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Article

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Abstract

There is a dearth of studies on academics' perceptions of good teaching in transitional economies such as Uganda and the degree of parity between academics' conceptions of good teaching and the items in the student evaluation of teaching (SET) questionnaires. Against this backdrop, the article reports on a study that explored how academics at Makerere University, Uganda, perceive good teaching and compared the resultant perceptions with the items in the SET questionnaires. The study employed a qualitative approach and data was collected by using semi-structured interviews and reviewing documents. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data from the interviews while the data from the documents was analysed using content analysis. The findings showed that academics perceive good teaching as: being knowledgeable; being student-centred; demonstrating good communication skills; undertaking research-based teaching; demonstrating professionalism; being approachable; and being organised. Finally, the findings demonstrated a convergence between academics' perceptions of good teaching and most of the items in the SET questionnaires.

Keywords: academics; perceptions; good teaching; higher education; quality

Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, quality assurance − a controversial phenomenon that originated from the private sector − has found a permanent home in higher education and attracted both a love and hate relationship among academics. Improvement of teaching and learning is paraded, though contestably, as the main purpose of quality assurance (Harvey 1998; Parri 2006; Westerheijden 1999). The improvement purpose of quality assurance is compatible with the transformative notion of quality in higher education. Under the transformative perspective of quality, universities should add value to the student through developing high order knowledge, skills as well as personal attributes (Pitman 2014). Since the aim of quality assurance in higher education is to improve teaching, then "a clear theoretical understanding of what constitutes quality teaching must inform all aspects of the evaluation and quality assurance (EQA) system" (Barrie, Ginn and Prosser 2005, 634). This necessitates that the items relating to good teaching in the student evaluation of teaching (SET) questionnaires should resonate with the perceptions of good teaching by stakeholders at the student-academic interface. However, the extant literature faults most SET questionnaires in higher education for mirroring administrators' perceptions of good teaching (Meng and Onwuegbuzie 2015) at the expense of stakeholders at the student-academic interface. This may occasion a gap between the items in the questionnaires and academics' perceptions of good teaching − a situation which may inadvertently undermine measures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

On the Ugandan higher education landscape, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) – a regulatory body for higher education – makes it mandatory for students enrolled in higher education institutions (HEIs) to evaluate teachers at the end of each course unit using a standardised questionnaire. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide feedback to the teacher (NCHE 2014) for reflection and improvement of teaching. Similarly, in 2011, Makerere University in Uganda, developed a student evaluation of course and teaching (SECAT) questionnaire. Nevertheless, little is known about whether the items in the two questionnaires resonate with academics' perceptions of good teaching or not. More so, there is a dearth of studies into perceptions of good teaching in the Ugandan higher education space.

Against this backdrop, the study was conducted at Makerere University to answer the following question: How do academics perceive good teaching and to what extent do the academics' perceptions of good teaching mirror the statements in the Makerere University and the NCHE SET questionnaires?

The article comprises five sections. After the introduction, the literature on perceptions of good teaching is presented and is followed by a section which details the methods of the study. Then the results are presented followed by a discussion of the findings and a delineation of the conclusions.

Literature Review: Academics' Perceptions of Good Teaching

Teaching is a core function of universities but a multidimensional concept (Williams et al. 2016) and has numerous connotations, such as: imparting information; transmitting knowledge; facilitating learning; changing students' conceptions (Samuelowicz and Bain 1992); and encouraging knowledge creation (Samuelowicz and Bain 2001). Eisner (1994, 159) defines teaching as "a set of acts performed by people we call teachers as they attempt to foster learning". Eisner's definition portrays teaching in the task sense (as an activity) and the achievement sense (as learning). Therefore, teaching can be regarded as a process of facilitating learning (Samuelowicz and Bain 1992). Perceptions, that is, what is elicited from academics as far as good teaching is concerned, simply connote the dimensions that individuals use in describing phenomena. In the context of the article, perceptions refer to the specific meanings that academics (or university employees who hold academic titles and participate in teaching mission of the university) attach to good teaching.

