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Towards a Typology of Activities for Community Transformation: Case Study of Gulu University

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Abstract

More than ever, pressure is being brought to bear on universities to contribute directly to societal transformation. However, research about this phenomenon in Africa is rare. The objective of the study was to explore activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields in Gulu University, in northern Uganda. We sought to understand how community transformation activities manifest in disciplinary fields in Gulu University through a qualitative case study. Twelve senior faculty and three top managers constituted the sample. We collected data using in-depth interviews and documents check; and analysed thematically. Findings reveal inter- and intra-disciplinary asymmetry and variation; and functional asymmetry in activities for community transformation by

disciplinary fields. We conclude that the overall state of community transformation is fragile. A multi- and inter-disciplinary approach to activities for community transformation is proposed.

Key Words: *Community transformation, activities, disciplinary fields, Gulu University, Uganda*

1.0 Introduction

More than ever, pressure is being brought to bear on universities to contribute directly to societal development (Altbach, 2015; Boyer, 2016). Universities have three traditional roles: teaching, research and service (Chatterton, 2000; Kellogg Commission, 1999). They need to apply these to solve societal problems and transform communities. However, that is not always the case (Boyer, 2016; Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swason, 2016). According to Kasozi (2009), teaching activities have tended to be theoretical characterised by undesirably heavy workloads, while both research and service have been neglected by the professoriate in most universities, with hardly any efforts towards solving societies real needs. Raditloaneng (2015) notes that serving societal good had been relegated by universities to a secondary function. Whereas, Bisaso (2013) and Mugabi (2014) found some semblance of activities for community transformation in Makerere University, for Gulu University, the situation seems oblivious. This study sought to contribute to the discourse by exploring how activities for community transformation manifest in disciplinary fields using the case study design.

1.1 Background

The medieval universities provided education in the learned professions; with limited direct contributions to society (Altbach, 2015). Generally, they were classic ivory towers and enclaves of learning (Youtie & Shapira, 2008) and elitist without cognizance for community transformation (Altbach, 2000). Their ivory tower and citadel of learning mentality was anchored in the religious ideology that society was morally decayed therefore there was need to insulate students from societal evils in order to nurture them into morally upright citizens (Bruning, McGrew & Cooper, 2006). It seems apparent that, universities' orientation towards societal good varied across the globe over time.

In America, colleges and universities were deeply rooted in the community-oriented paradigm, as opposed to the ivory tower notion (Harkavy, Hartley, Hodges & Weeks, 2013). This was premised on the conception that if the university was to cause real societal change at all, it had to be locally embedded. Adapting from the European model, America became keen on using the unity between teaching and research for nation building, with major focus on agriculture and industry for societal transformation (Altbach, 2000). According to Fitzgerald et al. (2016), the 1800s and 1900s witnessed a strong move to use higher education as the engine for societal transformation evident in the Morrill Acts (1862 & 1890), the Hatch Act (1867); and the Smith-Lever Act (1914). Despite all these, pursuit of activities for community transformation by universities has been inconsistent (Boyer, 2016). Similar efforts have been made in Europe over the years (Youtie & Shapira, 2008). In Australia, the Regional Universities Network (RUN) report diverse activities aimed at socio-economic transformation of communities (RUN, 2013), while Wander, Hefferan and Panddenburg, (2015) report the case of the university of Sunshine Coast and its pivotal role in regional transformation of the Sunshine Coast. In Africa, universities started as ivory towers, mainly training personnel to fill vacancies in the civil service (Teferra, 2016), and not so much mindful of community-oriented activities.

Activities by disciplinary fields towards societal good manifest differently in different universities. Teaching activities tend to manifest in adult and continuing education (Rogers, 2014), basic literacy and computer literacy

training (Paton, Reith, Harden, Abaurre and Treblay, 2014), service learning (Kronick and Cunningham, 2013), health education (Peery, and Kolas, 2011) and course consulting (Cash, Bhadury, McCrickard, and Weeks, 2010). Research for community transformation mainly manifest in community-based research or participatory research, by students or by academic staff, while service activities have commonly featured in form of diagnostic, clinical, patient, expert testimony, legal services (Doberneck and Schweitzer, 2017); and board representation (Cash et al., 2010). Thus, we define disciplinary activities for community transformation to mean and include all activities performed by academic staff, students or both to solve societal problems rooted in the content and principles of their respective academic disciplines.

