STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES OF CONTEXTUAL ENGAGEMENT OF PhD PROGRAMS AT SELECT EVANGELICAL SEMINARIES IN THE MAJORITY WORLD

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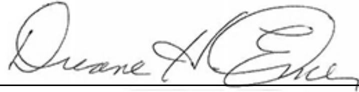

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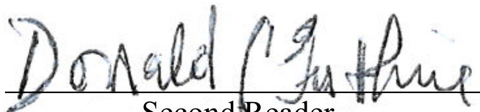

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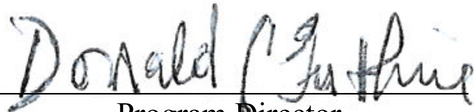

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ABSTRACT

This research utilized qualitative methods to explore how students and faculty perceive the contextual engagement of the PhD program at three select theological institutions in the Majority World. This research has value, as such engagement is both an explicit and implicit value of doctoral programs located in the Majority World. Over the last decade, the number of PhD programs established to serve the church in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East and the number of students in them has risen rapidly. The research is descriptive in nature and not an attempt to evaluate the level of success or merit of such programs. Rather, it assumed that each program engages its context and sought to identify common themes as well as areas of convergence and divergence as indicated by faculty and student stakeholders.

The study consisted of thirty-six interviews. Sets of six faulty members and six doctoral students at each of three seminaries located in the Majority World were asked to share from their experiences in the doctoral program. The participating schools were Africa International University in Nairobi, Kenya; South Asian Institute for Advanced Christian Studies in Bangalore, India and Seminario Teológico Centroamericano, Guatemala City, Guatemala. The study asked participants to describe how the PhD program engages the context including classroom teaching and learning tasks, course outputs, including dissertations, and other non-formal aspects of the doctoral experience.

The findings revealed three primary categories of contextual engagement described by the faculty and students across the three contexts. The participants first described how the intentional design of the programs including explicit and implicit components of the curriculum engage the context. Secondly, students and faculty addressed issues of worldview and cultural values. Contextual insiders provide a depth of understanding not available outside of the context. Intracultural critique ensures contextually engaged aspects are improved through peer interactions. Finally, student and faculty participants found adult learning practices very helpful to overcome conditioned dependency on traditional education models. Participants perceived these practices as particularly helpful for engaging the local context.

Dedicated to those who have pioneered the way
in Majority World theological education.

Your work has brought forth fruit
the impact of which will only be
known in the decades to come

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIU	Africa International University
CID	Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate
DET	PhD en Educación Teológica
D.Min.	Doctor of Ministry
DMiss	Doctor of Missiology
EdD	Educational Doctorate
ICETE	International Council for Evangelical Theological Education
M.A.	Master's of Arts
MDiv	Master of Divinity
NEGST	Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology
PDP	Pre-doctoral Program
PRODOLA	Latin American Doctoral Program in Theology
SAIACS	South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies
SETECA	Seminario Teológico Centroamericano

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Research Concern

The purpose of this research is to better understand stakeholder perceptions of the contextual nature of select evangelical PhD programs in the Majority World. The research will explore how these PhD programs reflect cultural and contextual values and dynamics. In a sense, the research will explore what makes a doctoral program located in Africa, Asia or Latin America uniquely "African," "Asian," or "Latin American." It examines how students and faculty, including administration, perceive their programs to uniquely reflect and address the contextual realities where they are located.

This research comes at a unique moment in the growth of the church and the expansion of evangelical theological education. Over the last decade, the global church has come to recognize the shift of the center of world Christianity from the West to the regions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; collectively referred to as the Majority World (Jenkins 2002, Robert 2000, Sanneh 2009) As the church has grown in the Majority World, so have the seminaries and Bible schools tasked to train pastors and leaders for these regions, albeit at a much slower rate (Bowers 2007). As the number of schools has increased, so too has the level of schooling. Certificate and bachelor's degrees led to master level training, and eventually to the doctoral programs that now exist in each of these regions. The Majority

World has now clearly entered the third stage of development in evangelical post-secondary education (Cunningham 2007).

Research Context

Since 1996, at least nineteen PhD programs have developed at evangelical schools located in the Majority World. The vast majority of these have launched since 2003 (see Appendix 4 for a list of programs). Many factors have shaped each of these new PhD programs including a desire to meet gaps perceived in Western based training (Cunningham 2007, Ho 2009, Starcher 2004b, Van Der Walt 2002). The growth of the church has led to a great need to develop faculty members who will meet the training needs of the rapidly growing church. Programs located in the Majority World directly address issues of achievability related to time, travel and expense for studies (Cunningham 2007, Starcher and Stick 2003).

In addition to practical considerations, these programs have arisen out of and have a particular concern for their context. These contextual programs represent a maturation of Majority World Theological education. Theological education in the Majority World has moved from a largely missionary endeavor, to a point where the leaders and programs are increasingly gaining voice in the global theological discourse. These new programs respond to critiques of the well-documented connection between higher education and its missionary and colonial heritage (Caldwell 2010, Crossley and Tikly 2004, Hiebert 1987, Ho 2009, Poerwowidagdo 2003, Sall and Ndjaye 2007, Van Der Walt 2002). They represent an opportunity to develop a new cadre of theological thought leaders, developed within their

home contexts, addressing issues that hold particular contextual relevance, and eroding the "subtle colonialism" that all good training must be done in the West (Caldwell 2010, 33).

Contextual engagement means more than geographic location. Higgs states that for a program to be African, it must do more than take place on African soil; rather an African program "directs its attention to issues, concerns and theoretical or conceptual underpinnings of African culture" (Higgs 2008, 448). In a similar fashion, Caldwell adds that Asian programs require more than location and the ethnic make up of faculty, but must address Asian issues and engage Asian pedagogies (2010, 32).

During this time, a number of seminaries have intentionally created doctoral programs with an express purpose to meet needs that differ from the West (Starcher 2004a). The program at Africa International University (formerly Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology) demonstrates a measured, deliberate approach utilizing the research of Starcher and others to determine feasibility and needs.[1] It is a doctoral program expressly designed to "meet the needs of Africa and the African church" (Starcher 2003, 194). Others express similar missions in the language of contextual relevance (South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies) or the preparation of leaders directly for their regional context (Central American Theological Seminary). Majority World doctoral programs meet a need to train faculty who can meet demands different than those encountered – or prepared for – by graduate studies in the West (Starcher and Stick 2005, Poerwowidagdo 2003).

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[1] Dr. Richard Starcher served as a missionary in Africa for 20 years, including 8 years as a resident faculty member and administrator at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. His dissertation research helped in the development of the current PhD program at NEGST, a school of Africa International University.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to explore ways in which the newly developed doctoral programs at specific evangelical seminaries in the Majority World engage their contexts. Each of these programs is relatively new and emerging in a time of initial formation of doctoral studies at evangelical institutions in the Majority World. The research will provide better understanding in how current students and faculty members perceive the doctoral process and research output serve the church as it addresses the societal and cultural realities of their respective contexts.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide the research into the contextual nature of these newly developed PhD programs.

RQ1: How do students in evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World describe the contextual engagement within their programs?

RQ 2: How do professors teaching in Majority World doctoral programs describe the contextual engagement within the doctoral program?

RQ 3: What insights, if any, do the program outputs offer with regard to the contextualization of the program?

Definition of Terms

Majority World. Majority World refers to the regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The researcher uses this term as it has preference over historic terms such as “Third World” or “Developing World” which may carry a pejorative connotation. Directional terms such as “West” and “Global South” may also be used, but the terms more generally describe differences in resources and influence as opposed to geography. For example, Brazil is clearly in the Western hemisphere but not generally considered “the West.” Australia is in the southern hemisphere, but is more often associated with the resources and power dynamics found in Europe and North America. Majority World is a positive term that reflects the reality of both the population in general and Christians in particular, as the majority of Christians now live in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Contextual Programs. For a Majority World based theological education program to be contextual, it must be driven by the needs and realities of making the gospel relevant in the respective cultural and existential contexts (Hesselgrave and Rommen 2000). These programs are not only located in the Majority World, but are intended to develop leaders for the context, as well as theologically address issues directly related to the context.

Doctoral program. In this paper, the term doctoral program will refer to the Doctor of Philosophy degree, or PhD. For the purpose of this paper, the term doctoral program will refer exclusively to the research doctorate degree, to the exclusion of the professional doctorate (D.Min, D.Miss. Ed.D. etc). While valuable, these degrees accomplish a different purpose than the PhD and are available more broadly than the PhD.

Stakeholders. Stakeholders are generally defined as those who will be affected by or interested in the findings of a research study (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007). For the purposes of this study, stakeholders will refer exclusively to students and faculty (including some who also hold administrative positions) in the PhD program.

Program Outputs. For the purposes of this paper, program outputs refer to any educational product produced within the PhD program including but not limited to course papers, comprehensive exams, and doctoral dissertations.[2]

Participating Schools and Their Acronyms. The research will focus on three schools located on three different continents:

1. Africa International University (AIU) may also be referred to by its graduate program, Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST). It is located in Nairobi, Kenya.

2. Central American Theological Seminary (CATS) will be referred to by its Spanish name and acronym Seminario Teológico Centroamericano (SETECA). It is located in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

3. South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS). It is located in Bangalore, India.

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[2] In the US, the final doctoral paper is most often referred to as a dissertation and the word thesis refers to the culminating work at the Master's level. However, in the UK, the word thesis refers to doctoral work. For the purposes of his paper, the two words will be used interchangeably.

Assumptions

Each program in this study is located within its cultural context and has an expressed intent to meet contextual needs. Each program has begun in an era when issues of contextualization have recognized missionary and colonial strengths and weaknesses. The research is intended to reflect insider perspectives on the unique contextual benefits that exist within the programs.

The researcher assumes that most people have been greatly influenced by their own educational experiences. Without intentionality otherwise, most people will replicate what they have experienced. For professors, this means that they will teach in the ways they were taught. This has importance because most of the professors in these new PhD programs received their own doctoral education in the West. Until most recently, contextual alternatives did not exist, with the possible exceptions of national universities, Catholic schools or mainline protestant schools within their home countries. However, such schools do not have an expressly evangelical perspective. Many faculty members made some level of comparison with their experiences during their PhD studies in the West. While comparison is not the aim of this study, it is both natural and helpful as it situates the professor's experience within the meaningful context of existing doctoral education (Stephens 2009).

The researcher's identity as a North American is important to note. He does not come as an "insider" to the programs. While the disparity between "Western" and "Majority World" in terms of economic power and influence remains a reality in global theological education, this does not limit the value or potential validity of field research conducted by on outsider within these contexts (Borneman and Hammoudi 2009). By giving

careful attention in the interview process a researcher may develop rapport and attend to participant responses in order to equalize the power and cultural distance between the researcher and those interviewed (Stephens 2009). This is something the researcher sought in each of the interviews of this study.

Importance of the Study

The proliferation of doctoral programs in the Majority World in the last decade has occurred at a staggering rate. Developed largely independently, attempts to foster intentional conversation about the doctoral programs as a whole has only taken place in the last few years through the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE). ICETE sponsored Doctoral Consultations in 2010, 2011 and 2012. These meetings have led to the establishment of the Beirut Benchmarks Document (appendix 5) and the preliminary development of best practices for evangelicals in the Majority World (Shaw 2012).

These programs have expressed intent to promote a contextual response to pressing theological issues. In doing so, they will contribute to the larger global theological discourse. In addition, they come at a time when considerable attention has been given to the nature of the PhD in a globalized world (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, Lee and Danby 2012). The Bologna Process in Europe and research by the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate (CID)[3] have further expressed a need for changes in doctoral education that are more

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[3] The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate involved six disciplines and 80 departments, interacting with students, faculty and administration to design and implement new initiatives to improve doctoral education.

relevant, useful, integrated and better prepare graduates for teaching and leadership in higher education (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006, Walker 2008).

In addition to the above factors, the study holds importance because of the total students now enrolled in these programs. At the time of this research, the number of PhD students from the Majority World enrolled in evangelical programs located in Africa, Asia, Latina America and Eastern Europe was more than double the number studying in the evangelical PhD programs at ATS accredited seminaries in the US and Canada.[4] Following this trajectory, these programs may soon produce the majority of seminary trained evangelical PhD graduates in the Majority World.

These factors make such a study timely and may offer helpful reflection for the field of evangelical doctoral education. As the programs have grown, both explicit and implicit value has been given to the contextual nature of the programs. This study seeks to ask the question of what contextual engagement means in doctoral level education. Finally, these programs are young, have few graduates, and have a unique opportunity to shape the process and outcomes of doctoral education in their regions and as a contributor to global theological discourse.

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[4] At this time, evangelical Majority World PhD programs have 282 students enrolled (see Appendix 4) in addition to enrollments of 85 in the Latin America based PRODOLA program and another 91 in the SATS program accredited through the South African government. This brings the total to 458. Because of accreditation agreement between SATS and PRODOLA, some double counting may exist in those two numbers. Even so, the number of students enrolled in evangelical PhD programs in the Majority World is more than 400. A survey of the 15 evangelical PhD programs accredited by ATS in the US and Canada indicates that less than 200 non-Korean international students enrolled in the US. This knowingly excludes evangelical scholars at more mainline institutions (e.g. Princeton or Duke). In addition, a survey of European programs is more problematic as the schools are not as readily identified by their theological positions. However, the gap to get to more than 400 students is significant enough to warrant the surprising statement that more students are now enrolled in the Majority World than in the West.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research is to explore stakeholder perceptions of contextual engagement of PhD programs at select Majority World seminaries. This section reviews some of the current literature in the field of doctoral education, including current shifts in the field. In addition, it considers literature related to the importance of context including worldview, cultural differences, and reasoning across cultures. These areas provide background knowledge for the design of PhD programs and current developments more globally in doctoral education. They also provide a vocabulary and framework for understanding how participants described contextual engagement in their respective doctoral education experiences. In addition to these two major literature domains, a third area of adult learning practice emerged from the research interviews.

