting-students> [May, 15, 2023].

- eNCA. 2015b. *UCT exams go ahead despite protests*. Available: <https://www.enca.com/south-africa/uct-exams-go-ahead-despite-protests> [May, 16, 2023].
- eNCA. 2015c. *UCT Senate in favour of statue's removal*. Available: <https://www.news24.com/news24/uct-senate-in-favour-of-statues-removal-20150328> [May, 15, 2023].
- eNCA. 2015d. *Wits fee increase suspended*. Available: <https://www.enca.com/south-africa/wits-fee-increase-suspended>[May, 17, 2023].
- eNCA. 2016. *'Shackville' erected at UCT to protest lack of housing for black students*. Available: <https://www.enca.com/south-africa/shackville-erected-uct-protest-lack-housing-black-students> [May, 15, 2023].
- Etheridge, J. 2015. UCT students occupy Bremner building. Available: <https://www.news24.com/news24/uct-students-occupy-bremner-building-20151019> [July,3, 2023]
- Fearn-Banks, K. 2011. *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach*. New York, Routledge.
- Fink, S. *Crisis management: Planning for the inevitable*. New York. AMACOM, 1986.
- Golovanova, D. 2017. Business reputation and social media: The development of a marketing strategy based on threats to enterprise. *Вестник университета*. (1):188-191.
- Greeff, M., Mostert, K., Kahl, C. & Jonker, C. 2021. The #Feesmustfall Protests in South Africa: Exploring First-Year Students' Experiences at a Peri-Urban University Campus. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 35(4):78-103. DOI:10.20853/35-4-4219
Available: https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-high_v35_i4_a78.
- Griffiths, D. 2019. #FeesMustFall and the decolonised university in South Africa: Tensions and opportunities in a globalising world. *International Journal of Educational Research*. 94:143-149. DOI:10.1016/j.ijer.2019.01.004
Available:<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0883035518312205>.
- Hatton, K. 2016a. *Cancellation of tonight's Varsity Cup match*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-29-campus-announcement-cancellation-of-tonights-varsity-cup-match> [May,17,2016].
- Hatton, K. 2016b. *Planning for the upcoming week*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-18-planning-for-the-upcoming-week> [May, 17, 2023].
- Hatton, K. 2016c. *Protest action on campus today*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-15-protest-action-on-campus-today> [May, 17, 2023].
- Hatton, K. 2016d. *Update on campus protest today*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/->

[2016-09-16-update-on-campus-protest-today](#) [May, 17, 2023].

Healy-Clancy, M. 2017. The everyday politics of being a student in South Africa: A history. *History Compass*. 15(3):e12375-n/a. DOI:10.1111/hic3.12375.

Henderson, J.C. 1999. Managing the Asian Financial Crisis: Tourist Attractions in Singapore. *Journal of Travel Research*. 38(2):177-181. DOI:10.1177/004728759903800212.

Herskovitz, J. 2010. *More than 1 million South Africa state workers strike*. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUKLDE67H0CJ>[May,14,2023].

Holladay, S.J. . 2010. Are They Practicing What We Are Preaching? An Investigation of Crisis Communication Strategies in the Media Coverage of Chemical Accidents. In *The Handbook of Crisis Communication*. 159-180. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444314885.ch7>.

Holtzhausen, D.R. & Roberts, G.F. 2009. An Investigation into the Role of Image Repair Theory in Strategic Conflict Management. *Journal of Public Relations Research*. 21(2):165-186.DOI:10.1080/10627260802557431.

Hundenborn, J., Woolard, I. & Jellema, J. 2019. The effect of top incomes on inequality in South Africa. *International Tax and Public Finance*. 26(5):1018-1047. DOI:10.1007/s10797-018-9529-9.

Institute for Public Relations. 2017. *Crisis Management and Communications* . Available: <https://instituteforpr.org/crisis-management-and-communications/> [May, 16, 2023].

James, E.H., Wooten, L.P. & Dushek, K. 2011. Crisis Management: Informing a New Leadership Research Agenda. *The Academy of Management Annals*. 5(1):455-493. DOI:10.1080/19416520.2011.589594 Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2011.589594>.

Jeon, J. O., & Baeck, S. 2016. What drives consumer's responses to brand crisis? The moderating roles of brand associations and brand-customer relationship strength. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, **25**(6), 550– 567.

Kamaldien, Y. 2015. *Rhodes statue: students occupy offices*. Available: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/rhodes-statue-students-occupy-offices-1835276> [May, 15,2023].