1.2 Institutional Context

Gulu University is located in Northern Uganda in Gulu Municipality (Gulu University, 2018; 2016). This region has been socio-economically depressed, a situation, made worse by the decades of the Lord Resistance Army war (Blattman, Fiala, and Martinez, 2012), hence, the need for concerted development efforts and reconstruction (John Paul II Pope Justice & Peace Centre, 2012). Gulu University is expected to contribute to these efforts through activities of its disciplinary fields. This has been emphasized by the founding Vice-Chancellor (Gulu University, 2006), and in official documents, however, activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields seem inconsistent. Over the years, the trend has been for some disciplinary fields to report some outreach activities, while others consistently do not (Gulu University, 2006). This led to questioning as to how activities for community transformation were manifesting in the different disciplinary fields since they were being portrayed as engines through which the university would contribute to transformation of the region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Gulu University's Strategic Plan 2009/10-2018/9, strategic issue No. 5.4 goal No. 1 stipulates that "transformation of communities be enhanced and sustained" (Gulu University, 2014, p.18). Realisation of such a goal would call for requisite activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields (Fusilier and Munro, 2013). However, there appears to be inconsistent evidence of manifestation of activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields in Gulu University. For instance, Kalule et al. (2016) report the Student-Centred Outreach Model as the major activity for community transformation in the Faculty of Agriculture in Gulu University. On the other hand, heads of some disciplinary departments have lamented the dearth of activities for community transformation in their respective units while others are consistently silent about it (Gulu University, 2014, 2013, 2006).

This is indicative of some activities for community transformation being pursued by disciplinary fields in Gulu University (Gulu University, 2016, 2015). However, apart from the rhetoric by the management, staff and students, and the study by Kalule et al. (2016) which report on one academic programme, no study seems to have given a comprehensive scholarly view of the phenomenon, such scenario makes community transformation activities by universities vague and incomprehensible (Rogers, 2014). Yet a university declaring community transformation is obliged to have and provide full and clear accountability on the nature of such activities to stakeholders (Doberneck, Glass & Schweitzer, 2010). Short of that, a university risks portraying itself as a seat of affluence in a community typified by squalor, hostility and gloom (Harkavay in Boyer, 2016) to the detriment of its relevance and legitimacy (Youtie & Saphira, 2008). The current study seeks to bridge this gap by delineating the existing types of activities for community transformation in the university using and exploratory case study.

2.0 Methods

We used the qualitative exploratory case study design. The choice of Gulu University was purposive because it stands for community transformation. The Biglan (1973) classification of academic disciplines was used to stratify academic disciplines in to hard applied academic disciplines (HAAD) and soft applied academic disciplines (SAAD). Applied academic disciplines are known to be more responsive to societal problems (Murfo and Langstone, 1981). We purposively selected fifteen participants from the hard applied, soft applied disciplinary fields; and top management. To ensure anonymity, we used alphanumeric pseudonyms with HAAD, SAAD, and TOPM for participants from the hard applied, soft applied disciplines and top management respectively and Arabic numerals to distinguish participants. We selected academic staffs from Faculty of Agriculture (FAE); Faculty of Business and Development Studies (FBDS); Faculty of Education and Humanities (FEH); Faculty of Medicine (FM); Faculty of Science (FS) and Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) based on seniority and perceived participation in activities for community transformation. We collected data using in-depth interviews and documents check, and analysed using thematic analysis.

3.0 Results

The findings revealed three major themes: teaching activities, service activities, and research activities.

3.1 Teaching Activities

We considered teaching activities as community transformative activities based on an agreed inclusion criteria, thus, student placement, trainings and public dialogue bore the semblance of teaching activities.

