

Why Southern African Scholars Conduct Research: A Comparative Study of Values

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Introduction

Why do scholars conduct and disseminate research?

This is a foundational question in academia, though one that is usually taken for granted in the literature on scholarly values¹ and attitudes. Most studies – which typically focus on scholars from the global North – tend to assess academics’ feelings about research-related issues such as academic peer review (Harley et al. 2007), dissemination outlets for scholarly

¹ According to Schwartz, all values are defined by the following six qualities: (1) Values are beliefs linked to emotion; (2) Values are desirable goals motivating action; (3) Values transcend specific actions or situations; (4) Values serve as standards or criteria; (5) Values are ordered by importance relative to one another; (6) The relative importance of multiple values guides action (2012: 3–4). As trans-situational abstract goals that form part of a hierarchically ordered system, values are distinguished from “concepts like norms and attitudes, which usually refer to specific actions, objects, or situations” (Schwartz 2007: 1), and need not be hierarchically ordered. Examples of such values include power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security (Schwartz 1994: 22). In this paper, the term values will be used in a more open way, beyond universal abstractions such as benevolence and security, though such deeper values often underpin the more concrete value expressions noted here in the university context.

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outputs (Harley et al. 2010; King et al. 2006; RIN 2009, 2010; Rowlands & Nicholas 2005), perceptions of journal quality (Regazzi & Aytac 2008), digital and Web 2.0 technologies (RIN 2010; Rowlands, Nicholas & Huntingdon 2004; Rowlands & Nicholas 2006; Schauder 1993), open access publishing (RIN 2009) and academic identity (Archer 2008).

These studies shed light on scholars' attitudes toward elements of their research and communication practices, but they do not get at the more basic question of why scholars conduct research in the first place. In Africa, where most universities have only recently incorporated a research mission into what have long been teaching-oriented institutions, the question of why scholars conduct research is a pertinent one, and the answers cannot be assumed. Moreover, the purpose of university research on the continent is shaped by more than just the desires of the scholars themselves, but by those of their national governments, their institutions' managers, students, overseas funders, local NGOs and community stakeholders. Thus all of these competing interests impact how scholars view the research enterprise.

As part of its work of mapping scholarly communication activity systems in Southern Africa, the Scholarly Communication in Africa Programme (SCAP) – a three-year research and implementation project based at the University of Cape Town² – tried to answer this foundational question by examining regional scholars' motivations for conducting and disseminating research. Between 2010 and 2013, it engaged with four different faculties in four different universities in four different countries so that the regions' scholarly research and communication activities would be assessed with an eye for how disciplinary, institutional and national factors impacted scholars' research values. SCAP conducted its research with the following faculties:

- University of Botswana (UB) Faculty of Humanities (FoH)

- University of Cape Town (UCT) Faculty of Commerce (Comm)
- University of Mauritius (UoM) Faculty of Science (FoS)
- University of Namibia (UNAM) Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS)

In this paper, we will explore the scholarly values motivating the production and dissemination of research in these four Southern African universities as revealed in SCAP research (Trotter et al. 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d, 2014e).

Methodology

To understand the complex scholarly communication activity systems operating at these universities and in these faculties, SCAP employed a number of research techniques to obtain relevant data. Each of these approaches illuminated these systems from multiple angles, helping to reveal the complicated and nuanced issues surrounding values.

First, SCAP utilised Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to guide its research. Because CHAT asserts that all social activity is mediated by tools (language, technologies, etc.), rules (policies, norms, etc.), communities (colleagues, managers, etc.) and divisions of labour (students, collaborators, etc.), it provides a useful lens through which to identify obstacles in complex activity systems, especially those that are structured by deep and sensitive cultural and historical elements (Engeström 1987, 1996, 2001). One of the means by which knowledge is obtained in CHAT is through “change laboratories”, workshop-like sessions between facilitators (SCAP) and research site participants (scholars, librarians, managers) who work together to elaborate participants' scholarly activity systems and the obstacles hindering optimal functionality of those systems (Engeström, Miettinen & Punamäki 1999). In the course of four site visits, SCAP conducted four change labs at each university and obtained rich information not only about the various scholarly communication ecosystems, but the values animating scholarly activity within them.

² SCAP was funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Second, SCAP employed a survey that was prepared with reference to the questions and findings from a number of international scholarly communication studies and surveys (Houghton, Steele & Henty 2004; Maron & Smith 2008; Palmer, Tefteau & Pirmann 2009; Procter et al. 2010; Rowlands, Nicholas & Huntingdon 2004; Rowlands & Nicholas 2006). It focused on three key areas of research activity: communication and collaboration; information search and access; and dissemination and publication. Within these areas, certain questions were aimed at identifying research motivations, such as asking respondents to rate the importance of a series of potentially motivating factors (i.e. “for promotion”, “to make a difference to the wider community”, “part of my job description”, etc.). The surveys were administered to between 28 and 50 academics in the relevant faculties (see Table 1).

Third, SCAP conducted semi-structured interviews with individual academics aimed at gaining a more granular feel for day-to-day research practices and what enabled or constrained them. The team also asked certain scholars to participate in “day-recall” sessions, in which interviewees narrated everything work-related they had done in the previous 24-hour period in order to elicit critical incidents that might shed light on what enabled or constrained research and dissemination. At each university, SCAP conducted between five and seven such interviews lasting about an hour-and-a-half each.

Lastly, SCAP conducted a series of interviews with academics, librarians and managers at each university aimed specifically at understanding scholars’ research values. The SCAP team conducted focus group interviews with between six and 14 academics, individual interviews with between three and five librarians and individual interviews with five managers at each university. The focus group interviews lasted about an hour-and-a-half and the in-depth individual interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour each. Informants were recruited through convenience sampling, typically relying on university research coordinators to identify and contact the appropriate people for SCAP to engage.

For each category of university personnel interviewed, SCAP created a set of standardised questions, prompting respondents to reflect on their own and their institutions’ research values. Through this, SCAP was able to gather the data necessary for comparing scholars’ values across the four universities. Below is the list of questions that interviewees were asked to prompt discussion:

To academics (in focus groups):

1. Why do you currently do research?
2. Why would you want to do research (ideally)?
3. How much does our African context influence these motivations?
4. Are there different motivations driving basic and applied research? Do you feel that these motivations change in a developing context?

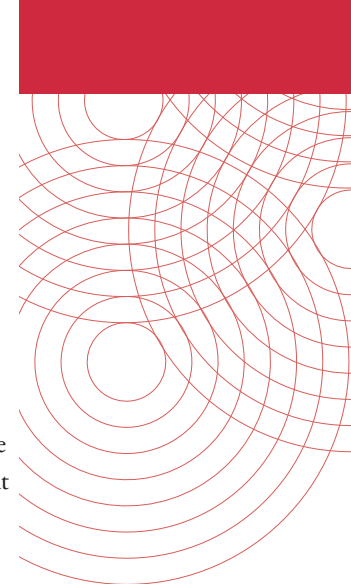
To university librarians (individually):

1. What role do you currently play in the scholarly communication process?
2. What role would you like to play in that process (ideally)?
3. Does the African context influence the role you currently play, or would like to play, in this process?