Kang, J., & Hustvedt, G. (2014). Building trust between consumers and corporations: The role of consumer perceptions of transparency and social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, **125**(2), 253– 265.

Kaplan, M.L. & Haenlein, M. 2010. Users of the world unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, **53**, 59-68.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>

Kawulich, B.B. 2005. Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method. *Forum, Qualitative Social Research*. 6(2).

Kekana, M. 2015. *UCT: Students to continue occupying Bremner Building*. Available: <https://ewn.co.za/2015/03/22/UCT-Students-to-continue-occupying-Bremner-building> [May, 17,2023].

Kim, S. & Sung, K.H. 2014. Revisiting the Effectiveness of Base Crisis Response Strategies in Comparison of Reputation Management Crisis Responses. *Journal of Public Relations Research*. 26(1):62-78. DOI:10.1080/1062726X.2013.795867.

Kim, P. H., Dirks, K. T., & Cooper, C. D. (2009). The repair of trust: A dynamic bilateral perspective and multilevel conceptualization. *Academy of Management Review*, 34(3), 401– 422.

Klein, J., & Dawar, N. (2004). Corporate social responsibility and consumers' attributions and brand evaluations in a product-harm crisis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 21(3), 203– 217

Kros, C. 2015. Rhodes Must Fall: archives and counter-archives. *Critical Arts*. 29:150-165.DOI:10.1080/02560046.2015.1102270.

Kruger, D.W. 1957. Paul Kruger en Cecil Rhodes. *Koers (Potchefstroom, South Africa)*. 25(2) DOI:10.4102/koers.v25i2.1994.

Kruger, G. 2015a. *All activities cancelled on Upper, Middle and Lower Campus at UCT*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-19-all-activities-cancelled-on-upper-middle-and-lower-campus-at-uct-released-11h00-19-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2015b. *UCT encourages responsible student activism over Rhodes statue*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/releases/2015/UCT%20encourages%20responsible%20student%20activism%20over%20Rhodes%20statue12March2015.pdf> [May, 15, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2015c. *Update on UCT developments*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-06-update-on-uct-developmentsreleased-18h20-6-november-2015> [May,17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016a. *Campus activities suspended, Thursday, 22 September - Sunday, 25 September*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-21-campus-activities-suspended-thursday-22-september-sunday-25-september> [May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016b. *Classes, lectures and tutorials are suspended for today and tomorrow, 20 and 21 September 2016*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-20->

[classes-](#)

[lectures-and-tutorials-are-suspended-for-today-and-tomorrow-20nbspand-21september-2016](#)

[May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016c. *Fire on upper campus* . Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-05-fire-on-upper-campus-5-october-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016d. *UCT closed Tuesday, 11 October 2016*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-10-uct-closed-tuesday-11-october-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016e. *UCT's presentation to the Fees Commission*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-06-ucts-presentation-to-the-fees-commission> [May,17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016f. *Urgent: Closing of Campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-28-urgent-closing-of-campus>[May, 17, 2023].

Kruger, G. 2016g. *VC meetings with staff on campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-23-vc-meetings-with-staff-on-campus-today-23-september-2016> [May, 17,2023].

Lan, Yajie. (2022). New Dilemma that Social Media Poses for Crisis Communication Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Studies. 4. 268-271. 10.32996/jhsss.2022.4.3.30.

Levinsohn, J. 2008. *Two Policies to Alleviate Unemployment in South Africa*. Available: .

Lewis,P., Vasagar, J., Williams,R and Taylor.M. 2010. *Student protest over fees turns violent*. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/nov/10/student-protest-fees-violent> [May, 15, 2023].

Lowenberg, A.D. 1997. WHY SOUTH AFRICA'S APARTHEID ECONOMY

AILED. Contemporary Economic Policy; Contemporary Economic Policy. 15(3):62-72.

DOI:10.1111/j.1465-7287.1997.tb00478.x.

Luescher, T.M. 2016. Frantz Fanon and the #MustFall Movements in South Africa. *International Higher Education*. (85):22-24. DOI:10.6017/ihe.2016.85.9244.

Machika, P. & Johnson, B. 2016. Postgraduate students experience of poverty and academic success at a university of technology in South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 29(6) DOI:10.20853/29-6-542

Mafeje, A. 1978. Soweto and its aftermath. *Review of African Political Economy*. 5(11):17-30. DOI:10.1080/03056247808703347.