Over the past three decades, studies on the perception of good teaching in higher education by students and academics have burgeoned (Biggs 2001; Chism 1999; Kember 1997; Kember and Kwan 2000; Kuppinger and Jucks 2017; Marton and Saljo 1976; Nabaho, Oonyu and Aguti 2017; Ramsden 1992). These studies revealed that good teaching is a contested concept (Skelton 2004) and therefore defies a single definition. The quality movement in higher education ignited and continues to fuel research on how stakeholders, including academics, unpack good teaching. A common thread in extant studies on the subject is that good teaching is "oriented to and focused on students" (Devlin and Samarawickrema 2010, 112) and promotes high quality student learning (Devlin and Samarawickrema 2010; Hativa 2000; Prosser 2013; Ramsden 1992). This viewpoint of good teaching is explicated by the idea that teaching is not an end in itself, but a process of ensuring high quality student learning (Prosser 2013). Biggs' (2001, 224) assertion that "unless appropriate learning takes place, [then teaching] is an empty display" lends credence to the imperative to foster higher quality learning through teaching.

Studies have been conducted on perceptions of good teaching in higher education. For Chism (1999), subject matter competence, preparation and organisation, clarity, enthusiasm and interpersonal rapport are some of the key dimensions of good teaching. Zerihun (2012) examined how lecturers at Makelle University and Jimma University in Ethiopia made sense of good teaching. The findings were based on 43 questionnaires completed by lecturers in the departments of civil and electrical engineering, and nursing and pharmacy. The results showed that 54 per cent of the lecturers described effective teaching as transmitting information. Additionally, 23 per cent of the teachers considered effective teaching to be characterised by being organised and delivering clear presentations. Applying continuous assessment and providing feedback on progress attracted 23 per cent of the responses; being knowledgeable attracted 18 per

cent; while being punctual and considering students' comments attracted 16 per cent. The current study shed light on how effective teaching is conceptualised by academics in a developing country.

From the extant studies on good teaching, we can infer that most studies on the subject treat academics as a homogeneous group and therefore fail to point out cross-disciplinary variations in the perception of good teaching. Secondly, voices of academics from developing countries in relation to perceptions of good teaching are limited. We therefore know little about whether the perceptions of good teaching of academics from the African higher education space align with those of academics from the more advanced higher education systems of the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. This article, therefore, nuances our understanding of the perceptions of good teaching from a developing country with an embryonic quality assurance system.

In Uganda, the NCHE provides for students in HEIs to assess their teachers at the end of each course using an instrument that comprises 14 dimensions of good teaching from the regulator's standpoint. On each dimension, students are required to assess the teacher using a scale which ranges from "unsatisfactory" to "excellent". The feedback from the students is intended to "help the individual staff to identify his/her weaknesses and strengths" (NCHE 2014, 32). On the other hand, Makerere University students are required to evaluate their lecturers on 13 dimensions along a 5-point rating scale with 1 connoting "strongly disagree" and 5 reflecting "strongly agree". The students' feedback is intended to guide the university in improving the core function of teaching and learning. However, as mentioned in the previous section, there is a dearth of empirical studies pertaining to the extent of parity between the items in the SET questionnaires and the perceptions of good teaching by academics at Makerere University.

Methods

Before articulating the methods, it is imperative to provide contextual information on the case study – Makerere University, which is the oldest public university in Uganda and in East Africa, and was established in 1922 as a technical college. In 1949, it assumed the status of a university college affiliated to the University of London. Under the affiliation arrangement, it offered academic programmes leading to the general degrees of the University of London. It became one of the three constituent colleges of the University of East Africa in 1963 and this marked the end of the affiliation arrangement with the University of London. In 1970, by an Act of Parliament, it became an independent university of the Republic of Uganda. By 2013, Makerere University had a student population of 40 000 undergraduate and 3 000 postgraduate students, respectively (Makerere University 2013). The university comprises 10 colleges which are structured into schools and teaching departments. As at December 2012, the university had about 1 600 academic staff (Makerere University 2013).