To university managers (individually):

1. Why do scholars at your institution conduct research?
2. How does the African context impact their research motivations?
3. What challenges do they face in fulfilling their motivations?

These questions sought to understand not only the values animating the production of local research, but how they were shaped by the African context and its various challenges and opportunities. They also formed the basis of sustained discussions concerning a variety of topics that organically arose through the respondents’ reflections, such as on university rewards and incentive structures, national development imperatives and consultancy work.



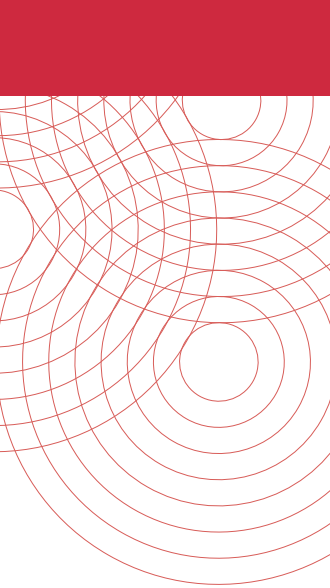


TABLE 1 Total number of participants in SCAP’s formal research processes

Interviewees/participants	UB	UCT	UoM	UNAM	Totals
Change lab participants [1/2/3/4]	12/7/11/11	10/10/7/8	13/8/4/7	13/9/11/11	152
Survey respondents	29	28	30	50	137
RCP interviews (academics)	5	6	6	7	24
Values interviews (academics)	13	6	14	13	46
Values interviews (librarians)	5	4	5	3	17
Values interviews (managers)	5	5	5	5	20
Totals	98	84	92	122	396

The data analysis process followed a fairly typical inductive “grounded theory” approach and the constant comparative method, exploring each data source (once thematised) with the other data sources. The process generally went as follows (although this was not uniform across all data sets):

- Reduce all inputs to text (i.e. transcribe change labs and interviews; tabulate the survey responses)
- Identify and extract all assertions from these texts (listed initially according to their research strand and university)
- Tag every assertion with an intuitive notation system that allows SCAP to keep track of their speaker, context of production and university affiliation
- Code assertions according to thematic categories (which are not pre-determined, but which are derived organically from the data)
- Analyse (in narrow focus) meaning of the assertions in relation to each other within their thematic category, research strand and university context
- Frame (in widening focus) implications of assertions from one theme with those of others, helping them make sense of each other, but still within a given strand and university
- Integrate analytical insights from all strands of research on a particular university (including from secondary literature and personal observations) to gain a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the scholarly communication ecosystem at the institution
- Compare integrated analyses from each university with each other, revealing similarities and differences in various aspects of their scholarly communication ecosystems,

thereby yielding a better picture of regional communication practices

In between these activities, SCAP also stepped back and embarked on a more deductive process which involved checking its data against key theoretical concepts in the literature, as well as exploring “hunches” based on immersion in the sites and data, which were then tested against the developing themes and frames.

Southern African scholars’ primary research motivations

Based on the numerous change labs, surveys, day-recalls, interviews and casual conversations that SCAP carried out at the four universities, the team found that the main reasons why these Southern African scholars conducted research were (in no particular order) to:

- achieve satisfaction by acting in accord with personal desires
- aid national/community development
- comply with the institution’s mandate to conduct research
- conform to peer expectations by contributing to the research ethos at the university
- earn points towards promotion
- enhance their teaching
- enjoy contributing
- generate new knowledge
- live up to the terms of their scholarly identity
- observe the dictates of their job description
- obtain indirect financial rewards (travel and conference funds)

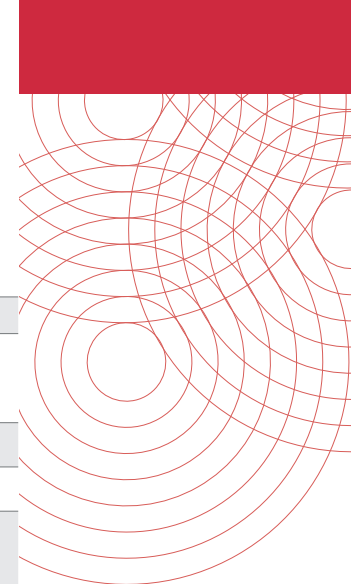


TABLE 2 Values comparison: Why scholars conduct and disseminate research (aggregated and ranked)

	UB FoH	UCT Comm	UoM FoS	UNAM FHSS
1	Comply with institutional mandate to conduct research	Conform to peer expectations by contributing to university research ethos	Achieve satisfaction by acting in accordance with personal desires	Enhance their teaching and Generate new knowledge*
2	Earn points for promotion	Earn points for promotion	Earn points for promotion	–
3	Enhance their teaching	Generate new knowledge	Generate new knowledge	Earn points for promotion
4	Achieve satisfaction by acting in accordance with personal desires	Achieve satisfaction by acting in accordance with personal desires	Act in accordance with their sense of academic identity	Achieve satisfaction by fulfilling personal desires and Aid national/community development*
5	Observe the dictates of their job descriptions	Live up to the terms of their scholarly identity	Feel joy through making a contribution and Obtain indirect financial rewards*	–
6	Generate new knowledge	Enjoy contributing	–	Feel joy through making a contribution
7	Aid national/community development	Comply with institutional mandate	Aid national/community development and Enhance teaching*	Comply with institutional mandate
8	Obtain peer recognition	Obtain indirect financial rewards	–	Obtain indirect financial rewards
9	Obtain indirect financial rewards	Aid national/community development	Observe the dictates of their job descriptions	Observe the dictates of their job descriptions
10	–	Enhance their teaching	–	–
11	–	Observe the dictates of their job descriptions	–	–

* Values are ranked the same in importance

These motivations would be familiar to scholars at most universities, though the importance accorded to each would be influenced by the contextual factors shaping the institution, such as its history, infrastructure, wealth and mission. That contextual diversity is also important for distinguishing the prevailing values motivating research in these four faculties.

When SCAP aggregated and ranked these values in the faculties according to its multiple strands of research data, it became clear that, while all of them shared many of the same values towards research production, each of them prioritised different values based on the unique circumstances that defined them. Table 2 shows the comparison of values between the four faculties.

While this comparative listing of values (expressed in aggregate, not as any particular individual's values) offers a useful snapshot of the kinds of motivations that shape research production in these

four faculties, their significance and uniqueness becomes clearer when we analyse and compare them in greater detail.

To do this, it is useful to assess to what degree they are based on intrinsic or extrinsic motivations. A significant psychological literature explicates the virtue of this approach (Kreps 1997; Ryan & Deci 2000; Teo et al. 1999; Vallerand et al. 1992) and here we will use it to get a nuanced understanding of not only Southern African scholars' values, but also the "institutional cultures" (Bergquist & Pawlak 2008) that shape them and the research cultures that are produced by them.