3.1.1 Student placement

The following data extracts were found to speak to student placement. HAAD1stated:

We usually attach our students to the farming community, I think it is in the third year. We distribute them to the farming community. The idea being they go and learn what the real world is out there and the farmers also learn from them and they are expected to write reports and we have some very good reports from the farming community around that our students are actually excellent and I think if you have time to talk to the Dean, he will enlighten you more on that especially this is under the Department of Rural Development. They have a number of students scattered around. These students go by themselves, they have bicycles, they know the directions and they spend a lot of time with the farmers. For example, if a farmer is growing banana, a student goes and guides him have a discussion with him. (HAAD1)

HAAD2 reported:

They are actually involved. They go out to the community for the student attachment and they work with the community. They are visibly there. They usually do this during the training in these recess terms. I don't know whether it is the same with education there, in education you just go for your normal school practice, that is not what we say. For us we go out there and work with the community to see how they are practicing certain technologies and then also let the students train them on certain aspects. (HAAD2)

Another participant HAAD4, reported:

Well, at the moment the most important activity that we do is the placement of the medical students in the community through which then staff also end up in the community through outreaches. They provide majorly primary health care services both curative and preventive. (HAAD4)

From the soft applied academic fields, a number of participants reported student placement. SAAD1, talked about student internship:

Then two, if I cite Education, uhm, it is by policy that second and third year students go for school practice which is a partial requirement for graduation, without which Ministry of Education and Sports does not register them as graduate teachers. So, as they move out for school practice, they don't only focus on teaching, they do a lot of other activities within the community and also, they sell the university out there. They do a lot of public relation depending on how they conduct themselves anyway. They reflect what our university is . . . Then, in Business, in second year we send our students for internship, It is mandatory. They move to organisations out there and practice. That is where we see students linking theory to practice in preparation for the world of work because we want what we have taught in class should translate into practical service delivery. (SAAD1)

A similar picture was painted by SAAD2:

In second year of Business Administration, these students take internship before their research and they are able to interact with the community or the places you would think are of interest such that should there be an opportunity they are able to take them, they are able to find out more about this organisation placement. Should they note that there are certain flaws with this kind of set up because sometime you have a lot of ambition that you expect vis-à-vis, the practical aspect or the actual situation on the ground. (SAAD2)

Another participant SAAD6, reasoned:

I think also faculties have community outreach arms, like your faculty has school practice, that is community outreach. Of course, there are many issues that the students encounter and also those who go to supervise students encounter in those community that is a way of reaching out. There is also Faculty of Business and Development Studies has internship programme for students of Development Studies. Those are the opportunities to reach out to the community. Faculty of Medicine places their students to practice in the hospitals thereby reaching to the community. (SAAD6)

SAAD4 disclaims school practice as form of community transformation activity:

. . . we really go for other things like following our students but not really to go out and solve directly community problems. Those kinds of activities are not there. Well of course there are some researches which are going on especially the Thrive research; Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies has been trying to go out there to find out certain things about conflict. But apart from those, there are no written down programmes designed in teaching or research to solve community specific problems. (SAAD4)

All the participants in the top management category gave views which spoke to student placement. TOPM2 had this to say:

You are educating people, you are going out to work in schools, to work in farms, to work in hospitals to me that is it, then we should look at community transformation in that sense. (TOPM2)

TOPM3 made submission towards student placement, thus:

So, we send students of agriculture to the field, we send doctors for internship and we send students of education for school practice. All these are aimed at community transformation. And all those that they do are grounded in the curriculum which are developed in the faculties. So, it is from those documents that community transformation is completely derived. (TOPM3)

TOPM4, seems a little more elaborate on the issue.

I think students are taken out into the community. In certain cases, they do sensitisation. In other cases, they do actual training like teaching. They teach the community, for instance in Agriculture, they show

them methods of farming. Because the university does not have a farm. It is model that is now being appreciated by others including RUFORUM which has given us the MasterCard project just because of our unique system we work directly with the farmers. Showing them how better, they can improve the farming methods, applying drugs, using certain technologies. And then in schools these students go to do actual teaching. Apart from teaching, they do administration in the schools. These are activities which the university is doing. Then, the staff follow and supervise even in Education; In Medicine, they go to the field like I saw the other day in Paico doing safe male medical circumcision, sensitizing the community, talking about hygiene. (TOPM4)

Thus, student placement in FAE bears the semblance of a community transformation activity as revealed by participants and documents check. For FM, both interviews and documents check revealed student placement (Gulu University, 2009). However, student placement in FE&H was not considered an activity for community transformation by the participants from that unit. However, checks performed on the academic programme document revealed that school practice was an sheer curricula practice (FE&H, 2017), and not necessarily a community oriented activity.

3.1.2 Training

Training emerged as a category of activities for community transformation reported by a number of participants as well as document checks.