The article is anchored in the world view of interpretivism and adopted the qualitative research approach. Under the qualitative approach, "the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon [and] this meaning is mediated through the researcher as an instrument" (Merriam 2002, 6). The qualitative approach considers the quality of the participants and the depth of the interviews to be more important than the number of participants in the study. The choice of the qualitative approach was influenced by the research question which aimed at understanding academics' culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of good teaching. In other words, the qualitative approach was deemed an appropriate lens because of its potency to facilitate gaining a better understanding of good teaching from the academics' own frame of reference.

Multi-stage purposive sampling was used to select representative colleges, schools, departments and lecturers. Using the humanities and sciences dichotomy, the following four colleges were selected for the study: the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) and College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), representing the arts domain; and the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT) and College of Health Sciences (CHS), representing the sciences domain.

From each college, one school was purposively selected from which two academic departments were also purposively selected. One academic programme was purposively selected from each of the sampled departments. The eight programmes reflect six different disciplines (engineering, dentistry, nursing, education, music and drama, and development studies). From each discipline, academics were purposively selected. The following criteria were used to select two academics from each department: a minimum of three years in the university service; and having coordinated or currently coordinating a course. Academics who met the criteria were deemed relevant to the study because of their potential to reflect on their own teaching and the course evaluation feedback from the students. The sampling criteria yielded 14 participants (five females and nine males) after two academics declined to participate in the study. The 14 academics comprised one professor, one associate professor, three senior lecturers and heads of department, six lecturers and three assistant lecturers. Table 1 shows how multi-stage sampling was used to select the colleges, schools and departments.

Table 1: Sample size and sample selection of academics

College	School	Department	Programme	(N=14)
CEES	Education	Humanities and Language Education	Bachelor of Arts with Education	2
		Science, Technical and Vocational Education	Bachelor of Science with Education	1
CHUSS	Liberal and Performing Arts	Philosophy and Development Studies	Bachelor of Development Studies	1
		Performing Arts	Bachelor of Arts in Drama and Music	2
CEDAT	Engineering	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	2
		Electrical and Computer Engineering	Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering	2
CHS	Health Sciences	Dentistry	Bachelor of Dental Surgery	2
		Nursing	Bachelor of Nursing	2

The data for the article was collected from 1 April to 1 July 2014 by conducting interviews and reviewing documents. Regarding the interviews, though follow-up questions were asked, data collection was guided by the following questions: (1) When someone talks of good teaching at university level, what comes to your mind? and

(2) What do you trace your perceptions about good teaching to? All the interviews were conducted in English and each interview session lasted 45 to 60 minutes. As far as document review is concerned, data was gathered from the Makerere University SECAT and the NCHE questionnaires. A document review guide was used as the data collection tool. The document review focused on identifying the dimensions of good teaching in both documents.

The data from the interviews was analysed immediately after data collection and the analysis adopted Creswell's (2003) six steps of qualitative data analysis, namely: (1) organise and prepare the data for analysis; (2) read through the data to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on the overall meaning; (3) begin detailed analysis with a coding process; (4) use the coding process to generate a description of the categories or themes; (5) advance how the description and relationship of themes were represented in the qualitative narrative; and (6) make an interpretation or find meaning with the data. Organising the data for analysis involved transcribing each interview. Firstly, each transcript was read to get a feeling for the participants' wording.

Secondly, coding was done from which two codes emerged from the data: "instructor's personal characteristics" and "instructor's skills". Finally, the data from the documents was analysed using content analysis technique. Krippendorff (2004, 18–19) defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use".