Mail & Guardian. 2012. *Strike forces closure of TUT campuses*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2012-08-20-strike-forces-closure-of-tut-campuses/> [May, 15, 2023].

Mail & Guardian. 2014 *Sasco calls for mass student protests*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-01-26-sasco-calls-for-mass-student-protests/> [April, 22, 2023].

Mail & Guardian. 2015. *Rhodes statue to be removed from UCT, and Mugabe gives his opinion*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-04-09-rhodes-statue-to-be-removed-after-uct-council-decision/> [May, 15, 2023].

Mail & Guardian. 2015. *UCT suspends all operations over 'threat to safety of staff and students'*. Available: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2015-10-19-uct-suspends-all-operations-over-threat-to-safety-of-staff-and-students/> [May, 16, 2023].

Mail & Guardian. 2017. *UCT discloses planned 8% fee increase*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-11-02-uct-discloses-planned-8-fee-increase/> [May, 16, 2023].

Mail & Guardian. 2016. *Appeal court ruling sets parameters for protest at universities*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2016-10-24-appeal-court-ruling-sets-parameters-for-protest-at-universities/> [May, 16, 2023].

Mair, J., Ritchie, B.W. & Walters, G. 2016. Towards a research agenda for post-disaster and post-crisis recovery strategies for tourist destinations: a narrative review. *Current Issues in Tourism*. 19(1):1-26. DOI:10.1080/13683500.2014.932758.

Makoni, M. 2015a. *Disturbances, student deaths close two universities*. Available: <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20150918124351351> [May, 17, 2023]

- Makoni, M. 2015b. *Student revolt against the statue of Cecil John Rhodes*. Available: <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20150326130155803> [May, 16, 2023].
- Malgas, N. 2016. *Protest underway at UCT over housing for black students* . Available: <https://ewn.co.za/2016/02/15/UCT-students-protest-over-accommodation> [May, 17, 2023].
- Malgas, N & Fisher, S. 2015. *UCT Students block entrances with human barricade*. Available: <https://ewn.co.za/2015/10/21/UCT-students-continue-to-block-entrances> [May, 17, 2023].
- Marcellis-Warin, Nathalie De and Serban Teodoresco. “Corporate Reputation: Is Your Most Strategic Asset at Risk?” (2012)
- Masipa, T. 2018. South Africa’s transition to democracy and democratic consolidation: A reflection on socio-economic challenges. *Journal of Public Affairs*. 18(4):e1713-n/a. DOI:10.1002/pa.1713.
- Masondo, S. 2016. *University fees will rise*. Available: <https://www.news24.com/news24/university-fees-will-rise-20160904>[May, 15, 2023].
- Mavunga, G. 2019. FeesMustFall Protests in South Africa: A Critical Realist Analysis of Selected Newspaper Articles. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*. 7(1):81. DOI:10.24085/jsaa.v7i1.3694 Available: https://explore.openaire.eu/search/publication?articleId=dedup_wf_001::0685a41b581eb6888f0971b257ea9bfc.
- Medina, R. Z., Diaz, J. C. L. (2016). Social Media Use in Crisis Communication Management: An Opportunity for Local Communities?. In: Sobaci, M. (eds) Social Media and Local Governments. Public Administration and Information Technology, vol 15. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17722-9_17
- Mense,E.G., Lemoine, P.A.,Garretson,C.J& Richardson,M.D. 2018. The Development of Global Higher Education in a World of Transformation. *Journal of Education and Development*. 2(3) Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329967874_The_Development_of_Global_Higher_Education_in_a_World_of_Transformation/fulltext/5c262903299bf12be39f16ba/The-Development-of-Global-Higher-Education-in-a-World-of-Transformation.pdf.
- Mhlongo, T.E. 2018. Exploring the Availability, Accessibility and Adequacy of the National Students’ Financial Aid Scheme: A Case Study. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*. 5(4) Available: http://jespnet.com/journals/Vol_5_No_4_December_2018/4.pdf.
- Mitroff, I. I.1994. Crisis management and environmentalism: A natural fit in *California Management Review*, 36(2) 101-113

