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**Author**

MAPESELA, Mabokang

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H. R. Hay

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**Abstract**

This article provides a descriptive theoretical analysis of the most important higher education policies and initiatives which were developed by the democratically elected government of South Africa after 1994 to transform the South African higher education system. The article sheds light on the rationale for the policies under scrutiny; how they take cognisance of academics' diverse needs; as well as how their implementation is bound to affect academics and possibly influence job satisfaction. The article argues that the South African higher education fraternity, currently overwhelmed by mammoth change initiatives, is simultaneously faced with two processes, namely transforming the socio-political state of the country, as well as transformation to respond to national higher education policy imperatives. Seemingly South African policy-makers, in their attempts to break away from the past, are oblivious of the realities of thorough policy implementation and do not take the voluminous nature of policies into consideration as an inhibiting factor. Undoubtedly this could have adverse

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effects for academic staff who are expected to propel change and transformation, but who are oftentimes confronted with the complexities of implementation which entail among others, dealing with cumbersome procedures, processes, bureaucratic structures as well as increasing workloads.  
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