To comply with ethical standards, the participants' informed consent was sought before they were interviewed. During the interviews, permission to record the interview was sought from each participant. An effort was made to preserve the identity of each interviewee. In this regard, each participant's identity was replaced with a pseudonym to keep the database anonymous. Finally, during data analysis and report writing, the responses were not attributed to particular participants in the study. Instead, codes were used to identify the participants based on the discipline followed by a sequence in which the interviews were conducted, with LAE standing for Lecturer in Arts Education; LBDS connoting Lecturer in Bachelor of Dental Surgery; LCE representing Lecturer in Civil Engineering; LEE symbolising Lecturer in Electrical Engineering; LMD indicating Lecturer in Music and Drama; LDS representing Lecturer in Development Studies; and LSE denoting Lecturer in Science Education.

The credibility of the findings was ensured through member checking (or participant validation of the findings) and purposive sampling. Member checking involves obtaining feedback on data interpretations and conclusions from the participants themselves. Member checking of the findings is considered to be "the most critical technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, 314) of qualitative research. Accordingly, a copy of the draft research report was availed to five academics each of whom was requested to single out any distortions or misrepresentations. Nevertheless, only two academics provided feedback on the draft report. Finally, credibility of the findings was guaranteed through purposeful sampling. The participants were selected purposively and this ensured that data was collected from information-rich sources.

Results: Academics' Conceptions of Good Teaching

Seven themes of good teaching were inductively discerned from the academics' responses, namely: being knowledgeable; being student-centred; demonstrating good communication skills; undertaking research-based teaching, demonstrating professionalism, being approachable, and being organised. These themes are elaborated below.

Being Knowledgeable

The findings on this attribute of good teaching give an insight into what the teacher should know insofar as teaching is concerned. The findings demonstrated that being

knowledgeable transcends the teacher's grasp of the subject matter (or what to teach). This multi-dimensional construct comprises variants, such as knowledge of pedagogy (how to teach/teaching methods); knowledge of the psychology of learning (how students learn); and knowledge of the students (background characteristics of the learners). All 14 academics identified with being knowledgeable as a dimension of good teaching.

In the first instance, good teaching entails knowledge of the subject matter. All the study participants associated with this variant. A lecturer in nursing, when asked to describe good teaching in nursing education, opined:

> … you (the teacher) must be knowledgeable [of the subject matter] and skilled first of all. (LDN-1)

A lecturer in dental surgery responded to the same question as follows:

> I think you need to be in a position where you are more knowledgeable [in content] than those you are attending to; it helps if you are more knowledgeable than your trainees. (LBDS-2)

Similarly, a lecturer in arts education said:

> Good teaching should first and foremost involve one's expertise in the subject area. (LAE-1)

Finally, a lecturer in music and drama described good teaching as reflecting being "well-grounded theoretically with the stuff (subject matter)." Therefore, the participants expect the teacher to be more knowledgeable than the learners.

There was a noticeable convergence between the academics' perceptions of good teaching as being knowledgeable of the subject matter and a statement in the SECAT questionnaire (Statement 4: The lecturer was knowledgeable and resourceful). The assumption that the teacher who is on top of the discipline is likely to maximise student learning may explicate the apparent parity.

Secondly, good teaching was perceived to involve being knowledge about the learners (the demographics of the class) and the psychology of learning. A lecturer in science education elucidated:

> knowledge of the students − the type of people you are dealing with. Sometimes we find that the students come from different backgrounds. Because if you do not know by the way [that] if these students are like this, [then] this is how to handle the situation. It is from the psychology of learning that this comes through. So, you must have some [knowledge of] elements of psychology of learning. (LSE-1)

Knowledge of the students should be juxtaposed with knowledge of the psychology of learning. This in essence requires a teacher to keep abreast of the contemporary theories of teaching and learning in addition to having a solid knowledge of student approaches to learning. The SECAT questionnaire does not take this variant into account while the

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NCHE questionnaire is sensitive to it (Statement 7: The instructor/lecturer/professor is sensitive to individual differences).