Understanding the PhD

Historical Roots of the PhD

The PhD traces its roots to the universities of Paris and Bologna in the twelfth century with influence from the University of Humboldt shaping current emphases on research (Nerad and Heggelund 2008). The University of Berlin particularly influenced the models of the PhD now present in the United Kingdom and the United States where the

seminar model led to a focus on independent research as the measure of the degree (Dahlgren and Bjuremeark 2012). In the early twentieth century, the idea of scholarship became increasingly focused on research to the exclusion of other scholarly activity (Boyer 1990, 15). In the US alone, more than 375,000 students are enrolled in PhD programs and more than 40,000 graduate with a doctorate each year (Bourner, Bowden, and Laing 2001). Internationally, new doctoral programs are being developed at a rapid pace, particularly to meet demands of economic growth in places like India, China, Russia and certain countries in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa (Danby and Lee 2012, Walker 2008).

Definitions of the PhD focus on an original piece of research embedded in a thesis or dissertation (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, 313). As such, the PhD is considered the pinnacle of scholarship (Boud and Lee 2009). Those who hold doctorates develop expertise within their discipline and become the primary source of innovation and research within their fields (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, Walker 2008). In addition to the ability to conduct independent research and to write, PhD graduates cultivate the ability to comprehend and critique the work of others (Starcher and Stick 2003, Zukas and Andersen 2012). The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate frequently asserts that the objective of doctoral education is to develop "stewards of the discipline" (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006, Walker 2008). In addition to their role as researchers and teachers, Nerad and Heggelund state that there is "broad agreement that doctoral students are poised to become global leaders" (2008, 5). Holders of the PhD teach, write and guide thought within their disciplines from positions within academia, research, business and public policy.

The same objectives hold true of theological education as well. Historically, the PhD began as a degree in service to the church, and today those who hold PhD's largely shape the understanding of doctrine and practice for the church. PhD holders teach at seminaries, educate faculty for Bible schools and colleges, as well as train pastors and church leaders for local service. Through classes, writing, and leadership, PhD holders shape the thought and practice of the church. For these reasons, the PhD holds a place of both prestige and importance for the development of Christian higher education in service to the church.

While the PhD is an inherently Western construct, the same might be said of most of theological education (Noelliste 2005). Much of the Majority World has relatively short histories of higher education and most theological education has been heavily dependent on the West for its inception, curriculum, and faculty (Ho 2009). Doctoral programs at Majority World seminaries have inherited this history and build on what has gone before them (Caldwell 2010, Ho 2010a). However, new doctoral programs have also emerged during a time when schools have devoted both great attention to context and during which much discussion of the doctoral degree in general has taken place.

The PhD in a "Time of Flux"

The emergence of Majority World based evangelical doctoral programs has come at a time when many are considering changes and reforms in the doctorate degree as a whole (Nyquist 2002). Described as a "state of flux," changes in doctoral education bring both great excitement and concern and frustration over the degree (Aitchison and Pare 2012, 12). While the work of the Carnegie Initiative and the Bologna Process focus on Western

doctoral programs, they do so in light of an increasingly globalized context of higher education, recognizing the enrollment patterns of international students as well as the growth of non-Western programs. Historically, doctoral programs have drawn heavily from the "cultural norms" of the US and Europe, however, as doctoral education responds to trends in globalization, a shift toward internationalization has occurred. The global South has emerged as a location for "creating knowledge about doctoral education, rather than being merely derivative of 'northern' ideas, models and pedagogies" (Aitchison and Pare 2012, 12).

Driven by a number of factors including the growth and expansion of doctoral programs globally, institutional and government requirements, and better understanding about learning and teaching, researchers have taken a renewed interest in the educative work of the PhD (Lee and Danby 2012). In a globalized world, researchers face the recurring tension of pursuing projects with immediate contextual relevance as well as engaging in an increasingly global community of scholars (Boud and Lee 2009, Lee and Danby 2012). Additional factors driving changes within the degree include the need for a sustainable supply of researchers and teachers, the need to prepare students for employment, the global reach and internationalization of programs, a push for harmonization among degrees to allow for greater portability between institutions, and favorable comparability between programs. These pressures become acute as doctoral graduates serve society in a variety of ways beyond academia (Nerad and Heggelund 2008).

Current Streams of Influence on the PhD

In Europe, the Bologna Process, (named for the University of Bologna, the location of the meeting that led to the Bologna Declaration, and oldest continually operating university in the world) has led to increased harmonization of degrees throughout Europe. The Bologna process makes degrees transferable and comparable across the continent (Gabrys and Beltechi 2012). The process, which applies to all levels of university education, pushes for shorter completion times, averaging three to four years. It measures success based on the "fitness for purpose" of the degree, placing a focus on relevance to both the academy and industry (Shaw 2010, Nerad and Heggelund 2008). With its influence over so many schools across Europe, global education around the world will feel the increasing influence of the Bologna Process.

Concerns over doctoral education have expanded and diversified rapidly, increasingly taking into account for the internationalization of the doctoral degree (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, Danby and Lee 2012). Many sectors have called for the PhD to be a degree that is both "useful" and "efficient" (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, 9). Efficiency and concern over degree completion rates have been common themes for the improvement of doctoral education for decades (Ehrenberg, Kuh, and Cornell Higher Education Research Institute. 2009). For example, in South Africa, less than 10% of doctoral students graduate within five years (Nerad and Heggelund 2008) According to a report by the Auburn Center, theological schools in the US follow a similar pattern with an average completion time for a PhD of seven years (Bleier and Wheeler 2010). Efficiency has merit, but should not come at the expense of lower programmatic expectations or retreat from serious scholarly work (Lee and

Danby 2012). In addition to improving completion rates, the future of doctoral education will require useful degrees that “balance standards and practices and the need for the university to flourish and breed creative, provocative ideas” (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, 199).

In the US, the CID has generated considerable thought on the doctorate after a process of action research on aligning the purpose and practices of doctoral education in six disciplines. At the conclusion of their analysis, the project recommended three fundamental questions that institutions should ask in order to improve doctoral education: (1) What is the purpose of the degree? (2) What is the rational and educational purpose of each aspect of the program? (3) How can the school measure success? (Golde and Walker 2006, 6).

A final trend has placed a greater concern for pedagogy within doctoral education (Golde and Walker 2006, Maki and Borkowski 2006). [1] This trend has placed more emphasis on the formation of the whole student as a scholar and practitioner in the field. Proponents encourage professors and program designers to give greater attention to not only the development of content expertise, but also concern for the cultivation of the habits and culture of research and teaching (Danby and Lee 2012).

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[1] Pedagogy functions with multiple meanings in the literature. For some it refers to the process of learning; a process through which knowledge is produced (Danby and Lee 2012, 4). Other authors intentionally distinguish between “pedagogy,” which as the Greek root implies is focused on children and “andragogy,” which has become a technical term in adult learning theory. The literature review will reflect the uses by individual authors. Outside of the literature on adult learning practices, the literature generally understands pedagogy as the overall concern for the learning process. In adult learning, andragogy refers to a more specific approach to adult learning as described by Knowles and others (2011).

Shifts Occurring within the PhD

Holders of the doctorate are expected to become "stewards of the discipline," capable of teaching, conducting research, and participating as members of the intellectual community (Walker 2008). The cultivation of "stewards of the discipline" means more than just developing researchers. As fewer and fewer doctoral graduates will spend their careers exclusively in academia, doctoral education needs to give greater attention to the needs of business, government, and non-profit sectors (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006, Walker 2008). Researchers in doctoral education have expressed concern that in general, the PhD does not adequately prepare students for their post-doctorate realities (Maki and Borkowski 2006). In the UK, 54% of doctoral graduates work outside of higher education, placing further pressure on schools to evaluate the purpose of their programs (Taylor 2009). In both the UK and the US, PhD programs are responding to global pressures on doctoral graduates and may require greater intentionality in the development of the doctoral process.

Theological schools face a similar challenge as many seminaries are unclear in their purpose or have programs that are "at odds" with their stated purpose (Bleier and Wheeler 2010, 18). Western PhD programs have concerns over the lack of jobs available within theological education, placing pressure on the purposes of PhD programs. Globally, schools have expressed concern for academic degrees that address broader societal issues and prepare graduates for engagement broader than just the academy (Vikner 2003).

Analysis across the disciplines in the CID research demonstrates a consistent call for increased development of the teaching skills of doctoral graduates. (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006) The CID revealed a concern by graduates over the lack of

preparation for teaching. Doctoral programs need to prepare graduates to teach, but not just in the classroom (Walker 2008). Doctoral graduates – inside and outside of academia – need the knowledge and skills to convey their field's complex ideas in a variety of contexts verbally and in writing (Walker 2008).

The literature reflects several shifts within doctoral education toward greater attention to the process of teaching and learning (Danby and Lee 2012). The first shift reflects a growing recognition of teaching as something more than simply the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next (Boud and Lee 2009, 13). The literature also reflects a shift in the understanding of doctoral education that moves beyond the preparation of researchers to the more holistic preparation for doctoral graduates, taking into account both personal and professional development (Walker 2008). Language like formation and stewardship demonstrate a concern for more than quality dissertations. The literature addresses a greater concern for the whole person who is the scholar (Walker 2008). Finally, a shift has begun toward greater levels of integration and collaboration across disciplines within the doctoral process (Willetts et al. 2012). Advocates of transdisciplinary work see such research as more relevant to real-life problems whose solutions do not neatly remain within the parameters of a single discipline. Manathunga maintains, "much of the cutting edge research in many fields now occurs along the gaps and cracks between disciplines" (2012, 48). She also cites Nerad and Heggelund (2008) and Boud and Lee (2009) on the value of team supervision as areas of study incorporate multiple areas of expertise.

Each discipline in the CID expressed a desire for integrative, cross-disciplinary work. Boyer considered the "scholarship of integration" an important tool for professors to

develop. He states, "By integration we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too … what we mean is serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research" (Boyer 1990, 18-19). Useful research means addressing complex issues requiring complex solutions. Integrative work of this nature necessitates more collaborative approaches. Historically, doctoral work has hinged upon "independent, original work," a theme that comes under strain in an era of integration and collaboration. Educational innovators are pushing the doctoral community to recognize that independent and original contributions can be made in collaborative and interdisciplinary pursuits (Boud and Lee 2009, 38; Boyer 1990). Collaborative work can address the more complex questions relevant to society today (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, Lee and Boud 2009, Willetts et al. 2012). In addition, such approaches will generate a need for those who can span the gaps between disciplines and bring an integration of theory and experience that will better inform research and decision making within the field (Colwill 2012).

These shifts have resulted in a renewed interest in the doctoral curriculum. Increasingly, the curriculum is understood not just as the required courses, reading and output of the program, but more of a journey, a systematic selection and articulation of the total experience toward the intended outcome (Boud and Lee 2009). Doctoral programs do not exist to produce dissertations, but to develop graduates who can steward the discipline (Walker 2008). This larger view of the curriculum takes into account the intended (formally stated), enacted (actually happening), and hidden or implicit aspects of the curriculum

(Gilbert 2009). All of these dynamics affect the total doctoral experience and include: the classroom, laboratory, reading, and papers; along with departmental meetings, peer interactions, presentations, critique, mentoring and modeling, and the overarching culture of the doctoral program. In addition to these, Eisner's (1994) category of the null curriculum – that which is left out – also plays a role in the development of the doctoral curriculum.

Doctoral students find themselves in a time of transition, moving from the role of a student to the role of professional researcher, teacher and colleague with their professors (Green 2009). Doctoral programs play a role in socializing the student into this new identity and helping them understand the realities of their changing identity from student to graduate (Lee and Boud 2009, Colwill 2012).

The mentor-student relationship has an important role in the overall PhD curriculum. Historically, doctoral students essentially hold apprenticeships in research (Lee and Danby 2012). Expert practitioners explain and demonstrate what it means to become a master in the field (Ehrenberg, Kuh, and Cornell Higher Education Research Institute. 2009). However, a need for even greater intentionality exists, particularly in light of a greater focus on the overall purpose of the doctorate. Rather than a series of courses, tutorials, papers, and meetings with a mentor that culminate in a thesis, the totality of the doctoral experience takes into account an even greater variety of experiences, relationships, and opportunities that shape the graduate. The language of a "doctoral journey" orients the curriculum around the student and encompasses a greater breadth of experiences that constitute the doctoral process, at the direction of the mentor who facilitates this journey (Leonard and Becker 2009). Part of the role of the mentor is to give the student visibility into the realities of post-doctorate life

(Walker 2008). He or she offers phases of challenge and support as the doctoral candidate journeys from student to colleague (Gardner 2009).

Themes of increasing collaboration and integration may also impact the future of both taught components and dissertation output for the PhD. A driving force behind the interest in doctoral education has been a need for more socially relevant dissertations (Nerad and Heggelund 2008). Production of this kind of output will require approaches that are often more integrative and collaborative. Complex challenges often require thought that extends beyond the boundaries of a single discipline (Willetts et al. 2012). Doctoral students need to develop skills at building connections across time, disciplines, and between the academy and the community (Walker 2008).

Doctoral scholars have both a preservative and a generative role with regard to their own fields of knowledge. As stewards of the discipline, they receive the charge for the creation of knowledge, the conservation of knowledge and the transformation of knowledge (Golde and Walker 2006, Walker 2008). The generative role of scholars is quite important, most directly expressed in the dissertation output (Gilbert 2004). Generating new knowledge comes through both in-depth research as well as call for newer transdisciplinary work that is generative through integration (Willetts et al. 2012).