HAAD1 responded:

I don't know whether, I have understood the question but training is just a small fraction but practically, for instance for the value chain in cassava production, we have machines for processing cassava. We give them the training and we give them the product. So, we practically go and give them the training and they produce the product. We have trained some few groups on how to make burns from composite cassava flour and wheat flour. We have trained them to make this instant cassava food that is popular West Africa, is called *gari*. We have trained them to make cakes from cassava, even this *kabalagala* from cassava and sweet bananas. (HAAD1)

Another participant HAAD3, had this to say:

So, the other aspect is that along the way we got a project which is actually in the Faculty of Medicine and one of the things we were doing was to build capacity to improve mental health literacy and skills. We train police officers, we train teachers, we train local leaders. It is a form of sensitization about mental health. That we did for about two years. (HAAD3)

Similarly, HAAD4 said:

But they also perform the preventive aspect through giving health education to the community as I earlier mentioned. Things like vaccination, immunisation and health education carried out by the student doctors fall within the preventive domain. For instance, you know malaria is a prevalent problem here, so the students create awareness about malaria in the community. So, how to prevent malaria such as the use of bed nets and so on. They give further talk to pregnant mothers who are considered vulnerable guiding them on how to feed, sleep and other important information they need in order to be safe. For the health and hygiene talk, we can go to a community and talk with them about how to dispose waste, for instance faeces of children. (HAAD4)

HAAD5 had this to say:

. . . we had a project in 2012 which was for youth empowerment where we were looking at senior six dropouts, that is youth who have completed senior six here in northern Uganda but they have failed to

advance to other levels. So, we targeted them and brought them here and trained them in something that we called the artisan courses. Yeah, someone who can do computing work for a living for instance, software a bit of repairs, installing software and things like that. (HAAD5)

HAAD6's views were quite in tandem with those of others:

. . . in our area if we are to see other services outside for example currently we always organise and train, for example we have health club, we have our pitch here, always we allow other members of the community to go and attend whether it being training or mainly training in the line of health club or your normal training you go and train . . . (HAAD6)

SAAD2 explained:

I have been able to train a group of different businesses. I was engaged by some NGO under the district NGO forum. I have been able to train some small business groups in book keeping. . . And then you train them on how to write business plans. Ah, how a good business can be crafted and formed. Then we are able to tell them how they do not need to aim to big at times when they are starting You start small and then you grow bigger and bigger. This organisation is able to make them follow actually ex-convicts who have already been released from prison and taken home such that they are able to live a life that is gainful and not be able to commit further crimes which could have them brought back to prison. (SAAD2)

SAAD5, explicated:

For peace education we thought what was more feasible was doing it through the radio. So, we go to the radio with our topics that we have chosen on peace education. We go to the radio, involve some of our students and our staffs. Some of them would talk, then we open our call-in programme, people call in, ask questions then we get back to them. So, the engagement was mostly over the radio. But also we had some workshops with teachers and one was in Amuru. We had some workshops with Karimojong community combined with Acholi people in Kitgum. (SAAD5)

SAAD6 also believed training was an activity for community transformation:

Okay, another activity I was involved in was peace education in secondary schools-stop caning in schools, and this one we focused on Gulu Army secondary School because there was a high prevalence of caning due to its military mentality being a military oriented school. So, we trained the teachers on how to make the classes more peaceful and not use violence within the classroom. (SAAD6)

These voices were supported by documents (Gulu University, 2014 & 2009). FM organised and implemented trainings in areas of trauma care; and infection control procedures to health care providers from eight hospitals within the region (Gulu University, 2013; 2011). FS offered short courses in Computer Applications. FAE among others carried out sensitisation on post-harvest management and strengthening value chains for several crops in Paicho, Lakwana, Bobi, Bungatira and Patiko (Gulu University, 2016).