- Mitroff, I.I. 2005. *Why some companies emerge stronger and better from a crisis 7 essential lessons for surviving disaster*. New York: American Management Association. Available: .
- Mnguni, L. 2020. BlackLivesMatter, even in research: A call to researchers to take a knee. *South African Journal of Science*. 116:25-5. DOI:10.17159/sajs.2020/8540.
- Mohautse, M.S. 2014. The Economic and Political Ramifications of Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*. 6(9):690-699. DOI:10.22610/jeps.v6i9.529 Available: <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1657311426>.
- Mohd Nur Hafiz Fauzi, Azman Hasan, Noorazman Abd Samad, Mohd Jalil Ahmad, Suhaili Hanafi. Readiness Level Students in Electrical Engineering from the Aspect Technical Skills on the Formation Workability at Polytechnic, *International Journal of Vocational Education and Training Research*. Volume 2, Issue 5, October 2016 , pp. 28-33. doi: 10.11648/j.ijvetr.20160205.11
- Moletsane, R. 2022. FeesMustFall and its aftermath: Violence, wellbeing and the student movement in South Africa by T. M. Luescher, A. Wilson Fadiji, K. G. Morwe, A. Erasmus, T. S. Letsoalo & S. B. Mokhema (2022). Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*. 10(2).
- Morgan, R.M. & Hunt, S.D. 1994. The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*. 58(3):20-38. DOI:10.2307/1252308.
- National Treasury. 2011. *Confronting youth unemployment: policy options for South Africa*.
- Newell, P. & Frynas, J.G. 2007. Beyond csr? Business, poverty and social justice: an introduction. *Third World Quarterly*. 28(4):669-681. DOI:10.1080/01436590701336507.
- News24. 2016. *IS SA the protest capital of the world?* Available: <https://www.news24.com/is-sa-the-protest-capital-of-the-world-20151029> [April,22,2023].
- Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. & Moules, N.J. 2017. Thematic Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 16(1):1609406917733847. DOI:10.1177/1609406917733847 Available: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>.
- Nur Hafiz Fauzi, M. 2016. Readiness Level Students in Electrical Engineering from the Aspect Technical Skills on the Formation Workability at Polytechnic. *International Journal of Vocational Education and Training Research*. 2(5):28. DOI:10.11648/j.ijvetr.20160205.11.
- Nzimande, B. 2015. *Blade Nzimande and universities aim for 6% increase in student fees*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-21-blade-nzimande-and-universities-aim-for-6-increase-in-student-fees> [May, 17, 2023].
- Oleksiyenko, A., Mendoza, P., Riaño, F.E.C., Dwivedi, O.P., Kabir, A.H., Kuzhabekova, A.,

Charles, M., Ros, V. et al. 2022. Global crisis management and higher education: Agency and coupling in the context of wicked COVID-19 problems. *Higher Education Quarterly*. 77(2):356-374. DOI:10.1111/hequ.12406.

Olmos-Vega, F., Stalmeijer, R.E., Varpio, L. & Kahlke, R. 2022. A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical Teacher; Med Teach*. 45(3):241-251. DOI:10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287.

Ozler, B. 2007. Not Separate, Not Equal: Poverty and Inequality in Post-apartheid South Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. 55(3):487-529. DOI:10.1086/511191.

Padayachee, V. 2006. *The development decade?: economic and social change in South Africa, 1994-2004*. Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press.

Palttala, P. & Vos, M. 2012. Quality Indicators for Crisis Communication to Support Emergency Management by Public Authorities: Quality Indicators for Crisis Communication. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*. 20(1):39-51. DOI:10.1111/j.1468-5973.2011.00654.x.

Pearson, C.M. & Clair, J.A. 1998. Reframing Crisis Management. *The Academy of Management Review*. 23(1):59-76. DOI:10.2307/259099.

Petersen, F. 2015a. *Fees, financial aid and protest action*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-18-fees-financial-aid-and-protest-actionreleased-20h30-18-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2015b. *UCT operations to return to normal on Tuesday*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-19-uct-operations-to-return-to-normal-on-tuesdayreleased-22h45-19-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2015c. *Upper, Middle, Lower Campus closed again today*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-20-upper-middle-lower-campus-closed-again-today-released-10h25-20-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2016a. *Avenue House*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-04-dvc-desk-avenue-housereleased-13h30-4-february-2016> [May, 16, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2016b. *Campus Update*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-16-dvc-desk-campus-updatereleased-16h55-16-february-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2016c. *Important Notice*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-04-important-noticereleased-16h45-4-february-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Petersen, F. 2016d. *Update about accommodation*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-06-dvc-desk-update-about-accommodationreleased-19h00-6-february-2016> [May, 17,

2023].