Integrative work receives greater attention through the differentiation of two modes of knowledge, both of which are needed at the doctoral level. “Mode 1 Learning” pushes deeper into a single subject area, while “Mode 2 Learning” engages in more interdisciplinary understanding (Boud and Lee 2009, Gibbons et al. 1994). This second type of knowledge is “created, contested, refined in a ‘specific and localized context,’ rather than

being autonomous and universal" (Lee and Boud 2009, 17). Collaborative learning, therefore, becomes part of the process of developing more integrated work. Integrative learning means doctoral students need opportunities to work together, share ideas, offer and receive critique, and build on each other's work (Walker 2008). Such "transdisciplinary" knowledge often addresses more complex problems, drawing together multiple strains of thought and looking for ways to negotiate the tensions of multiple inputs, outputs and processes (Willetts et al. 2012).

At the outcome level, doctoral programs recognize that they must do more than simply produce graduates. Doctoral education lives within a tension between scholarly pursuits and an increasing push to meet direct needs within the broader community (Nerad and Heggelund 2008). The PhD will always have a knowledge acquisition and creation component, primarily driven through research. Scholars both develop expertise in their field and help create frameworks for better understanding and communicating that expertise (Walker 2008). However, the need for the development of teachers and leaders for academia and the broader world is also increasingly present.

In addition to equipping teachers and leaders, a greater attention to the PhD student as a whole has developed. The concept of the "formation of scholars" speaks to a desire to do more than simply develop intellectual expertise. The PhD is also a time of shaping personality, character and habits of the mind that will serve the student throughout life (Walker 2008). This concern for the whole student becomes a part of the assessment of the doctoral program. In addition to questions of how many and how quickly graduates are produced, researchers have begun to ask who graduates are becoming in their doctoral

journey (Maki and Borkowski 2006). Graduates need to be able to create and interpret new knowledge as well as comprehend, design and implement proper research. In addition- they need to make judgments within – and across – complex fields of study and have the ability to articulate these ideas to others in writing, the classroom, and increasingly to other, non-academic, audiences. In a knowledge-based, global society, these skills will be critical for employment (Gilbert 2009).

Land-Grant University Model

The land-grant university system in the US may prove a helpful model for navigating the tension between building theory and addressing practical needs. The land-grant university system began with an express intent to make application and practical problem solving as a valid brand of scholarship. This focus on addressing practical needs stands in contrast to the more continental theory building approach that shaped both European and early US doctoral programs. Yet, it does so with intent to develop solutions and action through the production of knowledge (McDowell 2001, 33).

The Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862 created this new model for university education that differed from both German and British systems that shaped university education in the US. The purpose was two-fold. First, the land-grant universities created greater access to university education, moving it from something for the intellectual elite, to something accessible to the farmer and laborer. Knowledge was to be pursued with a bent toward an empirical and applied brand of scholarship. All areas of life were to be investigated, researched and applied (McDowell 2001, 20). Today, land-grant universities

comprise more than a third of the highest level of "research universities" in the US. Every land-grant school offers doctorate degrees.

In addition to increasing access to university education, the land-grant system brought an inherently more practical approach to the university. Taylor describes the mission as on in which "thought and practice are indivorceable., that the place of the academy is in the world, not beyond it, that is the business of the university to demonstrate the connection of knowledge, art and practice." (Taylor 1981, 37). The research was to be driven by practical problems and scholarly research applied to real problems in service to the public good (McDowell 2001, 7). The land-grant university has an aim to develop the informed practioner as well as the theory-building researcher.

Over time, the land grant universities have moved closer to the theory focused schools in their programs and approaches. However, an ethos toward applied solutions resonates with the results of the Carnegie study and others calling for doctorates that serve society (Nerad and Heggelund 2008). Boyer refers to this as the scholarship of application, responsibly applying knowledge to consequential problems (1990, 21).

Summary

This section has considered the PhD degree more globally, including the development of the degree and some current shifts within universities around the world. The Bologna Process and the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate have the potential to shape doctoral education in the West for the coming decades. Many of these trends respond to the global context from which students come and into which they return to pursue their careers.

They recognize the globalized nature of the academy and these trends will also exert pressure on Majority World programs in the next decade. While the concerns have been framed in Western contexts, the major themes that call for a renewed consideration of the purpose of particular degree programs, the need for greater teaching ability and experience, and the formation of the whole person resonate deeply with stated needs by leaders of theological education in the Majority World.

Although the scope of the CID research did not include theology, the issues, shifts and recommendations offered have direct implications for theological schools and theological education. The proposals put forward to reform the PhD fall in line with the consistent critiques of theological education including a need for greater connection between the community (church) and the academy, the formation of student character during studies, and a desire for research that directly serves the church (Cannell 2006; Farley 1983; Kelsey 1992). Non-Western schools have been critical of inherited models of theological education that were designed according to meet needs that differ from those found in Majority World contexts (Banks 1999). Majority World institutions have recognized the need to develop a broader skillset beyond research as part of preparation for service and employment (Caldwell 2010; Starcher and Stick 2003, 2005; Vikner 2003). In addition, collaborative and integrative approaches reflect cultural values that are often stronger outside of the West. The language of formation resonates with the desire of seminary educators to shape graduates deeply in issues of faith and character in addition to their academic development. Finally, the land-grant university system in the US is noteworthy for its attention to scholarship applied to practical problems, even at the highest levels of doctoral study.

The Rise of Evangelical Doctoral Programs in the Majority World

Evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World have emerged at a unique time in the history of Christianity and the discourse related to doctoral education. These programs have been formed with a greater level intentionality around issues of contextual needs, methodologies and challenges than many of the current master's level programs were formed. Contextual doctoral programs respond to a need for new degree programs that meet intellectual challenges that often differ from those expressed in the West (Bowers 2007). These challenges necessitate doctoral programs that will address issues facing the global church that are not entirely Western in their approach (Starcher 2004). They have also been developed to train faculty specifically from and for their own contexts (Caldwell 2010, Ho 2009, Starcher 2004b).

The Proliferation of Evangelical Doctoral Programs in the Majority World

At the time of this research, at least nineteen PhD programs currently exist within evangelical seminaries in the Majority World. The list found in Appendix 4 represents a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, list of those programs affiliated with ICETE or one of the major regional accrediting bodies in the Majority World. The definition of which schools belong on the list is not rigid, but consists of those training at the PhD or ThD (research doctorate level) and schools that have self-identified within evangelical circles. The data

from these nineteen schools provide interesting insight into the current state of these programs.[2]

First, this is a very new endeavor, and the number of graduates is quite small. Only two programs (SAIACS in India and Akrofi Christaller in Ghana) began before the year 2000. The vast majority of the programs are less than ten years old. At the time of this research, the number of graduates was also quite small, with just over 80 verified PhD graduates. Of those, twenty percent graduated from one school, Trinity Theological College, Singapore. One-quarter of the schools on the list had yet to produce a PhD graduate.

The programs focus on the core disciplines of Biblical Studies and Theology. However, other unique fields have also emerged as illustrated by programs in areas such as Peace Studies, Holistic Child Development, Translation Studies, and Integrative Theology. In addition, the schools express a diversity of approaches in their program models including their requirements for residency, course components (if any), relationships with other schools and accrediting bodies, and use of technology.

While the programs are quite new, and the number of graduates is small, the number of currently enrolled students has grown quickly. More than 300 students are enrolled in these programs, with as many as 150 more enrolled through South African Theological Seminary and the PRODOLA programs.[3] Over the next five to seven years the

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[2] This list has been generated through conversations and electronic communications with seminary leaders, including participants in the three-year project on doctoral education sponsored by the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE).

[3] Recent changes in the PRODOLA structure have placed its accreditation under the South African Theological Seminary umbrella. It is unclear if there is double counting in their numbers.

number of PhD graduates from programs located in the Majority World will more than quadruple. Furthermore, enrollment numbers will likely continue to rise, especially if additional institutions launch doctoral programs during that time.

Created with Intentionality

The rise of these programs has come during a time with a great concern for contextual relevance. Contextual engagement is more than the by-product of geographic location. Higgs states that for a program to be African, it must do more than take place on African soil; rather an African program “directs its attention to issues, concerns and theoretical or conceptual underpinnings of African culture” (2008, 448). Caldwell (2010) adds that Asian programs require more than location and the ethnic make up of faculty, but must address Asian issues and engage Asian pedagogies.

Many contextual programs, therefore, have begun with significant intentionality and purpose to meet needs that differ from the West (Starcher 2004a). The participant programs in this research demonstrate this intentionality. The program at Africa International University (formerly NEGST) demonstrates a measured, deliberate approach utilizing the research of Starcher and others to determine feasibility and needs prior to the launch of a doctoral program designed to “meet the needs of Africa and the African church” (Starcher and Stick 2003, 194). The DET program at SETECA emerged from a collaborative effort to create a program to equip theological leaders for the schools in Latin America. The purpose of SAIACS as a graduate level institution is to provide a contextually based alternative to education in the West.

These doctoral programs intend to train faculty members who can meet different demands than those encountered – or prepared for – by graduate studies in the West (Starcher and Stick 2005, Poerwowidagdo 2003). They have arisen in a time when many schools have taken a more mission centered approach to theological education, partially in response to Bosch's (1991) call for more intentional and transformational engagement with society (Ott 2001). The formulation of contextual doctoral programs has been quite intentional, seeking to address a variety of contextual needs in contextual ways.

Addressing the Needs of the Church Locally and Globally

Contextual evangelical doctoral programs have significant value to the Majority World student. As recently as ten years ago, nearly every scholar had to travel to the West to pursue a PhD. Regional options add a direct value to students providing economically cheaper and geographically closer alternatives to programs in the US, Europe, or Australia. There is a hope that mentors living in the context better understand the questions and issues students want to engage with their research. Students entering these programs perceive that the programs are designed for their own cultural contexts.

In addition, contextual programs have value to the local church as leaders currently serving the church are not required to leave their ministries to pursue studies. Graduates can obtain their doctorates while remaining rooted in their own contexts, creating fewer cultural hurdles after the completion of their degrees. A well-known story shared by John Mbiti (1990) about the Western educated PhD who lost all sense of his cultural worldview in the process of his education highlights this point. While perhaps caricature, this

story of a young theologian espousing Western theological deconstruction of the spirit world in the midst of village crisis illustrates the perceived challenges of students losing relevance during an extended period studying abroad. Contextual doctoral programs further benefit the local church through the cultivation of relevant scholarship, writing, and publications that will meet the needs of the local context.

Contextual programs also add value to the global church by increasing the diversity of theological thinking and the ongoing development of theology. Contextual doctoral programs have emerged in a time when all fields have begun to recognize a plurality and interconnectedness of contexts within a globalized world. (Ionita 1997). They experience the realities of Schreiter's (1997) categories of "expansion" and "compression." Globalization has expanded the breadth of knowledge and engagement to all parts of the world. At the same time, the world has also compressed into a "global village" in which the events in what was once thought to be a far off part of the world touch and impact communities thousands of miles away. New theological developments in the midst of these global and local realities, are taking place that are shared and have impact beyond their geographic regions.

Just as many of the models of theological education came from the West, so too much of the theological discourse from the West has been considered globally normative (Ott 2001). Non-western theologians express a critique of the view that theology from the West is universal while that from the non-West is particular and "contextual" (Kang 2010). Coe (1976) advocated a move beyond western dominated models and simply indigenizing Western theology for non-Western contexts. Instead, there is a need to move to the

development of theologies from within that are internally consistent, doxological, generate ortho-praxis, and can engage in the broader global dialogue (Schreiter 1985).

Contextual programs can help develop what Hiebert (1985) has called the "fourth self" for the church, that of "self-theologizing." Priest defines self-theologizing as a process in which those "who are insiders to the culture address the issues and lived realities of their own people theologically, rather than simply replicating theologizing done elsewhere" (Priest 2011). Doctoral programs can help the church in the Majority World move beyond a "translated theology" (Lai 2006) toward an internally generated theology that has interplay with the broader global discourse (Harrison 2008). As the church in the Majority World becomes increasingly self-determinate in governance, resourcing, and propagation, it is also developing its own theologies that address the issues and realities faced within a specific context. While lower level degree programs focus more on learning theology, students at the doctoral level are expected to advance knowledge within their disciplines; in essence to "do theology." Global theological thought will be cultivated differently by faculties, schools, and students who pursue their degrees predominantly in their own contexts than by those who do so in the West.

Bevans boldly states "There is no such thing as theology; there is only contextual theology" (2002, 3). All theology must be done in a particular time and place that engages those particular realities, a process Coe (1976) relates to the incarnation, which he considers the divine model of contextualization. In the absence of a universal, decontextualized theology, contextual theologies engage in dialogue to gain a more robust understanding of God and truth (Ho 2010b). Self-theologizing brings value to global

discourse in the that it helps to create what Vanhoozer (2000) terms a more "pluralistic theology" in which multiple perspectives are needed to understand the truth of the gospel more fully. Hiebert describes a move beyond the era of "non-contextualization" that presumed a hegemony of the West and looks toward a time in which "Christians from every country [will] not only be institutionally, but also cognitively free from western domination" (1987, 108). Local theology, in global dialogue, will lead to the development of the international scholarship needed in this time of globalization (Samuel 2002).

In addition, doctoral programs will help create needed intellectual communities of Christian scholarship and allow for those communities to more readily network together for the benefit of the global church (Samuel 2002). These communities can help develop "first level theology," the identification and articulation of the essential core of the Christian faith (LaBute 2006). Doctoral programs provide space for the pursuit of these theological questions that have great benefit to the church – locally and globally.