To aid our analysis, in Figures 1–5 we have plotted scholars' values according to their level of importance for motivating research (*x*-axis) and the degree to which these values arise from intrinsic or extrinsic motivations (*y*-axis). We have then further divided the intrinsic-extrinsic continuum into the three loci of motivation that are most relevant in

the university context: the managerial (extrinsic), the collegial/social (mixed extrinsic and intrinsic) and the individual (intrinsic). This trifurcation offers a more precise delineation of scholars' motivation sources at these four universities.

On one end of the continuum, purely extrinsic motivations emanate from the university management. These are the values of the administration that are communicated through formal mechanisms such as institutional mandates (policies) and job descriptions (contracts). When scholars respond to these managerial incentives, their responses can be described as acts of *compliance*, in that their behaviour aligns with external requirements but without any sense of personal buy-in.

On the other end of the continuum, purely intrinsic motivations emanate from within the individual. They express a scholar's idiosyncratic desires, revealed internally as feelings of joy, integrity, virtue and growth. Intrinsically motivated scholars enjoy the research process as an end in itself. When scholars respond to this interior motivation, their responses can be described as acts of *congruence*, in that their behaviour aligns with their own personally held values and desires.

In the middle of this continuum is a space where extrinsic and intrinsic motivations meet; where, in the university context, external collegial and social demands structure internal personal desires. This occurs because the individual scholar identifies with and feels a member of the collegial or social group defining the value. When scholars respond to this motivation, their responses can be described as acts of *conformity*, in that their behaviour aligns internal desires with externally structured values.

University of Botswana Faculty of Humanities

The University of Botswana is the flagship higher education institution in the country, dating back to 1964 when it was part of a confederated system called the University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. It became autonomous in 1982 and is now a medium-sized institution with almost 18,000 students and 900 academic staff members.

It has been, for most of its history, a teaching-oriented institution, though it aims to become a "research intensive higher education institution by the year 2021" (UB 2009: 2). Within that structure, SCAP dealt with members of the Faculty of Humanities, which was comprised of 108 academics.

UB can be characterised as having a "managerial" institutional culture (Bergquist & Pawlak 2008), in that it has a strong, centralised authority that wields power in a paternalistic, top-down fashion.³ This gives a sense of cohesion to the institution and its policies, but it is also a cause for some resistance by those who feel that the administration is seeing to its own needs before those of the scholarly community (UB Academic Staff 2012).

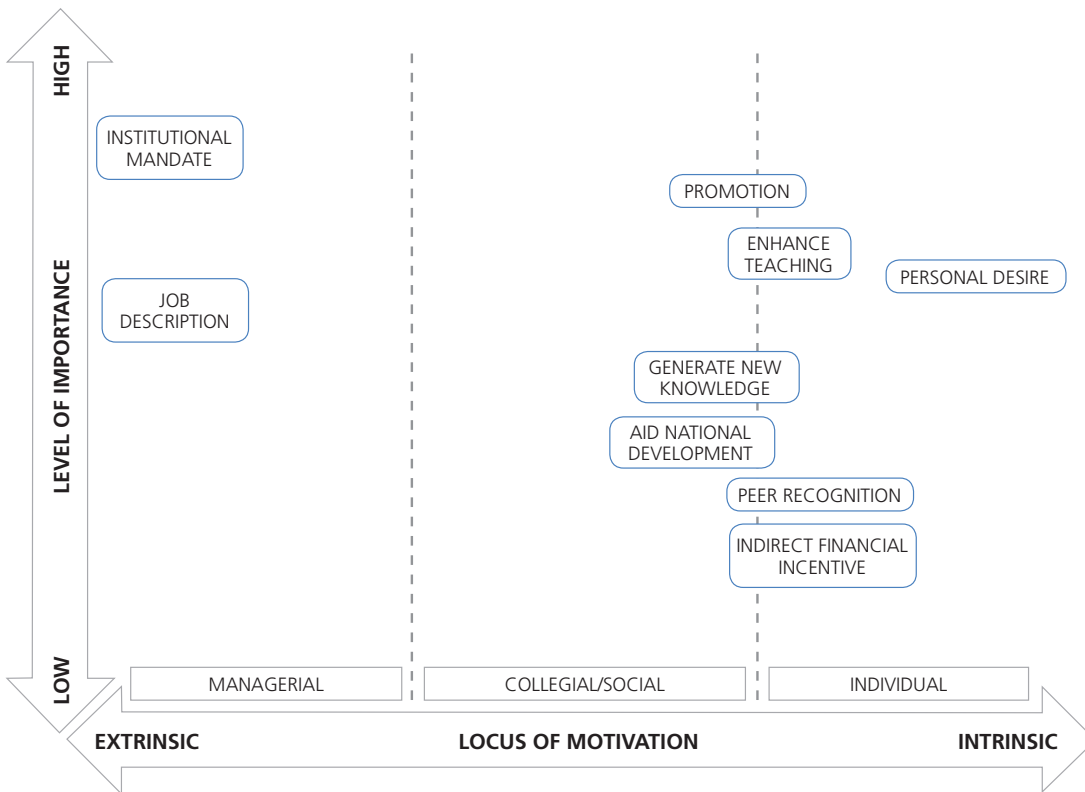
At UB, SCAP's research found that, for FoH scholars, the institutional mandate to produce research has the greatest overall importance for spurring their research production.

This motivational structure makes sense for a couple of reasons. First, as just mentioned, UB has historically been a teaching-oriented university, thus many of the faculty members (of whom the majority are over the age of 50 in the FoH) developed their sense of academic identity and purpose according to a teaching mission. With the administration's desire for UB to become a research university only formally spelled out in 2008 (UB 2008), this new institutional mandate has been a crucial mechanism for encouraging scholars to incorporate research into their work.

Second, for a variety of historical, cultural and practical reasons, the management plays an overwhelming role in defining UB's institutional culture. Scholars are comparatively sensitive to the directives given by the administration because

³ These power relations resemble that of paternalism, where a management stratum asks for, and is given, a great deal of authority (to create policy, dictate norms, etc.), with the understanding that it must fulfil certain critical moral obligations towards the governed strata (pay decent wages, be flexible with the application of rules when issues of personal dignity and public reputation are at stake, etc.). This authority structure is well known in the history of Botswana, and in fact is seen by many analysts as describing the national government's relationship with its citizens (Holm 1987).

FIGURE 1 Values motivating UB FoH scholars to conduct research



they emanate from a source of substantial power. This stands in contrast to the situation at UCT, for instance, where collegial norms (not the administration) comprise the dominant force motivating scholarly research, and at UoM, where the administration is weak. While the institutional mandate is not the only reason why UB FoH scholars conduct research, the fact that it is the top reason reveals how critical the relationship is between academics and the management.⁴

In comparison to other scholars' research values, the institutional mandate (which exists elsewhere as well) plays a significantly lesser role in motivating research and dissemination. For instance, at UNAM, which has also only recently taken on a greater research ambition, the institutional mandate ranked only fifth for FHSS scholars because they felt there were other more important reasons for conducting research.

At UCT, this imperative ranks even lower because, in a context where research activity is taken for

granted and where colleagues push each other through peer pressure, the institutional mandate seems redundant, at least for Comm staff. It strikes the intrinsically motivated types as unnecessary. However, none grate at the requirement. As one Comm scholar noted, "UCT wants a paper a year and if you give UCT a paper a year, they get off your back."