Pillay, D. 2016. *Stop corruption to help pay university fees, says Gordhan*. Available: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/news/2016-08-25-watch-stop-corruption-to-help-pay-university-fees-says-gordhan/> [May,17,2016].

Pillay, N., Bhorat, H. & Asmal, Z. 2021. Higher Education Outcomes in South Africa: The Role of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme. In Cham: Springer International Publishing. 171-194. Available:

Pillay, S.R. 2016. Silence is violence: (critical) psychology in an era of Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall. *South African Journal of Psychology*. 46(2):155-159. DOI:10.1177/0081246316636766.

PoliticsWeb. 2017. *Fallists occupy Mafeje Room in Bremner - UCT*. Available: <https://www.politicsweb.co.za/politics/fallists-occupy-mafeje-room-in-bremner--uct> [May, 17,2023].

Price, M. 2015a. *Council discussion of 24 October 2015 Released: 23h30, 25 October 2015*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-25-council-discussion-of-24-october-2015released-23h30-25-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2015b. *From the VC's Desk: Rhodes statue protests and transformation*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-03-18-from-the-vcs-desk-rhodes-statue-protests-and-transformation> [May, 16, 2023].

Price, M. 2015c. *Saturday evening 7 November 2015*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-07-vc-desk-saturday-evening-7-november-2015released-19h52-7-november-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2015d. *Statement from the Executive on the Interdict and Police action on campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-01-statement-from-the-executive-on-the-interdict-and-police-action-on-campus> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2015e. *UCT and Rhodes Must Fall sign agreement*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-05-26-uct-and-rhodes-must-fall-sign-agreement> [May, 17,2023].

Price, M. 2015f. *UCT grants amnesty to protesters*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-05-18-uct-grants-amnesty-to-protesters> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2015g. *UCT today and exams*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-22-uct-today-and-examsreleased-13h30-22-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2015h. *Urgent update on the Rhodes statue and Bremner occupation*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-04-10-urgent-update-on-the-rhodes-statue-and-bremner-occupation> [May, 17, 2023].

Price. 2015i. *Progress in discussing the removal of Rhodes statue*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-03-24-from-the-vcs-desk-progress-in-discussing-the-removal-of-rhodes-statue> [July,3,2023]

Price, M. 2016a. *From UCT's Vice-Chancellor: The way forward to completing the 2016 academic year*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-06-from-ucts-vice-chancellor-the-way-forward-to-completing-the-2016-academic-year> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016b. *Importance of keeping UCT open for debate*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-24-vc-desk-importance-of-keeping-uct-open-for-debaterelased-13h55-24-february-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016c. *Invitation to join picket at parliament* . Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-action/list/-archive/news/-category/all/-year/2016/-month/09> [May, 18, 2023].

Price, M. 2016d. *Message to campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-09-25-message-to-campus-25-september-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016e. *UCT closed on Monday 10 October 2016*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-07-uct-closed-on-monday-10-october-2016> [May, 17,2023].

Price, M. 2016f. *Update on Senate, interim interdicts and arrests by SAPS*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-25-update-on-senate-interim-interdicts-and-arrests-by-saps> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016g. *Update on unfolding events at UCT*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-14-uct-to-resume-2016-academic-year-on-monday-17-october-2016> [May,17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016h. *Update on unfolding events at UCT*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-12-update-on-unfolding-events-at-uct> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016i. *VC Desk: Classes and university operations resume 3 October 2016*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-02-vc-desk-classes-and-university-operations-resume-3-october-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016j. *VC Desk: Further details on completing the 2016 academic*

year. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-15-vc-desk-further-details-on-completing-the-2016-academic-year-1> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016k. *VC thanks community and urges continued operations*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-04-vc-thanks-community-and-urges-continued-operations> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2017a. *UCT Vice-Chancellor appeals for release of Fees Commission report*. Available: https://www.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/328/media/releases/2017/2017-10-23_VC's%20appeal%20to%20release%20fees%20commission%20report.pdf

[May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2017b. *We are resolved to complete the academic year*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-11-04-we-are-resolved-to-complete-the-academic-year> [May, 17, 2023].

Price, M. 2016. *UCT committed to a safe study and work environment*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-16-vc-desk-uct-committed-to-a-safe-study-and-work-environmentreleased-23h50-16-february-2016> [May, 18, 2023].

Prinsloo, E.H. 2016. The role of the Humanities in decolonising the academy. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*. 15(1):164-168. DOI:10.1177/1474022215613608.

