Report of the
9th Africana Post-Graduate Academy
(APGA)

The 9th Africana Post Graduate Academy (APGA) was held on 3rd May 2018 at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Pretoria Main Campus. The programme started at 8.30 AM with the introduction of resource faculties by TUT's Postgraduate Research Support Officer Ms Naledi Nthite and Deputy Director, Dr Lawrence Sithole (Research and Innovation, TUT). The title of the academy research training was "High Quality Education and Research for Creative, Inventive, Innovative and Entrepreneurial Post-Graduates in Africa." TUT's Research and Innovation Directorate assisted in the organisation of the workshop leading to a day that was enriching in knowledge and learning exchange.

A total of 64 students from various faculties at TUT attended the research training day and these included those at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as postdoctoral fellows at TUT. In addition, a few students from other universities also attended. Furthermore, professors from various academic fields, with some coming from TUT, the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) and Magansustu University of Technology (MUT) engaged the emerging scholars that attended.

The program started with the opening remarks by Prof. Mammo Muchie. In his introductory remarks, Prof Muchie stressed the needs of the postgraduate academy to produce high quality Master's and Doctoral graduates based on finding research questions that capacitate the production of quality thesis and patents to bring practical solutions to the persistent numerous problems in Africa and the rest of the world. He also further emphasized the need to run the APGA on a regular basis to create regular interactions amongst post-graduate students, post-docs and professors to remove any supervision deficits that many students experience in their learning and research journey. The more academic exchanges among the doctoral students and professorial mentors, the easier it will be for the void of research guidance to be filled.

Prof. Muchie in his lecture demonstrated the paradigm shift in present day research and the way to excel and produce better quality thesis. There is a need in Africa to make a major change in the current thought-patterns — a radical change from remaining trapped in copying when African learners and researchers should be creating by replacing the former way of thinking or organizing with a radically different way of thinking or organizing. The existing paradigm of education and research have to change to produce graduates that create, invent, innovate, and are entrepreneurial, not job seekers, but those that are enabled to be job creators and problem solvers. Paradigm shift to include 'the excluded' rich African rooted knowledge is urgently needed.

Prof Kedibone Phago from MUT in Durban presented on different aspects of data analysis techniques for qualitative research. He explained the way and the positive impact of data analysis on qualitative research. The emphasis was placed understanding ontological and methodological leanings of the research in making choices regarding the nature of the problem for the study. He further mentioned that qualitative research study components should clearly talk to each other from problem statement up to the interview schedule and that such a method of data collection, along with data analysis should be properly aligned.

Prof Sunday Ojo from the department of ICT in TUT talked about the need and the way of research writing with impact using different channels. He indicated that research writing depends on the targeted audience. He went on to add that the researcher should be hooked with the short, clean and clear research questions, problem statement and hypothesis formulations. He encouraged full disclosure of the research

information and recommended the importance of presentation of the paper and the proper selection of the journal.

Prof Felix Dapare Dakora from TUT's Faculty of Science spoke on a researcher's problems and the way to resolve different issues. He dealt with numerous problems researchers face in their daily lives; for example, relationship with supervisor, personal and family issues and so on. His clear and frank advice was very revealing by taking specific cases and examples on how to manage with a positive spirit all academic challenges however difficult by all aspiring master's and doctoral students.

Ms Lufuno Sinthumule, a Patent Practitioner from TUT, discussed various Intellectual Property related issues raised from the university research. She further suggested ways to commercialize the research through industry and the role of the university in the commercialization process.

Prof. Zeleke Worku dealt with quantitative research methodology and the various issues of data collection, organization and interpretation. Several statistical methods, the qualitative and quantitative techniques and their advantages and disadvantages were dealt by using various examples. He also provided guidance on how to choose an appropriate statistical method for one's research. He indicated that the choice of a particular statistical package would not affect the results. He produced a number of very practical cases that also engaged the students inspiring them to ask many questions.

Dr. Diran Soumonni from WITS business school focused on the varied ways of selecting, applying and using different methodologies and how to address the research value chain from selecting problem to conclusion.

Finally, there was a question and answer session moderated by the program director Dr. Sithole. He provoked some lively interactions between the students and the panel members. There were many practical issues raised from the lecture sessions, which students face during their research. The presenters tried to solve the issues raised by the participants amicably on case-to-case basis. In the end, the program ended with the concluding remarks and vote of thanks by the programme director.

Panel Discussion

Some of the participants in the Academy

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