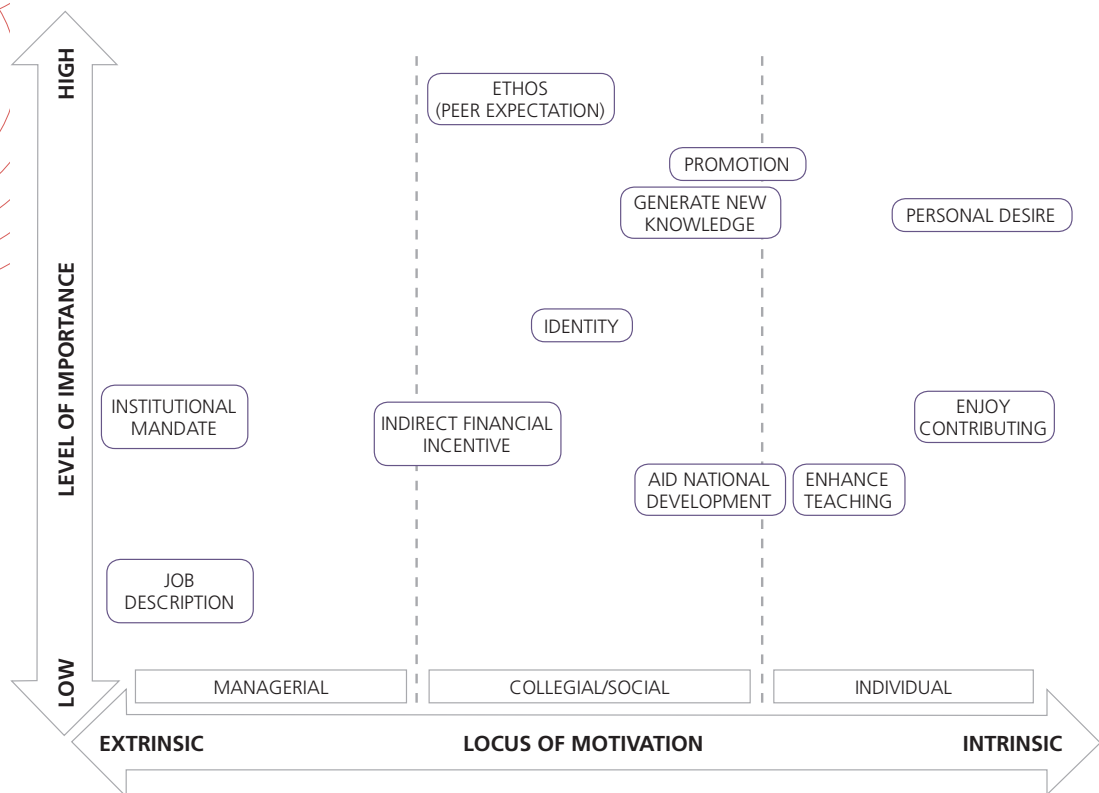
University of Cape Town Faculty of Commerce

The University of Cape Town is one of the oldest and most prestigious higher education institutions in South Africa, dating back to 1829 when it was a boys' high school before becoming a full-fledged university in 1918. Today, it is a medium- to large-sized institution with more than 25,000 students and 2,200 academic staff members. It has, for many years, been a research-intensive university, recognised worldwide for its contributions to various academic fields through research publications.⁵ Within this structure, SCAP dealt

⁴ For a perspective on how complicated that relationship can get at times, see UB Academic Staff (2012).

⁵ This recognition is given in multiple ways, but perhaps the most well-known form is through the Times Higher Education

FIGURE 2 Values motivating UCT Comm scholars to conduct research



with members of the Faculty of Commerce, which was comprised of 125 permanent academics.

UCT can be characterised as having a “collegial” institutional culture (Bergquist & Pawlak 2008), in that much of the operational power of the university exists at the faculty level. It is also characterised by high levels of personal autonomy for scholars, who are able to have a say in how the university works. This has allowed the upper echelons of the university to focus on high-level strategy rather than everyday bureaucratic maintenance.

UCT scholars are motivated to conduct research by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, but the research-oriented ethos of the university has the greatest overall impact on spurring research production in the Faculty of Commerce. This ethos is constituted through everyday forms of peer

expectation and evaluation between colleagues, often expressed through discursive engagements – such as casual conversation, formal recognition and critical feedback – which put subtle, persistent and yet unmistakable pressure on scholars to evaluate themselves through their research activities. As one manager put it, this is the “currency” that colleagues exchange with each other.

Most of the managers, who are all accomplished research scholars themselves, recognise this powerful form of peer regulation, both the “carrot” and “stick” elements of it. It is something that the administration supports, though it does not claim credit for creating it, nor of maintaining it alone. It is a social feature of the university. As one manager stated, “there’s something about the ethos that people are expected to do research, which is to say that ... one isn’t a proper academic unless one is publishing Here it’s peer driven as much as management driven.”

This ethos also serves to attract other scholars who want to be in such an environment, which further reinforces this dynamic. As another manager said,

World University Rankings, which, for 2013–14, ranked UCT number 126 globally, and number 1 in Africa. See: www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2013-14/world-ranking

“UCT has a whole long history of doing research and has a very strong research culture, so it attracts academics who are keen on research. And once you’re really keen on research, you don’t need an extra incentive ... It’s a research intensive university and encourages people to be here who want to do research and it’s got a high standard of output.”

This institutional ethos exhibits the features of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. On the one hand, it is extrinsic in that it derives from a broader collegial context that influences the individuals within it. On the other hand, because scholars identify with and claim membership in that collegial society, the values that characterise the group are also reflections of their own individual values. This ethos is shaped by a dialogical, mutually reinforcing process that helps clarify what values are important for the whole group and, concomitantly, for the individual scholar. Academics do not experience this peer pressure to do research as coming from outside alone, but from within themselves, as they have bought in completely to the collegial norm, helping maintain it themselves.

UCT’s research-oriented ethos forms an essential part of its broader research culture in which every strata of the institution recognises that the university’s core function is to create high-quality published research (not just employable graduates). All of SCAP’s interviews with UCT’s scholars, librarians and managers revealed this shared outlook.⁶

6 Three UCT librarians who were interviewed independently, stated without prompting, that if they had to decide whether to keep a certain resource (journal subscription, book, etc.) or not, the determining factor would be whether it was used by an NRF A-Rated researcher, not necessarily by the undergraduate students. As one stated, “There are some resource that see very low usage. And when we see something like that, we do question: ‘Well, do we still need this?’ And some of the questions that come in is, ‘Well, who is the person using this? Is it one A-rated scientist who’s using it?’ – in which case it doesn’t matter how little use it gets, we need to have it, because of the benefit – ‘Or is this really an undergraduate resource and their needs are being met with other resources, so we don’t need it anymore?’” This prioritisation of the needs of recognised researchers (even if it amounts to only one person) trumps the needs of the non-researchers (the masses of students), at least in certain cases like these. The fact that this sentiment was expressed to us by librarians reveals the extent to which the particular logic of UCT’s research culture has permeated every level of the institution.