Preliminary Desires in a Contextual PhD Program

As stated above, contextual programs offer more than a geographically proximate alternative for a PhD. For a Majority World based theological education program to be contextual, it must be driven by the needs and realities of making the gospel relevant in the respective cultural and existential contexts (Hesselgrave and Rommen 2000). Most, if not all, of the programs in Appendix 4 have the engagement of their unique context as a stated reason for their existence.

In preliminary work for the doctoral program at NEGST, Starcher described one of the desires of potential doctoral students as “contextual pragmatism” (2003, 192). For African students, achievability, cost and usefulness of the degree held the highest values in consideration of a doctoral program. African stakeholders recognized a need for PhD graduates to be able to teach, lead, and model godly character. This research resonates with the findings of the CID in “secular” fields. Such pragmatism places some tension between the need to develop credible research programs and the need for programs to quickly graduate students credentialed for work (teaching, etc.) in their home contexts (Starcher and Stick 2003).

Financial concerns and the time requirements to complete a PhD in the West offer further evidence of this tension. Many Majority World PhD scholars enter their PhD programs as more mature students, having already held senior leadership positions and teaching roles within their seminaries. This makes departure for three to seven years in the West quite challenging. Some will pursue non-residential and part-time programs so that they can continue to remain in ministry. Such pursuits place a strain on the value of achievability since part-time and non-residential programs may be cheaper, but often require more time to complete (Noelliste 2005, Starcher 2004a).

Many PhD graduates in the Majority World know that their careers will consist of more than just research and writing. Like the respondents in the CID, they see a great need for the development of teaching skills. In addition, many graduates will quickly enter into senior leadership roles such as Deans and Presidents, if they did not hold these positions already. These leadership roles require a set of skills not often addressed within

traditional theological PhD programs. While all will express a value for research and writing, most believe they will not have much opportunity to pursue such scholarly activities after graduation (Starcher and Stick 2005).

Finally, the programs, and the faculty and students within them, place a strong emphasis on the practical value of dissertation topics for the church (Poerwowidagdo 2003, Starcher and Stick 2003, Starcher 2003, Starcher and Stick 2005). In Africa, students are looking for programs in which they explore “questions of importance to Africa and the African church” (Starcher 2003, 206). In Asia, there is a great desire to see theological dissertations that can make a broader contribution to society (Vikner 2003). This desire for relevant research mirrors the work on the future of the doctorate found in the CID and other current research on the doctoral process (Golde and Walker 2006, Nerad and Heggelund 2008).

Benchmarks and Excellence

In 2010, the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) convened the Doctoral Consultation, a three-year project addressing the emerging Majority World doctoral programs. These meetings, which convened in Beirut (2010), Bangalore (2011) and Nairobi (2012), included Majority World schools, regional accreditation groups, and other support agencies. The Beirut Benchmarks found in Appendix 5 outline six qualities needed for doctoral graduates. These include a comprehensive understanding of the field of study, faithful exercise of crucial skills, serious inquiry with integrity into the design and implementation of research, a creative and original contribution

worthy of publication, contextual relevance that is biblically informed, critically engaged, well articulated, and demonstrates missional impact. At the final meeting in Nairobi, the consultation articulated a draft of some eighteen marks of "credible excellence" (Shaw 2012). The ICETE Doctoral Steering Committee will continue the work, helping individual schools appropriate the best practices into their doctoral programs.

Marks such as preparedness for ministry, integration of academic skills and spiritual formation, study in community, contextual relevance, and connectivity with the global academic discourse reflect some of the same values and responses to concerns previously mentioned. In addition, consideration was given not only to programs and graduates, but also the institutions themselves and a need for excellence as seen in academic, administrative and financial structures, high-quality facilities and access to resources, and high standards for admission of PhD students. Finally, the curriculum should include excellence in taught components, mentoring, context for research, and assessment (Shaw 2012). The ongoing work of the schools and programs with the Doctoral Steering committee further indicates the intentionality and concern for context developing within many of the doctoral programs.

Summary

The proliferation of evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World over the last decade has the potential to make a significant impact on theological education and global theology in the coming years. While the number of current graduates remains small, that number will grow exponentially over the next ten years as several hundred students are

currently enrolled in these programs. The graduates of these programs will help meet the need for teachers and administrators for seminaries throughout the Majority World. They will be able to achieve their degrees without some of the drawbacks of studying in the West including barriers to achievability, issues related to "brain drain," and a perceived gap in the relevance of Western-based doctoral research.

A Consideration of Cultural Context

Contextual programs have, by definition, a deep-rooted concern for the cultural context in which they exist. Attention to contextual concerns is evident in the output of the doctoral programs through relevant dissertation topics and attention to issues of achievability. However, the educational structures, approaches, and assessments also require cultural consideration as well, including consideration for the general worldview and cultural outlook of a particular context. In addition, research in the fields of comparative education, business leadership and cross-cultural reasoning have made significant findings that inform the current discussion by giving language, framework and categories for the discussion of cultural context of these new doctoral programs.

The Power of Worldview

Worldview consists of the "totality of the culturally structured images and assumptions (including value and commitment or allegiance assumptions) in terms of which a people both perceive and respond to reality" (Kraft 2008, 12). Derived from the German construct of *Weltanschauung,* a term gained prominence in the mid-nineteenth century to describe the overarching values and frameworks through which a person makes meaning of

reality (Wolters 2005). Worldview is largely unseen and implicit to the insider, consisting of deep level "core" culture that provides the categories through which life is understood (Hiebert 2008). Geertz (1973) refers to worldview as the mental map that shapes how people live. Hiebert, Tiénou and Shaw (1999) offer the image of worldview as a toolbox for explaining what is happening in life.

Worldview generates a tacit sense of how things ought to function. One major aspect of worldview is an orientation toward either group or individual focus. Adapting Hofstede's (2001) categories, Hiebert lists eight dominant themes shaped by worldview that come into play in understanding a culture or context including view of family, group or individual dynamics, orientation of boss and employees, criteria for promotion, and value of task or relationship in the process (2008, 21). Cultural insiders possess a common understanding of which of these values is more operational in the normal course of life in their own context.

Worldview is an all encompassing construct, impacting cognitive, affective and evaluative assumptions and frameworks a group makes about the nature of reality (Hiebert 2008). In the cognitive dimension, worldview helps create the grid through which meaning can be made. Worldview provides the interpretive framework through which bits of knowledge are assembled into a coherent whole. In a sense worldview helps insiders bring data together in meaningful ways such that the "whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Hiebert 2008, 48). Worldview provides understanding of a sense of time, space, and the stories and metaphors that explain life. Worldview helps shape which emotions are permissible and how they ought to be displayed. Worldview provides a grid for evaluating

that which is right, good or beautiful within a given culture. These values ultimately guide normative behaviors.

Because they are largely assumed and tacit, questions of worldview often only arise when they come into conflict with new data that does not fit the existing schema. Explicit beliefs may be easier to determine, but worldview penetrates to the deep-rooted assumptions or "givens" of life; consequently, understanding of them is often approximate (Hiebert 2008). Analysis from within (emic) can be challenging due to the implicit nature of so much of one's worldview. Analysis from without (etic) can be done, but only through outward appearances and behaviors, seeking to draw out the implicit assumptions and values that dictate those actions.

For example, use of semantic sets, or word groupings, can give a sense of worldview and contextual values. When shown groupings of words or pictures, participants with differing worldviews, shaped by their own indigenous contexts, may group the sets differently. Shown pictures of two men, a woman, and a child, certain worldviews, with an emphasis on holistic relationships, may group the man, woman and child together as a family unit. However, participants from another worldview might see the three adults as belonging together by category, leaving the child as the individual who falls outside the set (Hiebert 2008). In addition, to cognitive processing, outward signs such as food, dress and architecture may give clues into the tacit values of a particular worldview. Rituals, story and cross-cultural categories such as the approach to time, personal space and causality may also offer windows for understanding a particular worldview (Hiebert 2008).

Globalization has led to an increase in interaction between worldviews. Giddens describes globalization as the "intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events that are occurring many miles away and vice versa" (1990, 64). Through globalization, worldviews come into contact with one another more readily. The dominance of English and media privilege Western worldviews. However, global mobility through travel and migration also lead to a mixing of worldviews that is creating a more polycentric understanding of influence rather than acquiescing to Western hegemony. Such a shift has given an increased value to local expressions, even in the midst of a more globalized world (Hiebert 2008, Schreiter 1985).

The assumed nature of worldview means that it often only becomes visible when it is challenged. Increased convergence of worldviews can prove helpful in identifying and understanding them from both the insider and outsider perspectives. Hall (1989) states that the tacit aspects of worldview outnumber those which are explicit by as much as thousand or more. As unseen, tacit constructs that often dictate how one sees, understands and interacts with reality, worldviews are powerful and often difficult to change.

Context Matters

A strong emphasis on the value of context is not unique to the Christian world. Globalization has also brought greater attention to matters of contextualization and cultural difference in secular fields like business and education. In his seminal lecture at the turn of the 20th century, Sadler famously wrote of comparative international education:

> We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and picking off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant .... (1979, 49)

For over a century, the field of international comparative education has explored how various educational systems contribute to and compare with one another (Crossley 2003, Dimmock and Walker 2000b). Education, including theological education at all levels, cannot be separated from its context. Majority World programs may not simply borrow ideas – or receive them as an imposition from well-meaning outsiders – and expect them to work in their own contexts unilaterally as they did in the West. Like the image of Saddler's plant, careful consideration should be given to what can and should be transferred, and what can and should be changed or developed anew so that theological education might flourish in every context.

Cultural Context of the School

The literature base of business leadership and cross-cultural reasoning give language to cultural realities that shape the context of the school. Dimmock and Walker (2000a) describe three layers of culture in which a school is located: organizational, regional and national or societal (see figure 1). Furthermore, the school is comprised of four components: organizational structures, leadership, curriculum, and teaching and learning, with the latter two forming the "core technology" of a school (Dimmock and Walker 2000a, 148). As the figure illustrates, the core technology of a school is grounded in and impacted by the broader societal culture. A high level of interconnectedness exists between all components of the school. The organizational structures and leadership hold importance as

they direct what Eisner (1994) refers to as the implicit curriculum of the school. As the deep-rooted tacit assumptions that guide action, worldview will have significant impact on aspects that fit under the heading of implicit curriculum (Hiebert 2008). The teaching and learning component of the school includes components such as lectures, seminars, and readings. In addition, it includes outputs such as exams, papers and the dissertation. Mentoring also plays a role in the pedagogical process and may reflect cultural dynamics of relationships (Watkins 2000).

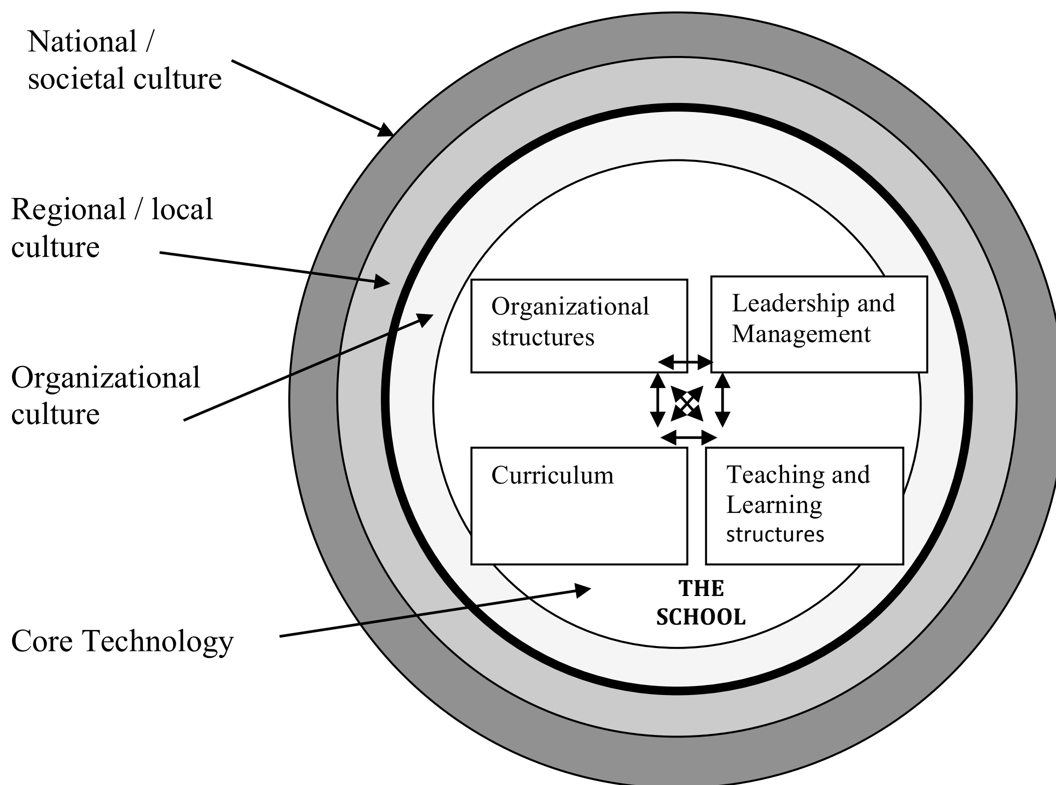

Figure 1. The cultural make up of the school, adapted from Dimmock and Walker's "A Model for Cross-cultural Comparison in Educational Leadership and Management (2000, 148).