The study participants considered knowledge of pedagogy (or how to teach) to be an indicator of good teaching. For example, a lecturer in science education explained:

> Good teaching could, in my view, [involve] the knowledgeability (sic) of the person who delivers. Are you knowledgeable? Do you know how to teach? And not all of us do by the way. I think the … majority of people who know how to teach are in [the College of] Education [and External Studies] because they are actually trained teachers. But you know that in many other Colleges, they (lecturers) are just bright people who were retained to become teachers but they don't even know how teach. Sometimes they are so bright that they don't [even] know how to pass on knowledge to others. (LSE-1)

A lecturer in dental surgery echoed the idea of knowledge of pedagogy:

> Good teaching … it should have the techniques because teaching has techniques; you should know the techniques of teaching.

This attests to the desirability of strengthening the pedagogical skills of university teachers since effective teaching hinges on, *inter alia*, knowing what to teach and how to teach it. Coincidentally, unlike the SECAT questionnaire, the NCHE questionnaire contains a statement that relates to this variant (Statement 4: The instructor/lecturer/ professor is familiar with the current methods of instruction). The absence of statements relating to knowledge of pedagogy in the SECAT questionnaire could be attributed to the notion that students are not reliable arbiters on the variant because they may not be knowledgeable about the current methods of instruction.

Being Student-Centred

The findings on this theme of good teaching nuance our understanding about whether the student or the teacher should be at the centre of the teaching process, the rationale for university educators to disengage from the transmission model of teaching, and the role of the teacher in a student-centred learning environment.

In the first place, as the name suggests, the study participants were of the view that the student, as the primary input in higher education, should be at the centre of teaching. By implication, the teacher should assume a peripheral status in the teaching and learning process. In recognition of the centrality of the student in the teaching and learning process, a lecturer in dental surgery asserted that with student-centred teaching, "the teacher is no longer at the centre; everything [that] you do revolves around the student" (LBDS-1). Furthermore, locating the student at the centre of the teaching process implies that the students should be engaged in teaching and learning. This hinges on the assumption that the learner brings some thinking into the teaching and learning process. A lecturer in music and drama illustrated:

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> I think good teaching would be that which…is based on participatory mechanisms or models. I am a strong believer of educationist, Paulo Freire, who believes that learners are not simply empty creatures but they also bring something to the learning process. So I believe in participatory models of teaching. (LMD-2)

The notion of students' participation in teaching and learning resonates with two statements (Statement 6: The instructor/lecturer/professor provided opportunities for student participation and involvement; and Statement 3: The lecturer encouraged class discussion and participation). Relatedly, a single statement in the NCHE questionnaire (Statement 11: The instructor/lecturer/professor lectures too often and does not evoke thought) attempts to unveil whether teaching is either teacher or student-centred. It can therefore be inferred that the three statements in both questionnaires are in sync with academics' perceptions of good teaching regarding this variant.

Secondly, student-centred learning, in addition to promoting deep learning (or understanding) as opposed to rote learning (or memorisation), is intended to transform students into independent or self-directed learners and thus reduce dependence on the teacher. A lecturer in dental surgery attested to this by asserting that student-centred learning is intended to "encourage [the] learners to own their own learning" (LBDS-2). Within this paradigm, the student ought to disengage from being an assimilator of knowledge, a common practice in teacher-centred instruction, and assume the role of a creator or constructor of his/her own knowledge. By implication, student engagement in teaching has the potency to develop lifelong learning competence − students who have learnt to learn. Lifelong learning is propelled by the idea that knowledge acquired during the university experience rapidly becomes obsolete as a result of rapid changes in the work environment and as such, the graduates should constantly learn. Finally, student engagement in the learning process develops critical thinking among students.

Finally, these findings enhance our understanding of the teacher's role in a student-centred learning environment. Ideally, the teacher should change perspective from being a disseminator of knowledge and assume the role of a facilitator or manager of the learning process. The role of facilitation of the learning process can be unravelled to include, *inter alia*, providing the learning experiences from while the learners construct their own knowledge and providing guidance during the sessions. Therefore, student-centred learning does not render the teacher helpless and powerless.