This ethos contributes greatly to the consistent and high levels of research productivity at UCT. Its presence distinguishes it from the other universities SCAP profiled which were still in the process of trying to build a more robust research culture. At those institutions and faculties, where teaching remains (in reality) the top priority for most, the pressure by colleagues to publish research is either mild or non-existent.

For instance, the only other scholars to mention their peers with regard to research motivation were those in UB FoH. However, they did not say that they were conforming to peer expectation, as at UCT, but rather seeking peer recognition. This is a different and less intense motivator because, unlike at UCT where peer expectation is constant and there are social outcomes for one’s performance (whether optimal or not), peer recognition simply awaits those who make the effort. So it is an optional, personal desire. If scholars do not publish research, they are not penalised; if they do, they achieve some acclaim and recognition. This makes sense in a context where research is valued, but where teaching remains scholars’ defining reality.

University of Mauritius Faculty of Science

The University of Mauritius is the flagship higher education institution in the country, dating back to late 1960s when the small island nation was gaining its dependence from the British. It is a relatively small institution with just under 12,000 students and 260 academic staff members. It has been, for most of its history, a teaching-oriented institution, though it has gradually enhanced its research capacity and the degree to which scholars are assessed by their research outputs. The government desires that it play a leading role in transforming the country into a “knowledge hub” in the region (MESR 2006: iv). Within that structure, SCAP dealt with members of the Faculty of Science, which was comprised of 55 academics.

UoM can be characterised as having a “bureaucratic” institutional culture, in that authority is highly centralised, but weak (Manraj 2013), a point that we will elaborate on below as it pertains to research and communication.

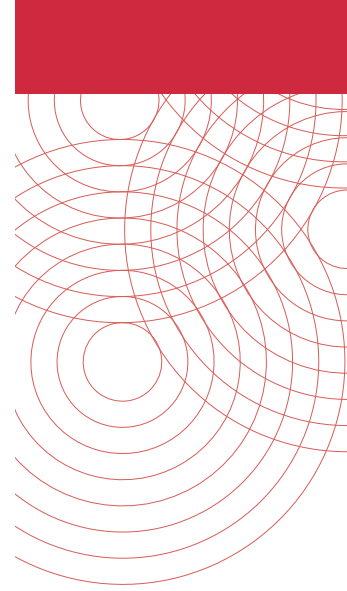
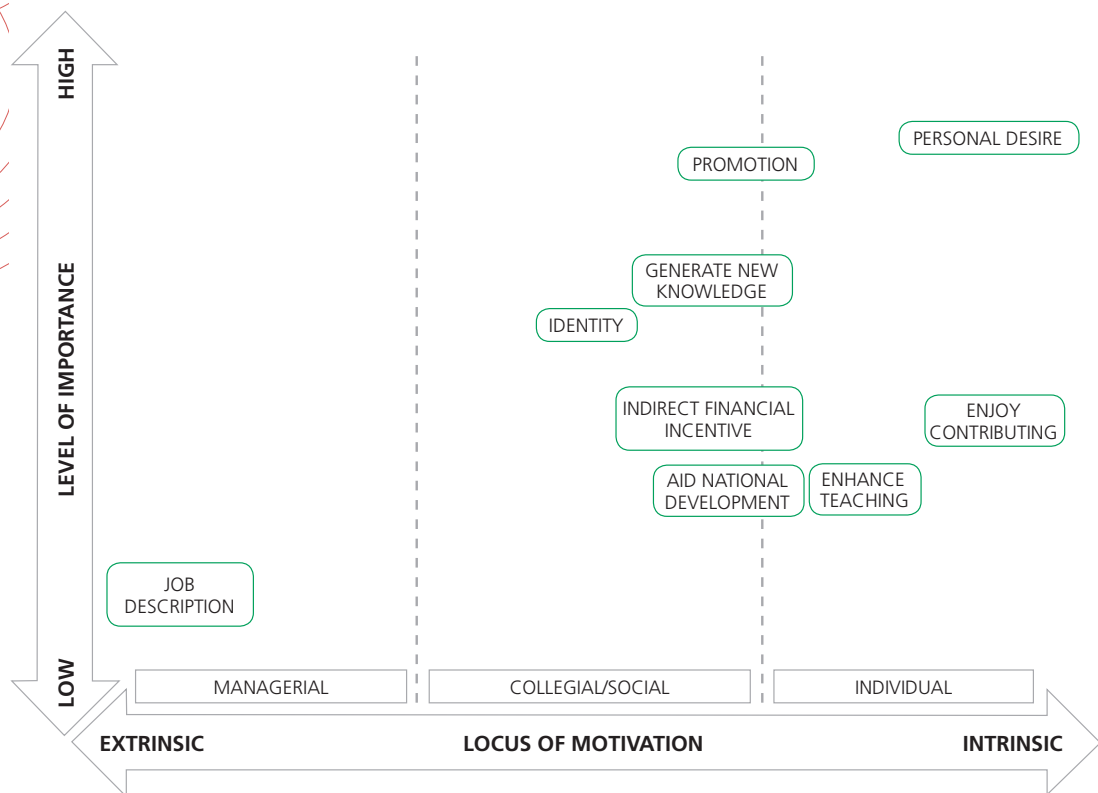


FIGURE 3 Values motivating UoM FoS scholars to conduct research



For UoM FoS scholars, personal desire is the most important overall factor for spurring research production. Because they work at a teaching-oriented university where the production of research outputs remains secondary to the fulfilment of the teaching mission, the motivation for conducting research often has to come from the individual scholars themselves. If they want to do it, they will be rewarded, but if they do not, they will not be penalised (at least not in any direct way). Thus the choice is theirs to make.

FoS scholars' need for personal desire to produce research is also influenced by UoM's bureaucratic, centralised and weak institutional culture. That is, on the one hand, the administration employs a variety of bureaucratic processes which ensure that even the smallest decisions made by academics are referred back to it for official approval ("red tape"), thereby centralising authority at the institution ("bureaucratism"). But on the other hand, it has largely vacated the strategic role that it is supposed to play in shaping the policies that drive research and dissemination activity, leaving scholars on their own to decide how much research they

would like to produce and how they would like to communicate it.

Part of this can be explained by the institutional instability that has beset UoM over the past few years caused by the unforeseen resignation of a popular vice chancellor in early 2012, followed by the dismissal of his replacement less than a year later for unknown reasons.⁷ This has had an unsettling effect on the administration, which has essentially frozen the implementation of a number of research strategies that were developed under the former VC. But this type of paralysis can happen in a centralised yet weak administrative structure that is rendered leaderless. Since authority radiates from the top down in such organisations, they do not perform well without a credible figure placed there (in this case, too many figures have been put there: UoM has had 5 VCs in the last 4 years). The middle and lower management strata which

⁷ Guillaume Gouges (17 August 2013) Controversy as university fires vice-chancellor, *University World News*, available at: www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130816180045660

could have otherwise stepped in to make sure that the university's research strategies are still being implemented were not empowered to take such initiative. The result has been that the chaos of the VC's office has been replicated in the maintenance of the research strategy (UoM 2009).