QS Top Universities. 2021. *QS World University Rankings 2022*. Available: <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2022> [May, 16, 2023].

QS Top Universities. 2023. *QS World University Rankings methodology: Using rankings to start your university search*. Available: <https://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings/methodology> [May, 16, 2023].

Quintal, G. *What you need to know about #FeesMustFall*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-19-four-things-you-need-to-know-about-feesmustfall/> [May, 15, 2015].

Qukula, Q. 2015. *At least nine UCT students arrested amid #FeesMustFall protests*. Available: <https://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/5900/at-least-four-uct-students-arrested-amid-feesmustfall-protests> [May, 16, 2023].

Rahman, M.S. 2016. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches and Methods in Language “Testing and Assessment” Research: A Literature Review. *Journal of Education and Learning*. 6(1) DOI:10.5539/jel.v6n1p102 Available:

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1120221.pdf>.

Rego, M., Vieira, C. & Vieira, I. (2019). Educational Choices, Family Background, and Social Mobility: Education and Social Mobility. 10.4018/978-1-5225-7937-3.ch008.

Reynolds, B. & Seeger, M. 2005. Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication as an Integrative Model. *Journal of Health Communication; J Health Commun.* 10(1):43-55. DOI:10.1080/10810730590904571.

Richardson, M., Moore, D.A., Gwernan-Jones, R., Thompson-Coon, J., Ukoumunne, O., Rogers, M., Whear, R., Newlove-Delgado, T. et al. 2015. Non-pharmacological interventions for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) delivered in school settings: systematic reviews of quantitative and qualitative research. *Health Technology Assessment (Winchester, England); Health Technol Assess.* 19(45):1-470. DOI:10.3310/hta19450.

Ross, P.T. & Bibler Zaidi, N.L. 2019. Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on Medical Education; Perspect Med Educ.* 8(4):261-264. DOI:10.1007/s40037-019-00530-x.

Sarriegi, Jose & Torres, Jose & Lardizabal, Paseo. (2009). The Dynamics of Crisis Lifecycle for Emergency Management.

Scheba, A., Turok, I. & Visagie, J. 2021. Inequality and Urban Density: Socio-economic Drivers of Uneven Densification in Cape Town. *Environment and Urbanization ASIA.* 12(1):S107-S126. DOI:10.1177/0975425321998026 Available: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0975425321998026>.

Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. 2013. *Theorizing crisis communication.* Chichester, West Sussex [England] ; Malden, MA, Wiley-Blackwell.

Shin, S. & Miller, S. 2022. A Review of the Participant Observation Method in Journalism: Designing and Reporting. *Review of Communication Research.* 10 DOI:10.12840/ISSN.2255-4165.035 Available: <https://search.proquest.com/docview/2652860729>.

Sianou-Kyrgiou, E. 2010. Stratification in Higher Education, Choice and Social Inequalities in Greece. *Higher Education Quarterly.* 64(1):22-40. DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2273.2009.00427.x.

Simpson, D., Fincher, R.E., Hafler, J.P., Irby, D.M., Richards, B.F., Rosenfeld, G.C. & Viggiano, T.R. 2007. Advancing educators and education by defining the components and evidence associated with educational scholarship. *Medical Education; Med Educ.* 41(10):1002-1009. DOI:10.1111/j.1365-2923.2007.02844.x.

Singh, K. 2017. *UCT granted High Court interdict against unlawful protests.* Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-10-31-uct-granted-high-court-interdict-against-unlawful-protests/> [May, 17, 2023].

Skarmeas, D., & Leonidou, C. N. (2013). When consumers doubt, watch out! The role of CSR skepticism. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(10), 1831– 1838.

Smith, D. *Vandalism of apartheid-era statues sparks fevered debate in South Africa*. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/10/vandalism-of-apartheid-era-statues-sparks-fevered-debate-in-south-africa> [May, 16, 2023].

Statistics South Africa. 2017. *Poverty on the rise in South Africa*. Available: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=10334> [May, 16, 2023].

Stewart, M.C. & Gail Wilson, B. 2016. The dynamic role of social media during Hurricane #Sandy: An introduction of the STREMI model to weather the storm of the crisis lifecycle. *Computers in Human Behavior*. 54:639-646. DOI:10.1016/j.chb.2015.07.009.