3.1.3 Public dialogue

Public dialogue was reported in by participants from IPSS only. SAAD5 stated:

. . . for us in the institute we have decided to go through projects. And we had a very vibrant one which is called (silence) CORPS, Community Outreach Peace Project which was very active between 2008 to 2010. So, we ... he got the sponsorship, after writing that grant proposal and there are a number of activities that we proposed: public dialogue on peace issues, community peace education through the radio and then engaging the public in "wang-oo" kind of storytelling, where we engage the people to tell us oral history

any other thing that we think is important in peace issues, then we also have peace movies where we involve some university students . . . (SAAD5)

SAAD6 argued:

As an academic staff I have been involved, I have been doing a lot of dialogues in the Main Hall for ending violence against women and girls and this one has been funded by UN-Women and another organization called CDF, (Communications Development Foundation, Uganda). Recently we had a dialogue, beginning of October, yes. And also, we have these running messages on radios, the short clips about ending violence against women and girls. (SAAD6)

3.2 Research Activities

Research activities were qualified as community oriented when they explicitly or implicitly met all or most of the following conditions (a) were occasioned by an identified community problem (b) involvement or participation of the community (c) sharing results with the community (d) devising ways of how to put results to community use. Thus: (a) students research and (b) research by academic staff.

3.2.1 Student Research

Indeed, overwhelming majority of participants from the hard-applied disciplinary field reported research by students as an activity for community transformation. HAAD1 put it:

And also, they have been doing some little bit of research on animal feeds like you know the local chicken go and start eating fresh cassava and so on and the student will say look perhaps you need to do A, B, C, D so that the health status of the of the feed is improved. So, for Agriculture as far as the extension part is concerned, it is doing very well. (HAAD1)

HAAD2, provided robust views:

We do that through research, for example most of our researches are done in the community. For example, if you want to deal with live stock, the initial planning of the research process is done with the community to see where the gap is and then how they can participate in the research process and things like that. We are not doing what other universities used to do like you work in your station produce a technology and then try it out there. No, we plan together with the farmer on something that we want to test, they also participate in testing. For example, recently the students, they have already graduated but my masters students worked directly with the community to test methods of feeding poultry and they also tested methods of management and the famers participated. (HAAD2)

HAAD3 made a similar submission about research:

We did something on the nodding syndrome we did something for children with nodding syndrome, the other was HIV. That is research that I do as member of the department but of course the credit goes to the department. . . . I will concentrate on the clinic for now. But of course, there is also research with a small "r", meaning that students come around do research within the hospital within the clinic, some of that have been part of my PhD work. So, this is research with a small r you collect data based on the patients you are seeing, that is very useful in influencing clinical care. I think the biggest research I have been able to do is the one where the things I have learnt overtime I have taught others. (HAAD3)

Another participant, HAAD6 fronted research as an activity they have done before and continue to do in their efforts to help the community:

Also, there is a study that is completed and one is on-going. The one that has been completed was on how to improve on the health of the community through exercise where we were giving exercise to persons

whom we feel or whom we have identified as having problem with their sugar level. Also, we have one being done as you are aware currently the problem is on how we feed so we are also conducting research on the nutritional values of the local dishes we have. How can we make the community use mainly local dishes against the nutritional values. (HAAD6)

From the soft applied academic disciplines, student research was reported as community oriented. SAAD1 elaborately puts it although not with vivid indication of community focus but more of curricular focus:

Then, thirdly, as part of policy issue aimed at transforming the community, we have our students who normally go out to the community to do their research. It is mandatory that every third-year student depending on the course. Others can be four likes in Agriculture, five in Medicine while Humanities have programmes which take three years. So, research project is a core course for all the students in this university which carries a higher credit unit being a core course unit. For instance, in Medicine, we see students being attached to medical facilities where they render service for a specified period of time, they are supervised. (SAAD1)

SAAD2 cites research as an activity for community transformation, albeit with a weak tone:

In second year of Business Administration, these students go say to do their research, rather they take internship before their research and they are able to interact with the community or the places you would think are of interest such that should there be an opportunity they able to take them. (SAAD2)

SAAD5 viewed student research as an activity for community transformation as well:

We have four PhD students, one is more focused on gender and land issues in Pader, another one is focusing on the role of traditional leaders in handling land conflict in Agago, another one is investigating how people look for different legal fora to sort their conflicts in Amuru, then another one is looking at the issue of the generational conflict between the youth and the older generation. All those kinds of things will be engaged in some kind of dissemination workshop and then we discuss also how to help them in those kinds of meetings. (SAAD5)

Drawing from these participants, it apparent that student research in both the soft applied and hard applied academic disciplines qualify as activities for community transformation based on their purpose, process and product.