There are benefits, however, to this centralised, but weak administrative arrangement. Even though academics often need to seek managerial permission to make even mundane decisions, they are nonetheless relatively autonomous in how they carry out their work, construct their careers and approach research and dissemination. Many scholars appreciate the latitude that this affords.

However, it is difficult to substantiate and sustain a dynamic research culture based on a highly intrinsic motivation system. Personal desire is an important part of any strong research culture, but it is too prone to fluctuations to form the cornerstone of a deep and abiding research culture. It needs to be balanced by other more extrinsic motivators as well (which UoM currently lacks).

At the other faculties, personal desire is also ranked relatively high, usually in the third or fourth place. At UB and UNAM, where there is not a great amount of peer pressure to produce research, personal desire plays an important role in motivating academics. As one FHSS scholar shared, "personally I just enjoy doing research. It's very important that you as a researcher enjoy what you do." At UCT, scholars also feel a high degree of personal motivation for conducting research, but many take this value for granted, assuming that this is one of the primary reasons why people join academia in the first place. As one manager said, "I think a lot of the research productivity has to do with self-motivation rather than external factors. It's not incentivised, it's not coerced, so it comes from the self."

University of Namibia Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

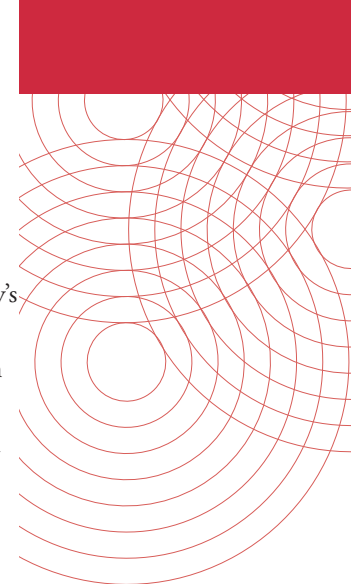
The University of Namibia is the flagship higher education institution in the country, dating back to 1992 just after the country gained independence from South Africa. It is now a medium-sized institution with almost 18,000 students and 750

academic staff members. It is a teaching-oriented institution (and recently incorporated the country's former teacher training colleges), though it aims to gradually build up its research capacity. Within that structure, SCAP dealt with members of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, which was comprised of 77 academics.

UNAM can be characterised as having a "developmental" institutional culture (Bergquist & Pawlak 2008), which is responsive to the needs of the nation and built on mentoring relationships. Power in this arrangement is not transferred in a top-down fashion (as in a managerial institutional culture), nor is it lateral or side-to-side (as in a collegial culture), but it is best described as front-back, meaning that a small cohort of colleagues (who are nominally equal, but distinguished by their experience) leads a broader cohort of "followers" by example. It is the senior academics – more than administrators or peers – who help to build the research capacity that the university desires.

UNAM scholars are motivated to conduct research by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, but the top reasons for FHSS scholars are to "enhance their teaching" and to "generate new knowledge". These two values (tied first in significance) are important because, working as they do at a teaching-oriented institution, research has great utility for scholars who want to stay current in their field and to learn new ideas through research activity (all of which would strengthen the quality of their teaching). With a strong teaching heritage – and the continued heavy teaching loads that scholars face – the primary audience for many of their research ideas are their students, some of whom assist in their research activities, and with whom a number of academics publish articles. We located this value on the line between social and individual motivation because most of the desire to "enhance" this aspect of their work derives from themselves as individuals, and to a certain extent by their students. Since the administration evaluates teaching performance more according to quantity (hours) rather than quality, scholars' desire to improve it emanates largely from themselves, with feedback from their students helping structure their efforts.

Equally important, many FHSS scholars want to



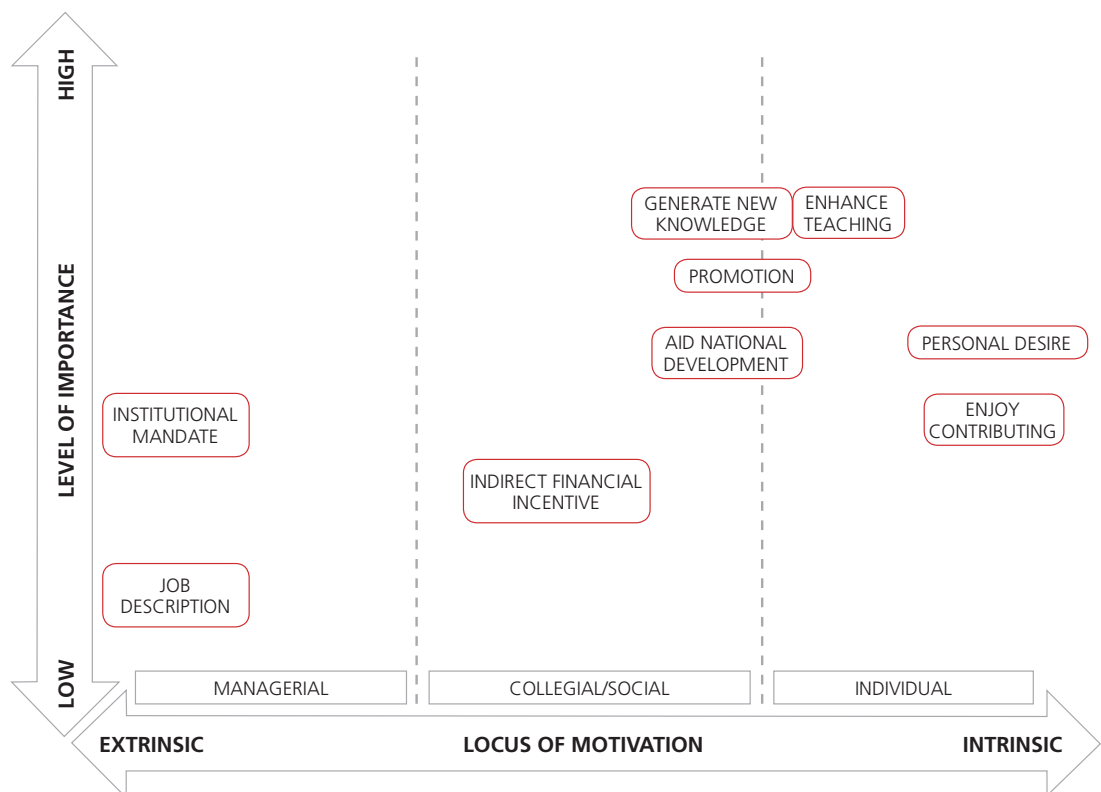
“generate new knowledge” through their research, a relatively intrinsic motivation, but structured by their field of inquiry and the various “gaps” it contains for a scholar to fill. For FHSS scholars, the gaps in humanities and social science research are significant, especially as it relates to the Namibian context. They see the country as “virgin territory” for researchers who can explore numerous topics, often producing the first research on a topic in Namibia. They are excited about this fact, that their research can help form the foundation for a truly national scholarly enterprise. As one scholar related, “you want to do that kind of research which can close the gap where other people across the globe can relate to your work.”