The core technology components deserve greater attention as to how they embrace the learning styles and cognitive approaches of cultures, in addition to reflecting greater concern for educative matters. Caldwell challenges Western dominance in both what is taught and how it is taught. He advocates approaches that move beyond Western pedagogy, without losing reference to it (2010, 40). This challenge recognizes that dominant

forms of teaching and learning have a social and political advantage, but not necessarily an inherent advantage for truth (Brookfield 2000, 127). Shaw further writes, "If the church is serious about developing leaders characterized by genuine reflective wisdom and Kingdom-mindedness there needs to be far greater diversity in the options available for higher study—both in terms of content and methodology" (2010, 59). As part of the "core technology" school, teaching and learning techniques should receive attention through cultural lenses as way to maximize the strengths of cultural convergence and divergence for the development of a better contextualized educational process.

The curriculum might also be evaluated through a cultural lens. As described previously, the curriculum consists of much more than just the course listings, but includes the systematic design and articulation of the entire educational experience. For the purpose of evangelical doctoral programs, the curriculum should meet the needs expressed in the purpose and goals of the program. In addition, it will shape the pursuit of learning through the prescription of courses, structured mentor relationship, research and desired outputs such as exams, papers and the dissertation. The curriculum naturally influences the teaching and learning components with a concern for both learner and teacher focused approaches, as well as how collective and independent work is addressed in the core technology of the school. Finally, curriculum design should also ask questions of how leadership and organizational structures will implicitly influence the doctoral experience and contribute to the formation of PhD scholars.

Accounting for Cultural Differences

Within the seminary environment, the field of missions has had the greatest focus on cultural differences, almost always in relation to evangelism. As the gospel has progressed around the world, theological education has quickly followed. Many Bible schools and seminaries have been established so that pastors might be equipped locally for church leadership. However, these schools have not always established with a consideration for the impact of culture and context on education.

In conjunction with the rise of globalization, the literature on business leadership has directed more attention to these matters, most notably in the work of Hofstede (2001) and the Globe Study led by House and associates (2004). Their work has produced a taxonomy of cultural values expressed specifically in the context of leadership. Hofstede (2001) describes a set of six dimensions that provide axes around which to organize the discussion. Those dimensions include:

- power distance
- collectivism/individualism
- aggression/consideration
- fatalistic/proactive (also uncertainty avoidance and attitude to the environment)
- generative/repetitive (i.e. innovation vs. adoption of existing ideas)
- limited relationships/ holistic relationships (also referred to as the democratization of relationships and special relationships).

Dimmock and Walker (2004) contribute additional dimensions for use in the organizational structure including process and outcome orientation, task and relational dimensions, professional/parochial orientation, (also international versus local contributions), open or closed approaches to resources, and orientation toward control. The Globe study

recasts similar ideas in nine dimensions and six leadership behaviors (House, Javidan, and Dorfman 2001).

Hofstede's work has received important critique, particularly related to the generalizations made from the study and the danger of restrictive definitions of societal culture that do not account for breadth and diversity within national groups (Jiang 2006, Graen 2006). The categories are necessarily comparative, but some critique valuation found in Hofstede's work that seems to create a sense of a "good" or successful culture, thus moving from descriptive to prescriptive in ways that favor Western tendencies (Fougere and Moulettes 2007, Carbaugh 2007). Other understandings of culture dynamics also exist including greater emphasis on the differences in how cultural groups pursue solutions to specific problems (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1998).

Hofstede maintains that the cultural dimensions function, as evidenced by the considerable data in the GLOBE study (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). In addition, Hofstede offers a helpful reminder with regard the purposes of these dimensions, cautioning that they "are also constructs that should not be reified. They do not 'exist'; they are tools for analysis which may or may not clarify a situation" (2007, 40). Furthermore, some generalization is possible as certain cultural values unite people even amongst diverse nations. For example, India exhibits a sense of cultural unity shaped by deep social and historical roots that is much greater than its political ties, religion and the caste system (Chhokar et al. 2007, 971). Africa also exhibits a sense of cultural unity across the continent despite the numerous ethnic groups and apparent cultural diversity (Diop 1989). In both

many contexts, a heritage of colonialism and shared suffering help cultivate a broader unity across diverse ethnic groups (Chhokar et al. 2007).

Hofstede provides categories for understanding cultural values present within the specific contexts of this research. The Globe study describes strong value in the areas of in-group collectivism, high power distance and humane orientations for the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and South Asia. These values stand in contrast to the Anglo, Germanic and Nordic European cultures that dominate theological education. These contexts rank high in uncertainty avoidance, performance and future orientation (House and Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program. 2004). While caution is warranted with regard to cultural generalizations, these tendencies may prove helpful in understanding the values applied to seeking solutions to societal and even theological issues.

In this research, the purpose of these descriptors is not a categorization of cultures or PhD programs, nor is it the intent to be directly comparative with the West. However, in the field of theological education, the normative and dominant role of the West will naturally bring some level of comparison. The cultural dimensions described in the Globe Study may offer categories and may provide insight into the educational process, research orientations, and communication styles utilized within higher education in theological institutions.

Differences in Reasoning Across Cultures

Recent studies in cultural dimensions of reasoning and learning also show that culture affects thought process and the ways in which people formulate problems, make assessments, and pursue answers and solutions (Altarriba 1993, Glaser and Resnick 1989). First published decades earlier, Kaplan (2001) provides visual descriptors to the "shape of logic" within cultural groups as they reason, communicate, and draw conclusions. Elmer (2002) adds further shapes and descriptors as well. The last fifteen years have produced considerable research exploring the reasoning and epistemology, particularly between East and West (Chi-yue et al. 2000, Choi and Nisbett 2000, Davies 2007, Nisbett 2003, Nisbett et al. 2001, Peng and Nisbett 1999). These cultural descriptors and differentiations help make explicit the tacit aspects of the cultural approaches found in the contexts in which the doctoral programs are being developed. They may also prove helpful for asking questions and creating pedagogy and methodology that not only address contextual issues, but also do so in ways that reflect the culture of the context in which they reside.

One of the more significant differences can be found between holistic and analytic thought (Nisbett 2003). In worldview terms, Hiebert (2008) describes a similar dynamic in terms of algorithmic logic and analogical logic. The examples given to depict the topological, categorical algorithmic approaches resemble western linear logic patterns, while the analogical aligns more closely with Eastern patterns.

Eastern thinking is often described as holistic or dialectical, while Western are analytic or Aristotelian (LaBute 2006). Western logic focuses on the law of non-contradiction and identity whereas a more Eastern approach embraces principles of change

and holism. Repeated studies demonstrate differences between holistic and analytic approaches with regard to field versus object focus and harmony versus goal orientation in tasks. Westerners tend to think categorically while those from the East think more relationally. Asian approaches favor experiential knowledge, while formal logic holds sway in the West (Boduroglu 2009, Choi and Nisbett 2000, Nisbett 2003, Nisbett et al. 2001, Peng and Nisbett 1999, Enns 2005, Shaw 2010).

Rather than juxtapose one way of thinking versus another, theological education can benefit from exploring what Chan and Yan (2007) refer to as areas of convergence and divergence between the two. Enns (2005) also attempts to draw from the strengths of both Asian and Western cultures within theological education. Eastern cultures bring strengths in observation and integration. Collectivist cultures develop skills in observation because one has a need to fit in (Boduroglu 2009, Ji, Schwartz, and Nisbett 2000). Relational thinking and a bias toward the "field focus" versus "object focus" help develop "big picture" and integrated thinking (Enns 2005, Peng and Nisbett 1999). In addition, non-linear approaches accommodate complexity and holistic approaches; whereas propositional statements tend to truncate matters into clear, simple, statements (Chang 1981). Finally, with a higher tolerance for ambiguity and a sense of exploring paradox, Asian methodology may be better able to "perceive and comprehend Christian truth beyond logic and rationality" (Lee 1999, 272).

Western thought receives less explicit treatment in the literature because it is the dominant paradigm, especially in academia. However, its strengths draw on a rich history

that has developed much of written theology providing, analytic and categorical expression, as well as systematic theological development (Enns 2005).

An approach that creates space for both Asian and Western perspectives has direct implications for new PhD programs. First, dissertation topics might be viewed differently when conceived from a more Eastern framework. Rather than delving deeper into some new area of theology, defining original theological work as a weaving together of existing ideas into new patterns might make sense. By moving from analytic to more holistic reasoning, students are free to engage interdisciplinary approaches that are better able to bridge theory and practice, and can produce more collaborative work (Enns 2005). The research on cognitive differences between analytic and holistic thought has value as it connects directly to the current research on doctoral education in general, as well as the stated desires for contextual programs in particular.

Summary

This section has explored some of the broader literature on cultural issues in order to better frame the discussion of contextual doctoral programs. As discussed in the first section, these programs have an expressed desire to engage their cultural contexts in ways that go beyond simply geographic location. To do so, however, requires some new language and categories for what, how and where this contextual engagement might occur. Worldview provides a deep-rooted, core cultural framework that is commonly understood by insiders, but largely assumed, and implicit as well. Comparative education reinforces the importance

of context for a school. Culture, both societal and organizational, has direct impact on the leadership and the core technology of a school.

The new and emerging doctoral programs have an opportunity to explore questions about their cultural impact and reflection within the PhD construct. Because the programs have a stated desire to meet needs that are not met by Western training, the areas of curriculum and teaching and learning ought to engage cultural dynamics that reflect some of the latest research on cultural differences in values, cognitive patterns, and approaches to problems. These bodies of literature offer categories for the description of this cultural reflection and areas in which such cultural distinctives might be manifest.

Adult Learning Practices

A third area of literature that emerged in the research related to adult learning practices. As the pinnacle achievement in formal education, the doctorate naturally has a concern for learning. Recent studies in doctoral education have given more attention to the relationship between pedagogy and the doctorate (Danby and Lee 2012). Learning refers to the product of education, often described as the acquisition and mastery of what is already known (i.e. existing content). It can also refer to the process through which new meaning is created out of experience and prior knowledge base, as well as a function in the organized and intentional process of seeking solution to encountered problems (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011, 34).

Historically, education has focused on the activity of teaching, often conceived as disseminating content from teacher to student. Increasingly, especially among

adult students, a shift has occurred placing greater focus on the learner and the learner's needs and perspective (Brookfield 1987, Vella 1995). The shift moves from the teacher as the locus of activity to the student.

Andragogy

Coined by Knowles (1980), andragogy refers to an approach to adult education as differentiated from pedagogy. Andragogy, therefore, stresses the difference in learning between children and adults. Pedagogy, as the name indicates, was developed for the teaching of children, often through memorization or indoctrination. Up until the nineteenth century much of the general approach of education had derived from medieval times when schools primarily trained boys for the priesthood. In pedagogy, the teacher has the primary responsibility to determine the content, location, timing and even whether learning will take place (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011). In contrast, andragogy focuses on adults, placing the responsibly and the focus on the learner. The core principles of andragogy include: (1) Self-directed learning; (2) a high value on the experience of learners; (3) a value on application of learning (4) Learning centered on solutions to problems (as opposed to content). Learning is self-directed, place a value on experience, a focus on life application and centered on problems and solutions as opposed to content or knowledge (Knowles 1980).

Learner-focused education moves beyond the banking theory described by Freire (2000) in which students are vessels to be filled. Instead, learner focused education views students and teachers as partners in the creation of knowledge. As such, the student takes ownership and responsibility for their learning. The process becomes self-directed and

the student develops critical thinking skills to better engage in further learning (Brookfield and Preskill 2005, Brookfield 1987). One of the challenges of this shift lies in overcoming the conditioned dependency on the teacher through prior schooling. Such change can be a form of “culture-shock” when students are exposed to educational approaches that require them to participate in the process (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011, loc. 2091). Deeply conditioned by their previous experiences and schooling, students will continue to operate in one framework until the assumptions are challenged (Mezirow 1991).

Andragogy values the experience of the student as part of the orientation to life application and connection. Resources for learning include the teacher’s expertise, course learning materials (books, readings, etc.) and the experience of the learners in the course. Students learn through the analysis of the “rich learning resource” of their experiences and those of their colleagues (Knowles 1980, 50). As a facilitator, the teacher listens to the to the adult learner’s experience, so that together teacher and student can build on that experience and knowledge base from what is already known to that which is new (Vella 2000).

Vella (1995) states that an active process promotes the most effective learning in adults. Applied and engaged learning also move from discipline defined learning to more problem focused learning in which the learners seek solution to the issue at hand rather than content mastery. Problem centered learning draws on experience, prior knowledge and opportunities for new learning rather than accumulation of facts for a later date. Knowles (1980) states that adults learn best when they are engaged in the process of their own learning, including the planning, implantation, and evaluating of the experiences.

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning is a process through which adult learners make meaning of their experiences (Cranton 2006). The transformative learning cycle begins with disruption and critical analysis of held assumptions that now stand in conflict with new ideas. When confronted with new information or experiences that do not fit into current meaning frameworks, the learner often experiences disequilibrium and must find a way to make sense of the new concepts. Implicit assumptions are revealed, new frameworks tried and ultimately transformation happens when the learner can assimilate the new information into a coherent framework that brings a new understanding of reality (Mezirow 1991). The new or revised interpretation will guide future action (Cranton 2002, Taylor 2008). Key components of transformative learning include the introduction of new ideas and critical analysis of one's own underlying assumptions and prior experiences. For the teacher, a key role in facilitating the process is to offer alternative perspectives for consideration (Brookfield 2000). Additional work on transformative learning also offers insight into the role of group and peer dialogue as components of critical reflection (Taylor 2008). Colwill (2012) advocates transformative learning as a particularly helpful schema for understanding the personal identity transformation of doctoral students who must navigate the inherent disequilibrium of the doctoral process as they move into new and more complex identities as scholars, researchers and colleagues. Transformative learning draws on Freire (2000) in promoting empowerment of the learner (Cranton 2006). For doctoral students, the transformative journey will develop scholars who have the "courage and confidence to take risks, to make

mistakes, to invent and reinvent knowledge and to pursue critical and life long inquiries in the world, with the world and with each other" (Lin and Cranton 2005).