The findings suggest that perceptions of good teaching by a stakeholder group can be decoupled from practice. For example, while most academics perceived good teaching to be student-centred, some of them presided over teacher-centred classrooms. The gap between perception and practice has been occasioned by context – huge student numbers – as exemplified by the following excerpts:

> It (student-centred learning) would be good but it is appropriate in normal classes and if you are having a 250+ class, it becomes difficult. I think the ideals are good but putting them into practice is an anathema. (LDS-1)

Another lecturer echoed:

> Student-centred learning goes with so many factors and one of them is: how big is the class size? There is no way you are going to talk of 500 students in a certain class and you think you can ever use student-centred learning [approaches]. I don't know how that is possible. But, for my department, we are…lucky that the university has, for now, allowed us to have the [small] numbers that we have and we can be able to achieve that (student-centred learning). (LMD-2)

High student numbers coupled with inadequate teaching staff makes it difficult to apply student-centred approaches. This seems to have precipitated the dominance of the lecture method especially in humanities. The lecture method may stifle the development of generic skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, lifelong learning, teamwork and leadership which can be best developed through student-centred approaches.

Demonstrating good communication skills

The findings on this dimension attested to the fact that knowing what to teach and how to teach it are moderated by the teacher's ability to communicate well. Therefore, two academics construed good teaching as entailing the teacher's ability to pass on knowledge to the learners as well as being audible. A lecturer in arts education affirmed that being knowledgeable is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee effective teaching:

> [Being] knowledgeable alone is not enough. This person [the teacher] must be in position to pass on this knowledge to the trainees. (LAE-1)

To emphasise the importance of communication in teaching, a lecturer in dental surgery asked:

> If you are not a good communicator, then how can you teach? (LBDS-1)

The two questionnaires pay explicit attention to this dimension of good teaching. Specifically, the NCHE questionnaire contains three statements which relate to effective communication (Statement 5: The instructor/lecturer/professor communicates the subject matter clearly and explains assignments; Statement 12: The instructor/lecturer/ professor yells so hard that it is not possible to concentrate; and Statement 13: The instructor/lecturer/professor speaks so softly that I hardly hear a word). The SECAT questionnaire of Makerere University contains three statements which focus on this attribute of good teaching (Statement 1: The lecturer gave a clear description of course objectives; Statement 10: The lecturer was an audible and effective communicator; and Statement 11: The lecturer presented subject matter with clear explanations). Generally, there was a noticeable convergence between the statements in both questionnaires and how the two academics' perceived good teaching.

Undertaking Research-Based Teaching

The research-teaching nexus featured in the responses of two academics. On this dimension of good teaching, a lecturer in development studies said:

> I mean good teaching…in higher education, unlike in secondary education, you teach what you have produced; we (lecturers) [are supposed to] produce knowledge [through research]. First and foremost, you have to produce knowledge then to pass it on either in class or through publications. (LDS-1)

On the other hand, a lecturer in arts education opined that if one is to excel at teaching, he/she "should be involved in research" (LAE-2). The research-teaching nexus recognises that research is not an end in itself but an input into teaching. Therefore, the participants were of the view that an academic should participate in the traditional twin missions of the university: teaching (knowledge dissemination) and research (knowledge generation). A research-active teacher is likely to increase his/her stock of knowledge and is likely to be rated by learners as being sufficiently knowledgeable in the discipline. The third mission of the university – community service (knowledge application) – did not feature in the participants' responses. Failure by the participants to allude to the third mission – either explicitly or implicitly – solidifies the idea of lack of parity of esteem for the traditional missions of a university (teaching and research) and the third mission.

The attribute of research-teaching nexus does not feature in both SET instruments. The notion that students may not be privy to the publication history of an academic explicates the absence of statements in both questionnaires.