Other Southern African scholars also share FHSS scholars’ primary research values, but with a lower sense of priority. UB FoH academics also desire to enhance their teaching through research, ranking it third in their collective list of motivations. This makes sense in a teaching-oriented institution where most of the scholars developed their sense of academic identity and contribution through

teaching activities. It ranks lower for UoM FoS scholars and far lower for UCT Comm academics, both of whom identify more with a research-focused academic identity.

Regarding the desire to “generate new knowledge”, UCT Comm and UoM FoS scholars also seek to do this to a high degree, but less due to a desire to contribute to the nation’s intellectual patrimony (as with FHSS scholars), and more due to a desire to contribute to their disciplinary fields. Comm scholars are, for instance, expected by their peers and managers to shape their fields through published contributions. This often requires developing new theories, analysing new resources and constructing new arguments. This desire is also a relatively intrinsic motivation, structured by scholars’ fields of inquiry and the various “gaps” available to fill. FoS scholars seek to do this, not so much because they are expected to do so, but because they simply desire to do so personally, out of a sense of curiosity and interest. As one FoS scholar stated, “there are lots of questions we need to answer and yet there is not much research.”

FIGURE 4 Values motivating UNAM FHSS scholars to conduct research



Other values

In addition to the top-ranked (aggregated) values identified above for each faculty, a number of other values shape research motivations in these faculties. They are listed above in the various tables and figures, but here we discuss them in greater detail.

Earn points towards promotion

The second most important factor for motivating research at all of the faculties is the desire for promotion. On the figures, we located promotion on the line between collegial and individual motivation because promotion not only satisfies an intrinsic desire for greater financial reward, but also elevates the prestige of the scholar in the eyes of their peers according to a status structure largely derived from collegial norms and traditions. As a motivating factor, promotion is one of the most ubiquitous, durable and reliable means for encouraging any type of behaviour that it is tied to, including research. Each person interviewed was able to tell us exactly how many publications they needed to produce in order to be eligible for promotion.

As one UNAM scholar described it, “To go up in the academic environment, you need to prove that you have contributed in terms of teaching as well as in terms of research outputs.” This was reinforced by a UNAM manager who said, “At this university, if you don’t do research, your chances of getting any promotion remain zero. So [if you want to get promoted] that becomes my main motivator, to make sure that I publish.”

Enjoy contributing

Another important value that Southern African scholars hold is the enjoyment that they receive from making a contribution, especially to their field. They like the idea that their work will have value and utility for others. As one UCT manager relayed, some Comm scholars conduct research “because they think it’s useful. I wouldn’t say this is the main driver, but useful research is something that motivates people.” A UNAM scholar concurred, stating, “I do research in order

to improve and to advance knowledge.” After all, “you never know how it can help somebody else.”

Live up to the terms of their scholarly identity

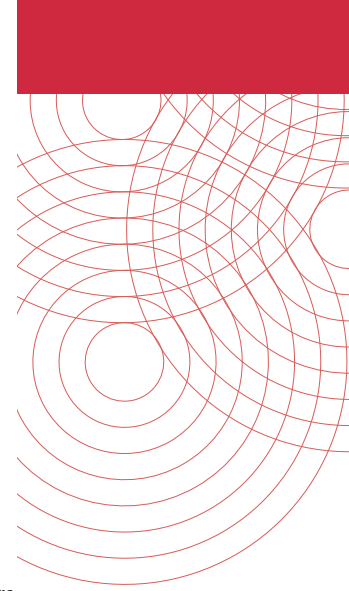
At UCT and UoM, scholars also mentioned that they wanted to live up to the standards that characterise their scholarly identities. This is an idealised, and contested, notion, but many scholars orient their actions according to the assumed terms of such identities (Archer 2008). As one Comm scholar stated concerning his desire to conduct research, “it’s part of my identity. It’s part of what makes sense to me. It makes me feel that I can hold my head up in a place like this. Universities are places of research.”

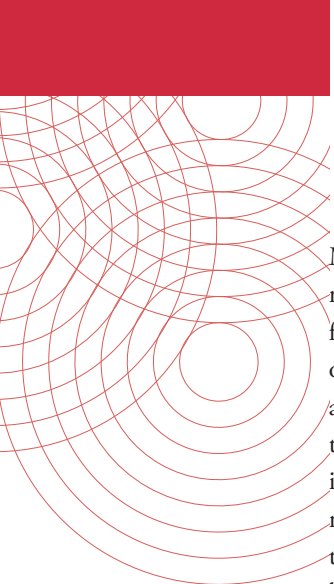
Another UCT manager put it even more bluntly, saying, “Well, presumably it’s why one becomes an academic, isn’t it.” This taken-for-grantedness of the research mission – and its relation to a proper sense of self – forms part of the conception of scholarly identity at most research-intensive universities such as UCT.

Some UoM FoS academics also operate according to a similar sensibility, with one stating, “As an academic, it’s part of your ... not duty ... but you can’t call yourself an academic if you’re not engaged in research.” For prolific researchers at UoM, this motivation by identification was crucial, but it was not the case for all. Others saw it as secondary to their teaching mission (the key element that substantiated their academic identities), especially at UNAM.

Aid national/community development

Rated equally with personal desire at UNAM, FHSS scholars would like their research to “aid national development”. Of all the universities SCAP profiled, UNAM scholars showed the greatest interest in promoting national development through their work. This makes sense given the young age of the institution – and the nation – making the importance of their contributions at this stage that much more important.





Most UB FoH scholars would also like their research to “aid national development” in some fashion, though it is not the overwhelming purpose of their activity. Indeed many feel that they are already contributing to national development by teaching students at the university. Moreover, some in the in the humanities worry that their work is not taken as seriously by the government compared to work in the fields of health, agriculture or the hard sciences. They find it a challenge to match their intrinsic desire to help others through their research with the more extrinsic factors determining what counts as “development” and what does not.

The same holds true for UoM FoS scholars, as one shared, “There is also this aspect of aligning it with the needs of the country and a strong emphasis is now laid on that, because we still are a developmental university. So whatever research we conduct, we have, to some extent, to align it to the needs of the country. So, many people are actually engaged in applied research rather than the more fundamental aspects of research.”

Compared to their other motivational desires, aiding national development ranks relatively low for UCT Comm scholars. This is due, in part, to the fact that they belong to one of many universities in the country that is part of a broader national research infrastructure. Thus they do not shoulder the burden of producing developmentally relevant research alone, unlike scholars in the other universities (which are often *the* major producer of research in their countries). UCT Comm scholars are happy if their work contributes to national development, but for many, it’s not a high priority for them (Mouton 2010: 30).

Obtain indirect financial rewards

Another broadly shared – but relatively low – research motivator for these Southern African scholars is the indirect financial rewards (in the form of travel and conference funds) that they can receive for their research efforts.

At UB, younger FoH scholars rate this as especially important, as it offers them an opportunity to disseminate their work prior to publication, get

feedback from their peers and travel outside of Botswana. Of course, older scholars also enjoy these same benefits, but they tend to rate them as less important because they do not have the same novelty value as they do for younger scholars.