Struwig, J., Bohler-Muller, N., Alexander, P., Gordon, S.L., Radebe, T. & Roberts, B.J. 2017. Minding the protest : attitudes towards different forms of protest action in contemporary South Africa. *SA Crime Quarterly; SA Crime Q.* 2017(62):81-92. DOI:10.17159/2413-3108/2017/v0n62a3041.

Tandwa, L. 2016. *UCT to lay criminal charges against protesting students*. Available: <https://www.news24.com/news24/uct-to-suspend-protesting-students-will-file-criminal-charges-20160217> [May, 16, 2023].

Tapscott, C. 2017. South Africa in the Twenty-First Century: Governance Challenges in the Struggle for Social Equity and Economic Growth. *Chinese Political Science Review*. 2(1):69-84. DOI:10.1007/s41111-017-0055-1.

Taylor, m., Lewis, P & Gabba, A. 2010. *Student protesters ignore winter freeze with mass rallies against tuition fees*. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/nov/30/student-protests-tuition-fees-rallies> [April, 21, 2023].

The Guardian. 2016. *South African police fire teargas as university fees protests spread*. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/22/south-african-police-fire-teargas-as-university-fees-protests-spread> [May, 19, 2023].

Times Higher Education. 2021. *World University Rankings 2022: methodology*. Available: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/world-university-rankings-2022-methodology> [May, 15, 2023].

Times Higher Education. 2023. *University of Cape Town*. Available: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-cape-town> [May, 15, 2023].

Treurniet, W. & Wolbers, J. 2021a. Codifying a crisis: Progressing from information sharing to

distributed decision-making. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*. 29(1):23-35.
DOI:10.1111/1468-5973.12323.

Treurniet, W. & Wolbers, J. 2021b. Codifying a crisis: Progressing from information sharing to distributed decision-making. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*. 29(1):23-35.
DOI:10.1111/1468-5973.12323 Available: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.12323>.

Tsounta, E., Suphaphiphat, N., Ricka, F., Dabla-Norris, E. & Kochhar, K. 2015. *Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality*. Available: .

Ulrich, D., Jick, T. & Glinow, M.A.V. 1993. High-impact learning: Building and diffusing learning capability. *Organizational Dynamics*. 22(2):52-66.
DOI:10.1016/0090-2616(93)90053-4.

University of Cape Town. 2013. *Faculty of Humanities Guide to Research Ethics Research with Human Participants*. Available:
https://humanities.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/media/documents/humanities_uct_ac_za/55/HumEthicsGuide.UL-28.08.13%5B1%5D.pdf

University of Cape Town. 2015a. *Exam update*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-10-24-exam-updatereleased-14h00-24-october-2015> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2015b. *Senate Vote* .Available:<https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/press/2015/SenateVote27March2015.pdf>

University of Cape Town. 2015c. *UCT commitment to completing exams*. Available:
<https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-08-uct-commitment-to-completing-examsreleased-16h30-8-november-2015> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2015d. *UCT Council Votes in Favour of Removing Rhodes Statue*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-04-08-uct-council-votes-in-favour-of-removing-rhodes-statue>

University of Cape Town. 2015e. *UCT invites students and staff to share views at #TransformUCT*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/releases/2015/TransformUCTassembly24March2015.pdf> [May, 15, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2015f. *UCT invites students and staff to share views at #TransformUCT assembly*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/releases/2015/TransformUCTassembly24March2015.pdf> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2015g. *UCT Media Update on recent critical developments* . Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/releases/2015/>

[UCTMediaUpdate29October2015.pdf](#) [May, 18, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2015h. *Update on Exams and Campus activities*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-11-09-campus-announcement-update-on-exams-and-campus-activitiesreleased-monday-9-november-2015> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016a. *Further details on UCT–student agreement*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-11-10-further-details-on-uctndashstudent-agreement> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016b. *The last 24 hours on campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-17-the-last-24-hours-on-campusreleased-14h20-17-february-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016c. *Letter to 2017 UCT applicants, parents and sponsors*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-11-25-letter-to-2017-uct-applicants-parents-and-sponsors> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016d. *Update on exams and completing the academic year*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-11-01-update-on-exams-and-completing-the-academic-year> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016e. *Update on private security on campus*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-02-09-dvc-desk-update-on-private-security-on-campus-released-16h00-9-february-2016> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016f. *Update on Senate, interim interdicts and arrests by SAPS*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-10-25-update-on-senate-interim-interdicts-and-arrests-by-saps> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016g. *Year-end message*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-12-22-year-end-message> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016h. *Release of Fees Commission report and other updates*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-11-15-release-of-fees-commission-report-and-other-updates> [May, 19, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2016i. *UCT executive and student groupings sign agreement*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2016-11-09-uct-executive-and-student-groupings-sign-agreement> [July,3, 2013]