3.2.2 Research by Academic Staff

Research by academic staff was as well reported. In the hard-applied field, one participant stated: "we did something on the nodding syndrome", "we did something for children with nodding syndrome, the other was HIV" (HAAD3). The participant also reveals that he has been doing research on his day-to-day service and patients which he has packaged to influence clinical care by him and other practitioners. HAAD6 reported that research was being pursued in his department towards helping the community. One had been concluded with positive results and another one was being carried out on nutritional values of local foods, so that the community may be encouraged to eat these local foods based on their nutritional benefits. Document checks revealed a number of researches pursued individually, as a department and faculties of Agriculture, Medicine, and Science (Gulu University, 2016; 2014).

From the soft applied academic disciplines, one participant reported having done research on government livelihood projects in northern Uganda and indeed shared the findings with stakeholders and development partners within the region (SAAD1). Another one, indicated that in his unit they were pursuing research which focuses on land issues. The participant pointed strongly that they "don't just leave our findings on the desk"

(SAAD5). The participant cited cases of the human-animal conflict in Purongo and land-issues in Karamoja whose results were disseminated in workshops. This was corroborated by document checks (Gulu University, 2016; 2014). The institute has stipulated a clear community-oriented research agenda under five themes: land and land conflict; governing post armed conflict transition; strategic peace building; water governance in post war transitional society and sexual gender-based violence (Gulu University, 2016). The research themes were aligned to the post war context in northern Uganda.

One academic unit, Faculty of Education and Humanities sticks out without community-oriented research by academic staff. SAAD3 from the faculty, reported that whatever research they carried out in the unit were meant for an exclusive purpose of partial fulfilment of academic awards at Masters or PhD levels and findings were never shared for community benefits. Indeed, documents checks affirmed the submission by SAAD3 (Gulu University, 2016; 2014).

3.3 Service Activities

Activities were qualified as service activities on condition based on agreeable inclusion criteria vetted by the researchers. Thus, advocacy, mentorship, diagnostic, clinical, and public health services qualified as service activities by disciplinary fields.

3.3.1 Advocacy Services

Advocacy activity was reported by one participant, SAAD6, from soft applied disciplinary field. The participant reported "I do advocacy on a lot of issues", "right now I do advocacy on land rights"; "right now I am on a what's up group, it is called making happiness not violence, so we share those experiences and also give feedback to each other". "I have done work also with the police on issues of not-revictimizing anybody who comes to report violence". "Up to the national level working with women on these very sensitive issues: land rights, domestic violence . . .". This is in line with the national tone, for instance the National Development Plans front advocacy as a key activity for influencing decisions in many spheres of life as the country aspires to achieve transformation (Republic of Uganda, 2014 & 2010). We note that advocacy manifested in one soft applied disciplinary field in the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies only.

3.3.2 Mentorship Services

Mentorship was also reported. In-vivo codes such as: "talk to the girls" "mentor girls to stay in school", "girls to remain in school", "they have to see a role model" (SAAD6), were noted. The participant explicated that she made it routine, at least weekly and sometimes involved the District Gender Officer. A similar activity was pursued in another soft academic discipline as reported by SAAD1, thus "we could sacrifice and reach out to secondary schools to encourage girls to study". So, "we could liaise with the headteachers and we talk to the girls as role models so that they are encouraged" (SAAD1). Thus, mentorship was exclusive to the soft applied discipline, and interestingly in relation to the girl child.

3.3.3 Diagnostic Services

Only participants from the hard-applied domain reported some semblance of diagnostic services related to examining, investigating or checking patients for diseases and health conditions. Moreover, their views culminated into in-vivo codes of considerable salience. Thus: HAAD3 opened up with a general statement "I think I spend 80% of my time doing community service and about 20% of my time is spent on teaching" (HAAD3). Then explicated: "the usual services", "I offer my expertise", "I make myself available as, well, I don't

want to call myself a specialist, although people say I am" (HAAD3). "I offer myself as someone who is available to train, to teach, to examine, to diagnose. I do this most of the time" (HAAD). HAAD4 reported views leading to codes which speak to the diagnostic category. For instance, "They provide majorly primary health care services both curative and preventive". "the students do what we call community diagnosis" "students perform diagnosis and treatment of people who are sick or have diseases of some sort". Therefore, diagnostic services were exclusive to the hard-applied disciplines and Faculty of Medicine in particular.