Role of Dialogue in Adult Learning

Dialogue can play a key role in adult learning. Through dialogue, learners encounter new ideas, experience challenges to uncritically accepted assumptions, and are presented with alternative frameworks (Cranton 2002). Discussion opens the group to a broader knowledge base by creating space for the expertise and experiences of the group (Slethaug 2007). Peer interaction then helps facilitate critical reflection, individually and collectively, which may lead to transformative learning (Taylor 2008). Cranton explains, "It helps to talk to others, exchanging opinions and ideas, receiving support and encouragement and engaging in discourse where alternatives are seriously weighed and brought forth" (2002, 65).

Dialogue increase motivation for learning because it affords opportunity for direct participation by adult learners (Knowles 1980). It validates participant experience as an important resource and draws on the experiences of peers to further broaden those resources. In dialogue, space is created to explore issues more deeply and discover new things (Cranton 2002). Collaboration fosters collective meaning-making (Colwill 2005, Dahlgren and Bjuremeark 2012). In a dialogue-based environment, doctoral students learn the process of giving and receiving critique, becoming socialized into their roles as professional scholars. Dahlgrenand Bjuremeark assert that in this exchange students begin to

"construe themselves as academics, and where they are construed by colleagues as potential members of a wider academic society" (2012, 62).

Holistic Approaches

Adult learning practices are important for doctoral level theological education because they take a more holistic approach to learning that addresses the fragmentation of knowledge within theological education as critiqued by Farley (1983) and others. Adult learning views knowledge as more than static content, but creative, changing and socially constructed (Colwill 2005, 75). Focus on issues and problems, as opposed to discipline-bounded content, values relevant experiences from the participants and keeps theory rooted in practice.

Such approaches also look for integrative solutions, drawing from multiple knowledge sources and applying knowledge in new ways. This integrative approach represents the inclusion of so called "Mode 2" integrative knowledge in addition to traditional "Mode 1" knowledge that pushes deeper into a particular subject (Boud and Lee 2009). "Mode 2" knowledge correlates with Boyer's (1990) scholarship of integration that looks to build connections across disciplines and draw new understanding in light of a larger whole. Willet stresses the value of transdisciplinary knowledge in promoting integrative approaches that can address real issues that make tangible contributions from their research, a process they term "change creation" (Willetts et al. 2012)

Colwill (2012) emphasizes the role of doctoral students as scholar-practitioners, those who use expert knowledge drawn from both theory and experience to

inform research, decision-making and action in the field. With a concern for both theory and practice, scholar- practitioners meet Huff's (2001) description of boundary spanners, seeking to appropriate value from their multiple identities in the learning process. For many adult learners, scholar- practitioner is an appropriate label that captures their desire to engage in meaningful research and scholarship, while creating change and having impact in the church and society.

Summary

This section has traced some of the literature in adult learning practices, with a focus on areas that emerged in this research on doctoral education. Differentiating andragogy from pedagogy in this instance proves helpful as it gives a vocabulary to an approach that recognizes the unique aspects learning among adults. Specifically, it places the locus of activity on the learner, values experience and more directly connects to reality though seeking solutions to problems as opposed to discipline-bounded content. Transformational learning theory informs the process of disruption and assimilation experienced by many adults as they seek to better understand reality in light of new ideas and critical reflection. Dialogue serves the process well, making use of learner experience, further locating the focus of learning on the student (instead of the teacher) and providing space for collective meaning making. Finally, adult learning practices are more holistic in their approach to both knowledge and the whole person of the learner. This holds value for doctoral education, especially in theological education, as it is in keeping with the development of "stewards of the discipline" and "the formation of scholars."

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This research explored stakeholder perceptions of the contextual engagement of a select group of PhD programs at evangelical institutions located in the Majority World. The research used qualitative methods to discover themes generated by participant responses as they reflected on their experiences in these PhD programs (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007). Qualitative methodology allows the research to investigate the topic in its complexity, through the instruments of observation, document research and interviews in context (Bogdan and Biklen 2007). As qualitative research, it was designed to discover essential characteristics of how the participants describe the contextual engagement of the programs, not as evaluation that determines worth, merit or value of the phenomena studied (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007).

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research.

RQ1: How do students in select evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World describe the contextual engagement within their programs?

RQ 2: How do professors teaching in select Majority World doctoral programs describe the contextual engagement within the doctoral program?

RQ 3: What insights, if any, do the program outputs offer with regard to the contextualization of the program?

Overview of the Research

This research utilized qualitative methods to explore how doctoral programs at select theological institutions in the Majority World engage their context. This research has value as such engagement is both an explicit and implicit value of the growing number of PhD programs established to serve the church in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The research is descriptive in nature and not an attempt to evaluate the level of success or merit of such programs. Rather, it assumed that each program engages its context and sought to identify common themes as well as areas of convergence and divergence as indicated by faculty and student stakeholders.

After obtaining approval for the dissertation proposal and receiving approval from the Protection of Human Rights Committee at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, the researcher invited three schools to participate in this project. Through communication with senior administration at each school (President, Academic Dean and Vice President), a purposeful sampling of faculty and students was invited to participate in the interviews about their experience in the doctoral program.

Research took place on site at each of the three schools located in Bangalore, India, Guatemala City, Guatemala, and Nairobi, Kenya. Prior to visiting the schools, a pilot study was conducted with five international students, including participants from each region - Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This pilot allowed the researcher to make sure that the interview questions made sense within the international settings he would visit. The pilot test allowed the researcher to be more aware of word choice in the interview protocol.

Onsite, the researcher spent time in observation of both campus life and documents related to the doctoral program including completed dissertations, course descriptions and syllabi. The researcher met with faculty and students for semi-structured interviews in order to listen to their descriptions of the PhD program, particularly in its engagement with the context. Observation and interviews are key instruments for qualitative research, appropriate to the purpose of this study, which is to describe stakeholder perceptions of contextual engagement of the respective PhD programs. As descriptive research, the study does not attempt to make judgments or evaluation of that engagement, but rather to analyze themes and issues as described by the participants in the study (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007).

Research Population

The population for this study consisted of students and faculty members studying or teaching in PhD programs at evangelical institutions located in the Majority World. Among the faculty, at least one member had administrative responsibilities at the school. The study focused on stakeholders from three institutions: Central American Theological Seminary (Guatemala), Africa International University's Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (Kenya), and the South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies (India). Their doctoral programs are characterized by relative newness and purposeful attention to the context in which they are located. These schools were chosen because they are recognized for their academic strength and intentional development of their respective doctoral programs. Because this study seeks to explore broader themes of

contextual engagement, illustrated by, but not limited to one particular national context, a combination of schools from Africa, Asia and Latin America was deemed appropriate. Each of these schools is among the earlier developers of PhD level education in their region. Each has graduated students at the doctoral level and admitted multiple classes of PhD students [1]

Africa International University

Founded as Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST), Africa International University (AIU) received a charter from the Kenyan government as a university in 2011. The Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM, now the AEA, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa) created the school to meet the need for "African Biblical theologians with advanced training" who could bring leadership to the African Church. The vision of AIU currently reads, "Christ-centered leaders in Africa, educated to transform God's people and world."[2] AIU now has degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral level. The faculty includes a mix of both indigenous scholars from across Africa and missionary professors, mostly from the West. Most of the missionary faculty members have spent considerable time serving in the context of Africa.

In the early 2000's, NEGST explored the creation of a PhD program, utilizing the research of Starcher and others to determine feasibility and needs for its commencement.

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[1] While the total number of doctoral students in the Majority World has become significant (see chart in appendix 4), it is important to note that most programs remain quite small in both enrollment and number of graduates.

[2] Africa International University http://www.africainternational.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=98:phd-history&catid=62:phd-general-info&Itemid=176. (accessed January 27, 2013).

At its inception, the doctoral program was expressly designed to “meet the needs of Africa and the African church” (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007). Students join the program in cohorts and complete at least two years of coursework prior to comprehensive exams and proposal defense. Most students are in residence, but shifts in the modular format for more recent cohorts allow for greater flexibility in student schedules. A study abroad component, largely focused on library research, is strongly encouraged for the doctoral students.

The PhD program in Biblical and Translation Studies began at AIU began in 2006. A second program in Intercultural Studies followed in 2011. A program in theology began in 2012. At the time of the research, AIU had graduated four PhD students and had a PhD enrollment of thirty-four current students. The program receives accreditation through the Kenyan government.

Seminario Teológico Centroamericano

Central American Theological Seminary (CATS), or Seminario Teológico Centroamericano (SETECA) in Spanish, has the vision to “Develop the best Spanish-speaking leadership for the evangelical community.” SETECA began in 1926 as part of the Central American Mission (now Camino Global) as the Central American Bible Institute. The school became a seminary and Dr. Emilo Nunez, a founding member of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, served as President of the school through the 1970’s. Established to meet the needs of Latin America, over the last twenty years, the school has undergone what one faculty member has called the “indigenization of the faculty” (LF1). The current faculty consists of a mix of Guatemalan and other Latin American professors as

well as Western missionaries. Most missionary faculty members have spent more than two decades in the context of Latin America. The current faculty includes three individuals who have served as President of the school.

In 2004, SETECA began its PhD program in Theological Education to better equip principals, academic deans and professors of evangelical seminaries in Latin America, in the areas of theological reflection and leadership of educational institutions.[3] This program emerged out of an expressed need for better equipped leadership for theological schools expressed by the *Associação Evangélica de Educação Teológica na América Latina* (AETAL) and member schools. As is common in most places in the Majority World, academic leaders have often quickly risen to positions of administration with little training for that position. Originally conceived as a consortium including up to seven schools, for a variety of reasons, the program eventually fell under the ownership of SETECA (LF4, LF6). The *PhD en Educación Teológica* (DET) or El *Doctorado* has included students from at least seven Latin American countries.

Students enter the programs in cohorts that remain together for the two years of coursework. Courses are modular in format, including two separate two-week on-campus modules in January and July. In the intervening time, students engage in weekly online assignments and prepare reading for the next set of courses. Each module combines one course primarily focused on educational issues with a second course focused on theological

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[3] SETECA. “Central American Theological Seminary – Postgraduate Programs.” http://seteca.edu/index.php/postrado/dotorado (accessed January 27, 2013).

reflection. After the coursework, students begin their dissertation writing. At the time of the research, the PhD program had six graduates and 14 currently enrolled students. At the time of the research, the program did not have accreditation (an issue for many theological programs in Latin America), but was exploring solutions through several local universities.

South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies

South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS) exists as a "world-class post-graduate theological institution in South Asia, greatly serving the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ globally." SAIACS strives to provide "biblically and contextually relevant postgraduate programs in India to serve the church in Asia"[4]. They explain that high quality postgraduate programs help to ensure students remain in Asia, address issues relevant to their own context and do so with a better sense of financial stewardship.

The PhD program at SAIACS began in 1997 and offers the PhD across the breadth of its disciplines. As one of the earliest evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World, SAIACS sought to create what one faculty member referred to as a "hybrid" of the North American and European models (IF5). Upon acceptance, students work with faculty members to design a six to nine month series of courses known as their Pre-Doctoral Program (PDP). After its completion, students begin writing their dissertations. At the time of the research, SAIACS had graduated ten doctoral students and had eleven currently

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[4] SAIACS. "South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies – Mission Vision." http://www.saiacs.org/Mission-Vision.html (accessed January 27, 2013).

enrolled students. The PhD program has two accreditation tracks; one through Asia Theological Association (ATA) and another in partnership with Mysore University.

Research Sample

This study utilized a purposeful sample, selected with help from the school administration in each location. Students were those currently enrolled in the doctoral program at the school. Students were selected based primarily on availability. Where appropriate, students were selected from a variety of disciplines. Program numbers are such that a sample of six constituted a significant proportion of currently enrolled students and prevented drawing students from only one discipline. For the purposes of this study, gender was not a consideration in the selection of students as obtaining balance was not possible in all of the programs. Student participants in the study had been enrolled in the programs for varying amounts of time, from second semester first-year students still engaged in coursework, to those in the final stages of their dissertation writing. This breadth was necessary given the student populations, but also allowed for a greater variety of perspectives on how the programs engaged their respective contexts. Students were pursuing their doctorates in the fields of Biblical studies, Theology, Practical Theology (counseling), Intercultural Studies (including Islam and World Christianity). The student participants earning their degrees in Guatemala were concentrated in one field, theology and educational leadership, the only field available through the doctoral program at SETECA. Dissertation topics at SETECA, however, have ranged from biblical exposition to theological analysis to qualitative research on specific educational questions.

Faculty members included those with direct teaching and supervisory responsibly within the doctoral program. Faculty members have taught at least two courses in the program. At least one faculty member also had administrative responsibilities at the level of dean or higher. In every case, senior administrators serve as teaching faculty in addition to their administrative capacities. This make up of respondents allowed the research to seek the extent to which, if any, administrative function adds additional insight to the PhD program, as administrators often have a special charge with regard to the mission of the institution.

At each school, faculty members included both indigenous and missionary faculty. In every case, missionary faculty had more than two decades of experience within their context. Faculty members represented a breadth of disciplines including biblical studies, translation studies, theology, intercultural studies, and higher education. In most instances, faculty members earned their PhD's at Western institutions. Exceptions included one faculty member each at SAIACS and SETECA who were among their institution's first PhD graduates.

In total, the stakeholder sample included a total of 36 respondents, six students and six faculty members from each of the three schools, located in Guatemala, Kenya, and India. Students receiving funding from the researcher's organization, ScholarLeaders International, at the time of the research were excluded from the study.