University of Cape Town. 2017a. *All classes to resume on Wednesday, 1 November2017*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-10-31-uct-granted-high-court-interdict-against-unlawful-protests/>

[May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017b. *All classes to resume on Wednesday, 1 November 2017*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-31-all-classes-to-resume-on-wednesday-1-november-2017> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017c. *Bremner occupation ends 3 April 2017*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-04-04-bremner-occupation-ends-3-april-2017> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017d. *Call to keep UCT open & for release of fees report*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-25-call-to-keep-uct-open-for-release-of-fees-report> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017e. *Disruption of classes and other updates*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-04-disruption-of-classes-and-other-updates> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017f. *Exams continue and other updates*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-11-20-exams-continue-and-other-updates> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017g. *Exams going forward despite attempts at disruption*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-11-02-exams-going-forward-despite-attempts-at-disruption> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017h. *Important development: notice of motion*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-26-important-development-notice-of-motion> [May, 17, 2017].

University of Cape Town. 2017i. *Notice about false information on social media*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-26-notice-about-false-information-on-social-media> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017j. *Teaching and learning at UCT continues but certain face-to-face lectures remain suspended*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-28-teaching-and-learning-at-uct-continues-but-certain-face-to-face-lectures-remain-suspended> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017k. *Update on Bremner occupation*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-04-01-update-on-bremner-occupation> [May, 17, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2017. *Western Cape High Court grants UCT an interim interdict*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2017-10-30-western-cape-high-court-grants-uct-an>

[interim-interdict](#) [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2023a. *About CMD*. Available: <https://uct.ac.za/staff/services-facilities-communication-marketing/about-cmd> [May, 15, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2023b. *History introduction*. Available: <https://uct.ac.za/history-introduction> [May, 15, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2023c. *Resumption of face-to-face university operations*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2023-02-19-resumption-of-face-to-face-university-operations> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town. 2023d. *Scope of Social Responsiveness*. Available: <http://www.socialresponsiveness.uct.ac.za/>[May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town Student Representative Council. 2015. *SRC Statement on UCT Student protest*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/images/archive/dailynews/2015/SRC%20Statement%20on%20UCT%20Student%20protest.pdf> [May, 16, 2023].

University of Cape Town's Student Representative Council. 2015. *Statement by Students' Representative Council*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-action/list/-archive/all/-category/all/-year/2015/-month/03> [May, 15, 2023].

University of Cape Town. *Letter to 2015 UCT students*. Available: <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2015-12-24-letter-to-2015-uct-students> [May, 16, 2023].

Vakilzadeh, K. & Haase, A. 2021. The building blocks of organizational resilience: a review of the empirical literature. *Continuity & Resilience Review*. 3(1):1-21. DOI:10.1108/CRR-04-2020-0002.

Vanhamme, J. & Grobben, B. 2009. "Too Good to Be True!". The Effectiveness of CSR History in Countering Negative Publicity. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 85:273-283. DOI:10.1007/s10551-008-9731-2.

Vught, F.v. 2008. Mission diversity and reputation in higher education. *Higher Education Policy*. 21(2):151-174. DOI:10.1057/hep.2008.5.

Waghid, Z. 2014. (Higher) Education for social justice through sustainable development, economic development and equity. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 28(4):1448-1463.

Wang, J. & Hutchins, H.M. 2010. Crisis management in higher education: What have we learned from Virginia tech? *Advances in Developing Human Resources*. 12(5):552-572. DOI:10.1177/1523422310394433.

Wilson, H. S., & Hutchinson, S. A. (1991). Triangulation of qualitative methods: Heideggerian hermeneutics and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 1, 263-273. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/104973239100100206>

Yen-I Lee, Lu, X., Voges, T. & Jin, Y. 2023. Fending off Unverified Accusation with Narratives: The Role of Primary and Secondary Narratives in Organizational Response Effectiveness in an Ongoing Crisis. *Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research (Print)*. 6(1):33-64. DOI:10.30658/jicrcr.6.1.2.

Yusif, Yahyaeva. 2020. The effectiveness of involving social investments in education. *New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences*. 7. 71-79. 10.18844/prosoc.v7i2.5017.