3.3.4 Clinical Services

One participant explained: "I offer my expertise", "I make myself available" . . . and treat" "I wear the hat of a psychiatrist" "offering clinical work"; "It is a Monday to Friday clinic" (HAAD3). From HAAD4 the following codes "they also do the preventive aspect" "curative" "student doctors treat a patient", "both curative and preventive medicine" "treating". TOPM4 said this in respect to the medical students "actual treatment of diseases such as giving injections", "medicines in form of syrup, tablets", "those that are smeared on the body", "even, also diseases of life style". Clinical services were exclusive to the hard-applied domain and apparently in one academic unit as well.

3.3.5 Public Health Services

Three participants reported public health services in Medicine, a hard-applied academic discipline. Codes included: "sanitation in the community", "health talks", "we also go for school health" "immunisation", "de-worming" and "giving vitamin A supplements". "giving health education to the community" "vaccination", "immunisation" and "health education" (HAAD4). Further codes included: "the students create awareness about malaria in the community". "how to prevent malaria" "talk to pregnant mothers who are considered vulnerable guiding them on how to feed, sleep and other important information they need in order to be safe". "health and hygiene talk". "disposal of children's waste". "guide them to have hand washing facility" (HAAD4). From TOPM4 the following in-vivo codes were identified: "in Medicine, they go to the field like I saw the other day in Paico, doing safe male medical circumcision", "sensitizing the community", "talking about hygiene".

From the analysis, a typology of activities for community transformation in Gulu University emerged (See Table 1).

Table 1: Typology of activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields and units in Gulu University

Theme	Category	Areas/Manifestation	Disciplinary Fields		Academic Units
			SAAD	HAAD	
Service Activities	Advocacy Services	(a) Land rights (b) Gender-based violence (c) Girl-child education	*		IPSS
	Mentorship Services	(a) Girl-child education (b) Girl-child sexual health (c) Career-subject choices	*		FBDS, IPSS
	Diagnostic Services	(a) Examination of patients		*	FM
	Clinical Services	(c) Treatment of patients		*	FM
	Public Health Services	(a) Information sharing on disease prevention, water, health and sanitation (b) Appropriation of medical skills for prevention of diseases such as vaccinations.		*	FM
	Research Activities	By Student (a) Research carried out by students for professional formation and intended direct		*	F AE, FM, FS

		community benefits		
Teaching Activities	By Academic Staff	(a) Research carried out by academic staff with intended direct community participation and benefits	*	* FAE, FM, FS; FBDS, IPSS
	Student Placement	(a) Internship (b) Field attachment		* FAE, FM
	Training	(a) Skills trainings directly to beneficiary communities (farmers, youth, athletes) (b) Skills trainings to practitioners (teachers, medical workers, social workers) (b) Sensitisation workshops	*	* FAE, FM, FS; FBDS, IPSS
	Public Dialogue	(a) Debates (b) Story Telling (c) Lectures	*	IPSS

Note: Asterisk (*) denotes academic discipline and unit in which activity category was/were reported by participants.

Table 1 reveals a typology of activities for community transformation that manifested in Gulu University, developed based on data obtained from interviews and document checks. We performed thematic analysis starting with transcription, reading through the data set, identifying in-vivo codes and developing categories based on similarities and dissimilarities, and ultimately developing the three themes. We used agreed inclusion criteria. Some activities reported by participants as community oriented were dropped upon further scrutiny.

Using Table 1, we compared the salience of the three themes; manifestation of activities for community transformation between the hard applied and soft applied disciplinary fields and among the academic units. Proliferation or scarceness of categories of activities were used as measure for this qualitative comparison. The comparison revealed four key issues. First, the service function is the most dominant function, followed by the teaching function and research. Although it was the most popular function, service activities only featured in two academic units, Faculty of Medicine and Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies. Second, the hard-applied disciplinary domain took the lead in pursuing community transformation activities. Faculty of Medicine and Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies took the lead among the hard applied and soft applied units respectively. Third, Faculty of Science and Faculty of Education and Humanities least pursued activities for community transformation among the hard applied and soft applied disciplines respectively. Although some participants in units other than Faculty of Education and Humanities suggested school practice as a form of community-oriented activity, participants from the faculty did not regard it as one, and the academic programmes for arts, science and business education did not espouse any community-oriented purpose in school practice. Fourth, the scarceness of community-oriented activities in some faculty was interpreted to mean a fragile state of activities for community-oriented activities in the university.