Instruments

The primary instrument for this study consisted of the interviews with the stakeholders. In addition to one on one interviews with the students, the researcher also

gathered some of the student population for an hour-long focus group to further discuss the PhD program. The researcher read dissertations produced by previous graduates of the program, course descriptions, syllabi and other institutional documents related to the history and creation of the doctoral programs. The researcher also observed other dynamics of campus life, including a doctoral class, chapel and other events on campus as available.

Pilot Testing

In order to assure the validity of the interview protocol, the researcher conducted a pilot test (Seidman 2006). This test took place with five international participants from the Majority World currently studying at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Students were asked to reflect on their Master's studies, which took place within their home contexts. Through the pilot test, the researcher was able to ensure that the questions in the research protocol were understandable to those from Majority World contexts.

Research Procedure

The research adhered to the Human Rights Research protocol submitted to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. After approval, the researcher contacted the senior administration at each school to secure permission to conduct this research. With the help of that administrator, the researcher created a list of potential participants and made contact with each participant to set up a primary interview.

The interviewer spent a minimum of eight days on site at each school between March and June 2013. Prior to conducting interviews, the researcher spent at least two days

in observation and reading on location. This included time in each library exploring completed dissertations from each program. The researcher also read through course descriptions and syllabi, as they were available. In each location, the researcher participated in meals and at least one chapel service on campus.

At the outset of each interview, the researcher clearly explained the purpose of this study and promised to ensure anonymity to the participants. All participants signed the informed consent form (Appendix 1). A demographic questionnaire was used to obtain standard information prior to each interview (Appendix 2).

The study featured a purposeful, convenience sample of stakeholders at each institution. The researcher utilized a "key informant interview" in order to collect data from participants who "have special knowledge or perceptions that would not otherwise be available to the researcher" (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007, 243). In this case such insight came through their roles as institutional cultural insiders engaged in the PhD program at the school.

Interviews were semi-structured following the research protocol contained in Appendix 3. The researcher used a conversational approach to build upon and explore the participants responses to the questions (Seidman 2006). The posture of the researcher was one of exploration and conversation rather than that of an expert researcher with the "best" questions (Creswell and Creswell 2007, 43). At the conclusion of each interview, the researcher asked a final question shaped by appreciative inquiry about what changes the participants would like to see in the program in the coming years (Cooperrider and Whitney 1999). The use of this approach allowed participants to identify gaps in the program without expressly asking about negative aspects.

At each school, the researcher also gathered a portion of the student sample population for a focus group discussion. This conversation provided an opportunity for a member check to explore whether a collective dynamic provided additional information regarding student perspectives on the PhD process that did not surface in the individual interviews (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2007, 238).

At each school, the researcher read available literature about the PhD programs, including the history and creation of the program. In most instances, he attended one or more classes to understand the teaching and learning dynamics within the program better. Because of modular schedules, there were not necessarily all PhD level courses. The researcher attended one course taught by a professor who participated in the study and also teaches at the PhD level, though not during that particular class. In addition, he examined dissertations written by PhD graduates. He also examined other institutional documents including syllabi, course catalogs and other materials as these documents offered an additional angle for understanding the issues of contextual engagement by the doctoral programs. This observation provided contextual background for the interview process (Bogdan and Biklen 2007). These observations and additional sources of information provided a more comprehensive understanding of the research concern, allowing for a triangulation of data to overcome the limitations of any one source and thereby increase the validity of the research (Patton 2002).

As this research was conducted in an international setting, the researcher took great care to build trust and adapted the interview to meet the style and cultural values of each indigenous group (Bogdan and Biklen 2007). According to Seidman (2006),

interviewers and participants of good will can create trust and bridge the barriers of ethnicity through sensitivity, respect and interest in the indigenous culture, despite the cross-cultural setting. Through his work at ScholarLeaders International, the interviewer has considerable experience working with theological leaders from the Majority World and has visited more than two-dozen seminaries located in the Majority World. This experience helped the interviewer strive for a sense of "equity" through a sense of justice and fairness between the participant and the interviewer (Seidman 2006, 109).

Interviews lasted approximately one hour. One interview took place over Skype, as a key informant was not on campus during the time of the researcher's visit. All but three interviews were conducted in English. In those cases, the researcher used a translator so that the interviews could take place in Spanish. The researcher met with the translator to review the interview protocol and familiarize the translator with the research. A process of translation and back translation was used to ensure accuracy of terms and concepts used in the research protocol (Stephens 2009). With prior permission, interviews were recorded digitally on the researcher's iPhone and transcribed after the interview. In addition, the researcher took field notes throughout the interviews and other periods of observation to capture ideas not clearly evident beyond the verbal interview. To protect anonymity, each participant received a separate identity marker for use in the reporting and analysis of the data. All interviews were transcribed and data was then coded and analyzed using HyperRESEARCH software. Codes were analyzed and refined to help identify themes and issues that emerged in the interviews.

Delimitations

This research was delimited to select evangelical PhD programs located in the Majority World. Student stakeholders included currently enrolled doctoral students at these institutions. Faculty stakeholders included those who taught a minimum of two courses taken by doctoral students in the program. Dissertations will be delimited to those of graduates from the respective programs.

Limitations

This research is generalizable only to the select programs that served as participants in this study. While the scope of these regions spans three continents, caution should be used in making any broader generalizations. Findings of the research also indicate opportunities for further research.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research explored stakeholder perceptions of the contextual engagement of a select group of PhD programs at evangelical institutions located in the Majority World. In the course of the research, the following themes emerged from interviews with students and faculty from the three PhD programs featured in this study in response to the following research questions:

> RQ1: How do students in select evangelical doctoral programs in the Majority World describe the contextual engagement within their programs?
>
> RQ 2: How do professors teaching in select Majority World doctoral programs describe the contextual engagement within the doctoral program?
>
> RQ 3: What insights, if any, do the program outputs offer with regard to the contextualization of the program?

Between February and June 2013, the researcher spent a minimum of eight days at each of the three campuses, located in Bangalore, India; Nairobi, Kenya; and Guatemala City, Guatemala. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and then coded with HyperRESEARCH software. Codes were developed based on the responses and refined based on emerging themes (Bogdan and Biklen 2007), While the research questions differentiated students, professors and program outputs (papers, dissertations, etc.), the

categories and themes that emerged spanned these data sources. In addition, while distinctive aspects of each campus and context were evident, the purpose of this research was to identify common themes across the research samples. Therefore, these findings are presented according to three major categories, including sub-themes that were evident, in varying degrees, across all of the data sources and in all three locations. While the difference between faculty and student perspectives warrants special attention at some points (such as their descriptions of the intentions and value of the PhD programs), throughout the research, their answers were generally combined under the major categorical themes.

Reporting includes both descriptive summaries of participant responses and direct quotations from the transcribed interviews. Where noted by quotation marks or in block format, these quotations are the interviewees' words, verbatim, as recorded and transcribed. The quotations reflect the diction and vocabulary of the participants, with as little editing as possible to smooth language. As with most spoken communication, answers at times do not adhere to strict grammatical constructions.

This research sought to capture the emic descriptions of contextual engagement as shared by the stakeholders. The following are their impressions of the doctoral programs. The research does not offer any attempt to measure or evaluate the degree of contextual engagement. Rather, this study seeks to offer description and a framework for understanding how the participants view their respective doctoral programs.

In order to protect anonymity of the respondents, the researcher assigned codes demarking the school by its location, position as faculty or student and a number. AS1

therefore refers to African Student 1; LF4 stands for Latin American Faculty 4; IF6 denotes Indian Faculty 6 and so on.

Through the analysis of the coded transcripts, three major categories were identified. The following will trace significant themes in each of these categories beginning with the program design, moving to issues of worldview and context, and then returning to specific matters related to adult learning theory. Utilizing the diagram based on Dimmock and Walker (2000a) the discussion of results will move from the organizational culture to the broader societal culture, before returning to the specific learning and teaching matters that constitute the "core technology" of the school.

Stakeholder Perceptions of the Intentional Design of the Programs

Missional Intent

As previously described, each of the seminaries and their respective PhD programs has an expressed intent to engage their particular geographic and cultural context. This intent is in keeping with the literature that describes a renewed emphasis on the importance of the purpose of the degree program in the design and implementation of doctoral education (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006, Nerad and Heggelund 2008). Asked to describe why they participate in the doctoral program and to describe the strengths of the program, nearly all of the faculty and students cited engagement with the context as a primary strength and rationale for their own participation in the doctoral program.

Among faculty members, common responses to the question about why they teach in the PhD program included the desire to serve the church and society through their teaching and the training of leaders, the academic rigor of the programs, and the value of students not having to go abroad for their studies. Five of the six faculty interviewed at SAIACS referred to the missional nature of the program that, as one professor stated, serves ‘the church and the mission of God in India” (IF3). In similar fashion, faculty members at SETECA explain that the PhD program serves “the needs of the seminaries in Latin America” (LF1), primarily through the equipping of faculty members and administrators who serve within the context. Another explained, “we wanted to offer something in our area, something more suited to the context.” (LF4). African leaders also point to the mission of the school in general, and the doctoral program in particular, in their rationale for teaching:

> I think we will continue to be relevant because that is our mission and vision. We want to serve Christ, the church and we want to serve society. My hope is that all the PhD programs and work we will do will be geared towards serving the church and serving society. We’ll be very intentional that we ensure that all our programs address these two entities: the church and society (AF5).
>
> I think the only [thing] that I can say is to emphasize that the PhD programs being within the context here is very important, is very good. We began by saying that was the element for which they train here; and the more they live here the more they love their continent and we are not losing them because they are training here (AF4).

When asked why they chose to do their PhD studies at their respective schools, students also stressed the academic rigor of the programs, the need to remain relevant within their contexts, and the personal economic advantages of the program. As

students shared about their choices, several seemed to justify their decisions to remain within context, expressly mentioning acceptance into Western PhD programs.

Students made it clear that they did not view the programs as second tier academic spaces. One student expressed that the program at SETECA was "more rigorous than the universities in Guatemala" (LS2). Another stated that while located in Latin America, the educational level is "at the level of the first world" (LS1). One student expressed a similar sentiment in India stating:

> SAIACS is the only institute, I may be biased, I don't know, but SAIACS is the only institute which can match up that Western standard and yet remain in India. I have no difficulty in choosing SAIACS for its academic standard at the international level which can match any institute in the world; and for its evangelical faith (IS3).

Students also stressed the contextual engagement of the doctoral programs as a primary reason for their choice to study there. For example, one Indian student explained that students who study at SAIACS are doing so to wrestle with the issues that matter to the church in India (IS3). One Latin American student explained, "At this point it is the only doctoral program born in Latin America ... It's born in Latin America to Latin America" (LS5). African students also expressed similar sentiments:

> I chose to do a PhD for academic reason, but also with what I get academically, I want also to be involved in the development of the church in Africa, so put into practice what I have gained and learned from my research. The philosophy of the school [means that when you] prepare for an exam but you have to show how this will apply for a church in Africa. (AS6)

This engagement was seen in the relevance of the courses and practical engagement with issues that matter in their contexts. As another student explained in both his rationale for

remaining in Africa, and a desire to see his own program continue to improve its engagement with the context:

> It's more like to stay in my context, to be able to engage the issues within my context and also deal with issues within my context … staying within the African context helped because at least I'm learning more to engage quite a number of issues that are relevant to the African context.... I feel that AIU could still make the content more African. There's still room for improvement but it's still better than going outside the context of Africa. (AS5)

Addressing Issues of Achievability

A majority of faculty and students who participated in the research commonly referenced what Starcher and Stick (2003) refer to issues of "achievability" (i.e. time, distance and cost) among the advantages of remaining in context. Spending five or more years abroad is not desirable, especially for students with families (IF1, IF5, LF3, AS3, IS3). Time away creates problems for both the scholars and their families upon reintegration and adjustment (IF1, AF6). One African student summed up a common sentiment among the participants when he said:

> That is why I said let me do it at AIU where it will be cheaper and also where I know I will not have to struggle with adjustment to new places and so on. Still, if there was an opening for me to go elsewhere I would have loved it, but if it is giving priority, I think AIU is my preference because it is at home, always at home. Then the cost, especially financial obligations. That was my fear. Doing it also here in Africa within the context because if I know if I go to do it elsewhere and come back to Africa I would have probably to adjust maybe to the situation here, but if I do it here where I am I think I'll not have to struggle so much with the adjustment. I will do it and if it is going elsewhere I would love to do it from Africa. If it is even teaching or contributing toward other things as well, let me do it from Africa, from here. (AS4)

Many schools fear that if they send faculty abroad for training, those teachers will remain in the West after they complete their degrees (IF5). Issues of achievability have also contributed to the loss of students who have studied in the West. Losing touch with the context, accumulating debt, and becoming increasingly connected o the West and Western culture to some scholars remaining in the West after their studies. For this reason, contextually situated programs have an express purpose to keep students at home. One professor summed it up well, “One of the things that made me feel like it is something that is needful, of course that was at the mention of you send people to study outside the country, they finish their PhD’s and we lose them” (AF4). SAIACS states this as a purpose for the school’s existence, one echoed by several faculty members when they explained the value of a SAIACS PhD:

> Yes, SAIACS by ethos was born to stop the influx to the West. I mean that was the main reason SAIACS was formed. We need an evangelical alternative to higher education to both Serampore,[1] which gives a liberal education liberal in the doctrinal sense, and more people who have to go abroad to a US-based institution and never come back. That ethos is very strong. (IF5)

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[1] The Senate of Serampore traces its roots to William Carey and other early Western missionaries in India. It was the first school to be recognized as a university. Working with the Western equivalent of mainline denominations, Serampore controls the theological curricula and degrees across India. Evangelical programs more frequently associate with Asia Theological Association (ATA) for their accreditation. Serampore churches do not recognize ATA degrees. At SAIACS, the partnership with Mysore University provides an alternative for students who might work with Serampore churches or theological schools.