Demonstrating Professionalism

Professionalism is a key ingredient of any occupation and teaching is no exception. In relation to the teaching occupation, the personal lives of teachers should be beyond reproach because educators have a significant influence, either negatively or positively, on the learners. Two academics subscribed to this attribute of good teaching. A lecturer in nursing asserted:

> Since this (Nursing) is a people sort of profession, you must teach by example. You must be a role model. I think that is very important. So if we are talking about time keeping, you are there on time and they see you. Then the learners get accustomed that this is how things are done. (LDN-1)

This statement demonstrates that role-modelling by the teacher has an immense potential to develop generic skills in students, particularly time management and integrity. Finally, academics felt that good teaching calls for demarcating a clear boundary between

personal issues and professional issues. A lecturer in civil engineering hinted on this aspect:

> Students should not be penalised because they turned down one's sexual advances or because of other personal issues. (LCE-1)

A single statement relating to professionalism was explicit in the NCHE questionnaire (Statement 9: The instructor/lecturer/professor is dependable and commands respect) can be nested in the theme of professionalism.

Being Approachable

Two academics considered being approachable to be a characteristic of good teaching. A lecturer in civil engineering variously described an approachable teacher as someone who "should be able to relate well with students", is "not rude" and is "easily accessible by students" (LCE-2). Similarly, good teaching was perceived in terms of the teacher cultivating open, professional and beneficial relationships between him/her and the students. Such relationships enable students to consult the teacher and teachers to learn from students. A lecturer in arts education gave a vivid description of this aspect:

> And to me teaching is interactive; there has to be a social relationship between the stimulus who is me (the teacher) and the organism who is the student. So that interaction continues even outside the classroom such that whoever has not understood can come [and consult]; whoever has a new idea can still share it with me because as I teach, I am also growing. If I don't open that relationship, I may not benefit from the students. (LAE-3)

In view of the above, it can be argued that good teachers create a climate that allows students to freely interact with them and consult on academic and non-academic matters. A statement in the SECAT questionnaire (Statement 12: The lecturer had a cordial and professional relationship with students) can be accommodated in this dimension.

Being Organised

Three study participants, two of whom were lecturers in education, identified this theme of good teaching. For example, a lecturer in civil engineering said:

> One needs to prepare before going to class [to teach]. I have heard stories about professors who have been thrown out of class because they did not prepare. (LCE-1)

Therefore, teaching is much broader than what takes place on the stage (or delivery of content) and encompass pre-stage activities such as preparation. A lecturer in arts education alluded to time management as a variant of being organised:

> First of all, he or she [a good teacher] should be a good time manager. (LAE-2)

Good time management would involve conducting classes as scheduled, punctuality and ending sessions on time. Similarly, completing the syllabus was perceived to be an integral component of being organised:

> Good teaching to me is finishing a syllabus. It is a challenge for most people to finish the syllabus; they just look at the time and they say I have stopped where I have stopped because the semester has come to an end. (LAE-3)

Completing the syllabus has an indirect relationship with time management; therefore, a university teacher with poor time management skills may not complete the syllabus on time.

One statement in the SECAT questionnaire (Statement 7: The lecturer conducted lectures as scheduled and came to class prepared) is consistent with this perception of good teaching as being organised. Similarly, the NCHE questionnaire contains a statement which is in sync with this dimension of good teaching (Statement 2: The lecturer is always punctual and prepared). The aspect of finishing the syllabus features in the SECAT questionnaire (Statement 8: The lecturer completed the syllabus).