4.0 Discussion

The current study revealed that some academic disciplines had higher affinity to pursue community transformation activities. The findings mirror those by Doberneck and Schweitzer (2017) who found that the hard disciplines generally had a high affinity to pursue community related activities than the soft disciplines. The findings further support those by Doberneck and Schweitzer (2017) in that within the hard-applied domain there was further imbalance in the intensity and degree of pursuit of community-oriented activities, with the life disciplines being more active than the non-life disciplines. This is also in tandem with findings by Glass et al. (2011) that members from the hard-applied disciplinary fields tended to pursue many more community-oriented activities but even then, other disciplines had higher affinity than others to carry out community-oriented

activities. We observe that, it was explicit in the voices of some participants that the nature of their disciplines had a bearing on their willingness to pursue community-oriented activities as much as the rhetoric for community transformation was somewhat compelling and inspiring. Thus, disciplinary attributes may be implicated for the disciplinary imbalance. Besides, other factors such as institutional leadership and management within different disciplinary units could have accounted to some extent for the disciplinary imbalance in activities for community transformation. In Gulu University, a number of community related projects are won by some academic units and a few/none by others. Such could most likely be attributable to the kind of leadership in terms of initiative, pro-activeness, inspiration and team work. Indeed, the units whose disciplines pursued more activities for community transformation attributed their success to their ability to write winning proposals. While other members intimated that the nature of their disciplines dictated that they work directly with the communities. This was more re-echoed by participants from the Faculty of Agriculture.

Variation in activities for community transformation was apparent. This is in tandem with previous studies such as Doberneck and Schweitzer (2017) and Glass, Doberneck, and Schweitzer (2011), who found certain categories or sub-types of community-oriented activities idiosyncratic to certain academic disciplines. This reveals that disciplinary dictates/normative forces could have been at play within academic disciplines. However, this was surprising because the current discourse is moving away from mono-disciplinarity to multi-disciplinarity and inter-disciplinarity. Through multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches, disciplinary variation in community transformation activities could have possibly not been as obvious as revealed. Disciplinary deficiencies could have been offset, thereby allowing academic disciplines to contribute to community transformation in a more synergistic manner.

The apparent fragile state of activities for community transformation is related to findings by Etomaru (2017) that a nascent state of knowledge translation existed at Makerere University despite its avowed research-led stance. This could be explained by absence of institutional policy and structures, as empirically revealed in this study. This further, concurs with Etomaru who found institutional environmental factors disenabling in respect to practices of knowledge translation. Thus, absence of mainstream institutional policy for community transformation could have deprived members of disciplinary fields of the sense of direction, zeal and incentives that they needed to pursue activities for community transformation in a vigorous and more robust way like they do in respect to teaching which has well defined academic programmes, courses and course loads, designated teaching hours, examination rules and generally mainstream policies. Universities with robust community transformation activities normally have distinctive support and structures, as seen in Dan (2012), Chung et al (2016) and Raditloaneng (2015) where such support more than anything helps to boost activities for community transformation.

4.1 Conclusion

We conclude that there is inter and intra-disciplinary and functional asymmetry, interdisciplinary variation and an overall fragile state of activities for community transformation by disciplinary fields in Gulu University. Whereas the applied academic disciplinary fields pursued more of service activities, the soft applied academic disciplines pursued less of service activities. Teaching activities in the soft applied academic disciplines did not embed community transformation purpose and activities, while those in the hard applied did. As for the functional asymmetry, the service function is most pursued, followed by teaching and research function. Certain activities were indeed idiosyncratic to particular academic disciplines, thus a variation. There is an overall fragile state of community transformation activities in Gulu University.

Thus, the university management should streamline activities for community transformation in all academic programmes. Such activities should contribute directly to community transformation. This is based on finding that some disciplinary units used student placement for sheer academic motive without community transformation in mind. Disciplinary fields/academic disciplines should adopt an inter- and multi-disciplinary approach to community transformation activities. This follows from the finding that, there was inter and intra-disciplinary imbalance in community transformation activities. It is hoped that such disciplinary imbalance within and between disciplinary fields may be mitigated in a more synergistic inter and multi-disciplinary approach.

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