At UCT, Comm scholars also enjoy the indirect financial incentives that research offers, including the esteem that goes with bringing in further research funding through South Africa’s unique block grant funding system. With each publication in a journal on the South African Post Secondary Education (SAPSE) publications list,⁸ a scholar attracts a certain amount of government money to their faculties (Mouton 2010: 23). This both rewards them (indirectly) for their work and opens up new opportunities for further research by others in the faculty. When UCT’s annual Research Report is circulated, scholars can see which colleagues have been productive in terms of publication (which earns them prestige), and they can appreciate whose research activities have brought in funding for the broader faculty (which earns them the esteem of their colleagues who can benefit from this contribution as well).

Observe the dictates of their job description

The last and lowest ranking research value for most concerns scholars’ desire to observe the dictates of their job descriptions. For UB scholars who work in a “managerial” institutional culture, this reinforced the institutional mandate that was already a crucial motivator for them. However, at the three other universities, this highly extrinsic factor was often the lowest ranking value, especially at UoM where scholars enjoy a good deal of autonomy and are motivated primarily by personal desire.

Ambivalent values

While all of the values above play a role in spurring research and dissemination activity in the four

⁸ Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) approved list (SAPSE list) of South African journals for 2013, available at: www.researchoffice.uct.ac.za/ustr/researchoffice/publication/SA-JournalList2013.xlsx

university faculties, for a number of personal, social, cultural and professional reasons, some UB FoH, UoM FoS and UNAM FHSS academics revealed that they were not keen to disseminate their research. Though they wanted it to count towards their academic performance assessments, they preferred that their research – or at least some portions of it – remain unseen. The reasons they gave for this stemmed from:

- anxieties about quality, peer judgment and community exposure (especially if they doubt the quality of their research contributions).
- a culturally informed sense of modesty (where it is considered improper to engage in “self-promotion”, such as calling attention to one’s own work).
- a minimalist communications strategy (where dissemination is achieved through reading a paper at a conference, or perhaps allowing a journal to publish it, but nothing further).
- fear that others may steal their ideas/data (especially if still in gestational form).
- a worry about upsetting research subjects (if the results are socially or politically sensitive).

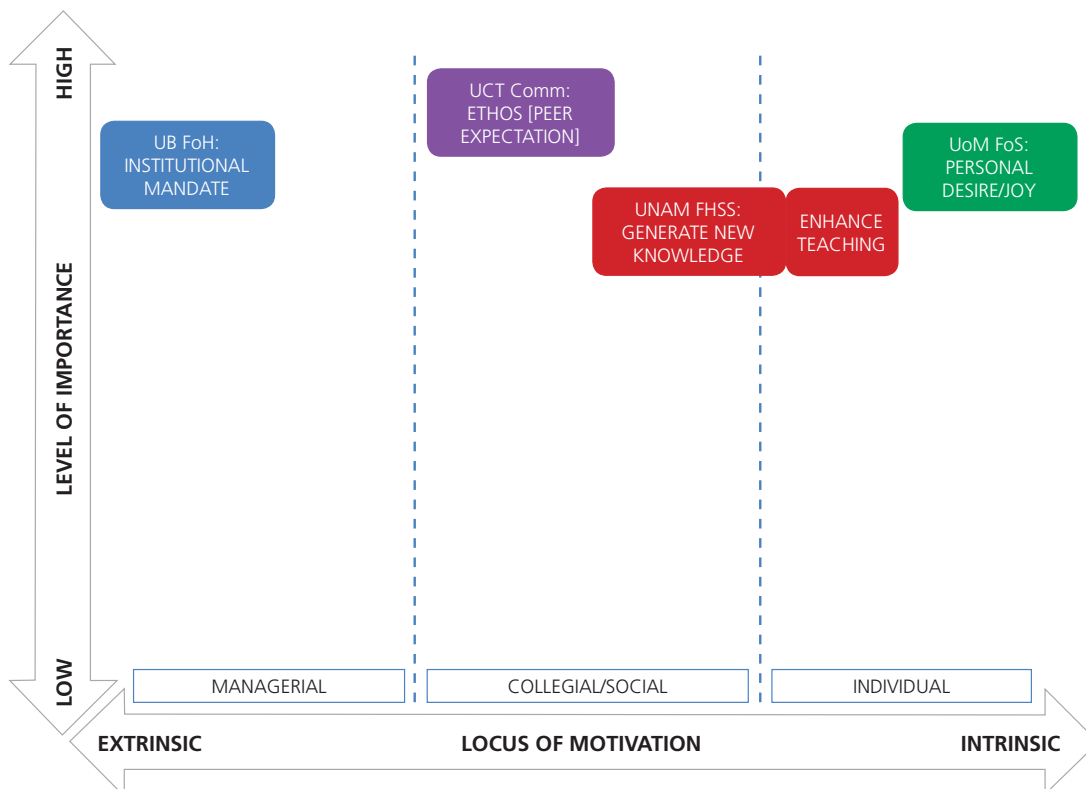
- a teaching- rather than research-oriented approach to scholarship (which speaks to one’s sense of academic identity, as a “teacher” rather than a “researcher”).

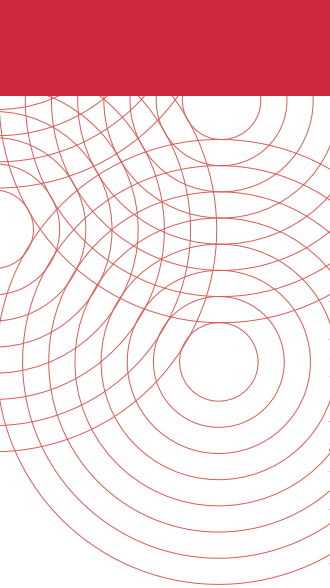
While many of these faculties’ scholars are keen to share their research with the world (as is probably true of most academics at these universities), some of the more cautious individuals do have understandable reasons for hiding their work, a point worth remembering as a number of these rationales are likely to be relevant in marginalised, postcolonial settings where academics face significant resource and access constraints.

Conclusion

This study shows that, even though these four universities share a number of similarities in terms of geography, history and mission, their differences are sufficient enough to create significant diversity in how their scholars respond to the research endeavour. Thus, if we visually compare the four faculties’ research values profiles to each other

FIGURE 5 Comparison of the four faculties’ primary research values





(Figure 5), we see that for UB FoH scholars, the institutional mandate is the primary research motivator. It is a highly extrinsic managerial value. For UCT Comm academics, peer expectation predominates, as the production of research is seen as part of the social ethos. It is a mixed, but extrinsically leaning, collegial value. For UNAM FHSS scholars, the desire to generate new knowledge and enhance teaching comprises the two key principles driving research in the still-largely teaching-focused university. It is an intrinsically leaning social and individual value. And at UoM, personal desire drives FoS scholars' research production. It is a highly intrinsic, individual value.

These values are supported by a number of other motivations, of course, many of which would be more important than these primary values at an individual level. But these collectively prioritised motivations give us an indication of how history, demography, mission and other factors impact the ways in which Southern African scholars conceive of their approach to research and dissemination practices.

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