Discussion

This article provides useful insights into the attributes of good teaching from the lens of academics from a transitional economy. Academics consider good teaching as being knowledgeable; being student-centred; being able to communicate well; undertaking research-based teaching; demonstrating professionalism; being approachable; and being organised. With the exception of undertaking research-based teaching, all the attributes of good teaching by academics corroborate the extant literature (e.g. Chism 1999; Kuppinger and Jucks 2017; Ramsden 1992; Zerihun 2012). Meng and Onwuegbuzie (2015) posit that most SET questionnaires lean more towards university administrators' perceptions of good teaching. However, the case of Makerere University points to the contrary because perceptions of good teaching by academics mirror the items in the SET questionnaires. Several factors may explain the parity between academics' perceptions of teaching and the items in the SET questionnaires. The most plausible explanation is that both front-line academics and academic administrators could have been involved in the development of the questionnaires.

An interesting insight from the perceptions of good teaching is that most of them focus on what the teacher does as opposed to what the student does. Similarly, most perceptions of good teaching by academics focus on the means (the teaching process) rather than the end (learning) which can, in part, be reflected in the assessment scores and the pass rate. We need to put a caveat: assessment scores and the pass rate may be influenced by the nature of the assessment items. For example, simple item or items that require recall of information may induce a higher pass rate which may not be the case with demanding

assessment items. Nevertheless, the pass rate-explicit indicator learning ought to be among the dimensions of good teaching in higher education.

Surprisingly, most of the attributes of good teaching that academics singled out are in sync with statements relating to good teaching in the two SET questionnaires. Nevertheless, there are some statements in the two questionnaires which academics did not allude to in their perceptions of good teaching. For example, providing assessment feedback to students was not alluded to – either explicitly or implicitly – in the participants' responses. This came as a surprise since teaching and assessment are considered to be two sides of the same coin and both SET questionnaires have items on assessment.

Generally, being knowledgeable features in extant studies on academics' perceptions of good teaching. Nevertheless, being knowledgeable has, hitherto, been looked at predominantly in terms of subject knowledge. The two SET questionnaires accord unparalleled attention to knowledge of the subject matter. This is anchored in the presupposition that a teacher ought to be more knowledgeable than the student and the high regard accorded to knowledge of the discipline in recruitment and selection practices in universities. However, the article has revealed that knowledge of the subject is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee effective teaching. The article extends the perception of good teaching from knowledge of the subject matter to knowledge of other variants that transcend expertise in the discipline: being knowledgeable about pedagogy, the students, and the psychology of learning. The findings on being knowledgeable shed light on the likely content of pedagogical training for university lecturers. Pedagogical training for lecturers should incorporate elements, such as the psychology of learning, higher education pedagogy, and assessment in higher education. The findings also point to the imperative to teach university teachers how to teach.

A dimension of good teaching that has occasionally appeared in previous studies and in SET questionnaires is the research-teaching nexus. In the current study, two academics considered good teaching to be research-led and argued that good teaching in higher education includes producing knowledge through research and disseminating it to students through teaching. The academics' views on the teaching-research nexus mirrors the Humboldtian principle of unity of teaching and research; and the NCHE Quality Assurance Framework (2014, 7) which states: "What distinguishes a university educator from a schoolteacher is the production of knowledge through mainly, research. A schoolteacher transmits already known knowledge, while a university educator must constantly create the knowledge he/she delivers to students."

The idea of integrating research into teaching is consistent with Gibbs (2008, 18) who opines that research benefits teaching indirectly based on the premise that "deep understanding of the discipline's key concepts and approaches derived from being actively involved in disciplinary research translates into clear and profound explanations for students and insightful critiques of limitations in students' understanding". Gibb's view on the unity between teaching and research is echoed by Blackmore (2016, 179) when he asserts, "teaching is distinctive because it is research-informed, and of course

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there is a strong argument that staff who are up to date in their field and its research are likely to teach better".

The study has made two contributions to higher education policy and practice. Firstly, it provides data that can be used to develop a theoretical framework for good teaching and to develop and/or refine frameworks for assuring and measuring good teaching. Secondly, the seven themes of good teaching are a valuable resource for academics to reflect on, vis-à-vis their current viewpoints of good teaching, and work toward becoming good teachers with a view to improving their teaching and learning.

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