Formation of Scholars Who Serve the Church in Context

Another area related to the missional intent of these programs was found in the formation of scholars who will serve the context through their work as teachers and theologians, who will ultimately impact both the church and society. The focus on impact on society within the PhD program aligns with the recommendations in the Carnegie Initiative and Bologna Process to promote research that serves society (Golde and Walker 2006, Boud and Lee 2009, Walker 2008).

Like other research doctorate programs in the Majority World, the three programs in this study have an expressed purpose to train teachers and leaders to serve the church. Both faculty and students expressed the need for development of skills in the primary activities of the scholar to teach and train others (AS5). Students also expressed the need for simply more scholars in total, as the current numbers are small (AS2). One student shared that he hopes to teach because "most of our church leaders are not theologically trained, because we do not have quality people to train them" (AS1).

In a similar way, faculty members also recognized the great need for developing contextually rooted teachers who will ultimately train the pastors and Christian workers within their contexts. One faculty member sees this as the purpose of the program, "equipping teachers who will make a difference within the context" (IF1). Most of the graduates from all three programs take on positions as teaching faculty or academic leadership. At SAIACS, "60% if not 80% will teach" (IF2). Students at SETECA can only enter their program having had experience as faculty or administrators (LF5, LF6, LF1).

As theologians in the broadest sense, doctoral students can also meet a need for theological reflection and writing. Both faculty and students expressed this need (AF6, IS2, LF2, AS1, IF5). Such writing is important given the apparent lack of contextually relevant resources. In addition, through writing, scholars enter the global theological discourse. One student expressed this sentiment saying:

> I felt that I will have a contribution to make toward, let's say toward the scholarship in Africa. Not only in Africa, I also feel that with the PhD then I will be even more open to other parts of the world. Whatever I'm going to contribute in Africa could as well be useful for other parts of the world. I felt the need to do a PhD, to do my education at the PhD level for, let's say for more visibility and even contributions I will make toward the scholarship in this continent of Africa. (AS4)

Whether in reference to dissertations or to other papers and program outputs, more than two-thirds of respondents explicitly noted the value of doctoral education in service to the church. This value often stood in contrast to something purely theoretical that remained only in the academy. As one participant contrasted the "abstract, irrelevant, pleasing the university kind of papers" with those that asked the question, "what difference does it make to the church" (IF5). To serve the church, students need to remain close to the church, to understand the church, to serve the church (IF5, AS6, IS2).

The programs also have a deep sense that they are called to serve the broader societies in which they are situated. This places a greater focus on the issues found in a society and drives many of the scholars to produce dissertations consistent with a push for more "socially relevant" scholarship (Boud and Lee 2009, 38). SETECA looks to produce academic leaders who will help the church engage the broader society and continue to have an impact on society, a theme more prevalent in Latin American theology (LS1). The ability

to understand society and communicate effectively with it helps bring scholarship out of the "ivory tower" and allows the scholar to "answer the questions [the people] are actually asking" (AF3) or to respond to the "questions, felt needs, real needs, needs that are part of the context" (LS3). One faculty member declared service to society as the unique legacy of his institution:

> We'll be very intentional that we ensure that all our programs address the concerns of these two entities: the church and society. I hope that it will be the distinctive we will have here and pursue that and develop that in the future so that we will leave us a strong legacy from this institution to reflect passionately about the issues the church in Africa is facing but all the issues society is struggling with. We must speak definitely to these issues and concerns. (AF5)

Participants in the study consistently noted the intentional design of the doctoral programs to engage the context in which they are located. This value included a concern for achievability in doctoral studies. In addition, both faculty and students note the importance for the programs to produce PhD scholars who can teach and write in service to both the church and society.

Explicit Curriculum

The "doctoral journey" includes the greater breadth of experiences the student accumulates during the totality of the pursuit of the PhD, including both explicit and implicit components to the curriculum (Leonard and Becker 2009, Maki and Borkowski 2006). The explicit components are those overtly stated items, including degree requirements, assigned readings, courses and papers (Eisner 1994). Echoing the warning of Sadler a century before, several faculty and students mentioned the ineffectiveness of simply transplanting curricula

from the West (AF5, AS5, IS4, IS5, LS1, LS4, LF4) (Crossley, Chisholm, and Holmes 2005). However, most participants also commented on some of the explicit components of curricula that have been developed intentionally to create the courses and requirements that fit the “soil” of the context.

Course Design

All three schools utilized some amount of coursework in their programs. At both SETECA and NEGST, this course work requires approximately two years of courses for most students. At SAIACS, the courses fall under the Pre-Doctoral Program (PDP) that generally lasts nine months to a year. In the PDP phase, student and mentor work together to create a mix of courses and readings to prepare the student for the dissertation proposal. During the time since it began, the PDP phase has increased in duration from a minimum of three months, to include a provision for up to a year of coursework. In each case, the coursework builds toward the student’s dissertation (AF2, AF6, IS2, IF6, LF2).

At each school, faculty members and students both mentioned particular courses that are designed to focus on the context. Courses such as African Worldview (NEGST), Contextual Theology (SAIACS), Theologies and Worldviews or Teaching and Learning in Latin America (SETECA) are examples, each mentioned by multiple participants, which directly address their respective contexts. Stakeholders described these courses as ones that provided opportunities for addressing specific issues related to the context. In addition, these courses provide opportunity for critical reflection on how theology and theological education are done in the process. Reflecting on a course that required

students to analyze syllabi from a number of schools in Latin America, one SETECA student noted:

> Then there is another class that is called curriculum and in that class, what it looks for is that one should have a curriculum, the curriculum should have to answer the needs in Latin America. And that class was very interesting because we noticed that many curriculums of our institutions, they were just like importing curriculums from the United States. That is sometimes natural, normal, because our institutions were founded by Americans. So in some institutions were still teaching about curriculums, not analyzing, like without contextualizing with the Latin American culture. (LS1)

But both students and faculty saw the coursework portions of the degree program as important for addressing issues and for helping to cultivate a pattern and process of contextual engagement.

Course Assignments

Faculty and students consistently identified course outputs, most often expressed through written papers, as another opportunity for contextual engagement. As one professor stated, “I would say that all the papers, they deal with, at least in my class, are all contextual papers” (AF5). Program outputs were a rich source of examples of how students bring their studies to bear on the context in which they live. For example, several students and faculty at AIU mentioned a course paper written by one female student (who was not interviewed) related to the issue of barrenness and its implications, biblically and culturally, in Africa (AF6, AF3, AS6, AS5). One student in India referenced his work on the political ramifications of missionary work after Indian independence and a reduction in foreign missionary presence (IS5). Most of the assignments in the SETECA doctoral program require participants to utilize case studies from their current schools or ministry contexts (LS1).

Course assignments engage the context because they most often deal with issues that are "real and present" in the lives of the students (AF6).

Despite the exuberance about the contextual nature of the course assignments, a minority of respondents expressed that they did not, or perhaps should not, engage the context. For example, one professor firmly believes exegetical work should precede contextualization and perhaps best be done "for its own sake" (much like the hard sciences), without a direct need for contextual application (IF4). He further expressed that this is a minority view at the school. However, his approach is motivated by a great fear that the work done at his institution would be relegated to the margins as "parochial" theology outside of the mainstream of biblical studies. His position reinforces the critique of the marginalization of non-Western theological approaches (Kang 2010).

One student also offered a counter argument, stating that several of the courses have not engaged the context and that the papers have not helped as much as he thought they should (AS6). Other students, especially in Biblical studies expressed the difficulty of producing contextually relevant work, but also saw examples of success in the midst of the challenge (IS3, AS1).

Academic Disciplines and Contextual Engagement

With the exception of SETECA, which offers the PhD focused only in the area of theological education, the research included professors and students across several academic disciplines in the seminary. Naturally, those pursuing research in a more applied discipline such as Intercultural Studies or World Christianity found it easier to engage the

context from within their studies. Missions has an advantage of dealing with issues directly on the field (IF1, AF6). Intercultural Studies more easily addresses traditional African thought and other cultural issues while World Christianity has an inherent interest in writers from the context (AS5). On the other hand, those in biblical studies expressed greater challenges in addressing contextual issues, in part because of differing philosophical and exegetical approaches. One student expressed his frustration stating that, "I may not have specific things to tell the community as I'm writing my dissertation because ... we were taught if you go that way that will not be biblical studies." Another student, who was in his final dissertation phase described mixed messages about the role of context in his research,

> for us in biblical studies, there are some people who think we should just deal with biblical text and leave it there but there are those who think no, no, no, no; you need to deal with biblical text and then you tell us how that biblical text can be, offer help there are problems, any problems maybe in African Christianity or in church in Africa. (AS1)

Another professor expressed a similar tension with regard to the work in the biblical studies department:

> To me, the commitment to make biblical studies somehow relevant to current African life is a great goal but you've got centuries of inertia to overcome in a way ... because most biblical scholars are not that concerned and the whole ethos of the discipline, the kind of academic weight of the discipline, is not towards relevance of any sort ... I think for most biblical scholars including even our African faculty here is first you figure out what the text means, then you apply it to Africa at the end so Africa is always chapter seven of your dissertation. (AF2)

Another Indian student also expressed this contrast between biblical studies and the other disciplines of his doctoral studies colleagues:

> Basically biblical studies is slightly difficult- Biblical studies, because I have seen several thesis including my thesis, that it becomes difficult to do the

> application thing because it has so much that if you have to do justice with theology or theoretical part there's not much space to apply to the Indian context. It is difficult, at least to be honest with you. For the other discipline like pastor theology, missiology or religion or any other discipline, yes, I would say both their dissertation and their PDP is designed in such a way that it does serve the purpose of church in India and the mission cause in India, no doubt about it. (IS3)

Both students and faculty perceived a difference in levels of engagement, with a consensus that contextual engagement was more difficult in the biblical studies departments. However, as evidenced by both faculty members and students in that department, several participants are trying hard to find new ways to make their biblical scholarship relevant to the context and to champion a different approach within their disciplines (IS3, AS1, AS2, IF2, AF2).

Structured Interaction Outside of Class

In addition to the formal coursework, each program has structured interactions beyond the classroom that stakeholders identified as important for contextual engagement. The "Doctor Club" at SAIACS provides a forum for students and faculty to interact together through the presentation and critique of papers. Most of the SAIACS students mentioned the Doctor Club considering it "really helpful in dialoguing with the Indian context" (IS5).

In a similar way, both faculty and students at NEGST identified formal opportunities for students to present papers and receive feedback from both professors and peers as an important contextual element to the doctoral program. This interaction most often occurred within the cohort structures at the school (AS5, AS2).

Finally, the modular and online design of the doctoral program at SETECA requires weekly interaction between faculty and students, especially during the weeks spent

away from class. Students post papers and engage in threaded discussions online. While the course requires a minimum number of postings, most dialogues continue beyond the compulsory interaction. During the online components, the cohorts are disbursed back to the ministries throughout Latin America. Though mediated through technology, the students perceived this interaction as genuine and important dialogue that enhanced the contextual engagement of the course (LS1, LS6, LS5).

Students and faculty members at all three schools gave examples of the contextual engagement of the explicit elements of the doctoral curriculum in their doctoral programs. Course content, assignments, and structured interaction inside and outside of the classroom all contribute to the contextual engagement of the doctoral programs. A minority of the participants expressed frustration over courses and papers that did not provide enough contextual engagement. One professor expressed opposition to an emphasis on contextual engagement from within the discipline of Biblical studies.

Implicit Curriculum

The doctoral experience incorporates more than just the formal aspects of the degree (Leonard and Becker 2009, Boud and Lee 2009). According to Eisner (1994) the implicit curriculum of the school relates to what students learn through the "kind of place" a school is. In every interview, students and faculty both described non-formal aspects of the school and the doctoral program that engaged the context. In a sense, this is how the local and societal culture rings described by Dimmock and Walker (2000a) impact the doctoral program. One Indian student captured the effect of these elements stating,

“Everything is part of the PDP, you eat in the commons, you attend the chapel, you interact with the people, how you behave, everything is a part of the program. That gives kind of a unique thing that we learn with the people, the circumstances, the academics” (IS5).

The Campus Community

Participants frequently listed aspects of the campus community as helpful for engaging the context. At SAIACS, the majority of faculty and students referenced the communal meals as something that makes the program “Indian.” During the researcher’s time at the school, he ate in the dining hall nearly every day for lunch, directly experiencing the role the midday meal plays in the community. In both the formal interviews as well as the informal conversations as the researcher scooped rice and curry with this fingers, students and faculty both explained that from the beginning the dining hall brought the entire community together. Several people explained that they all ate together, “from the Principal to the gardener,” in an effort to counter the strongly segregated caste mentality of India with a biblical affirmation of all people as created in the image of God (IF3). In this way, the campus community embodies the theological conviction of the school.

Participants mentioned meals and hospitably on all three campuses. In addition, multiple students and faculty shared about cohort retreats as a key part of the development of a strong community on campus. Both SETECA and AIU have included group trips in the PhD experience. While the trip has an explicit purpose for library study or other learning (such as a trip to Israel for Biblical Studies students at NEGST), students and faculty both reflected on the impact such travel has had on the campus community and

building stronger student relationships.

At SAIACS, students participate in weekly cell group meetings and the cohorts at AIU regularly meet together for formal and informal interactions. One student explained how this allowed learning to continue beyond the classroom, "it's both within and outside class because after the classes you still engage issues. You still meet together. You still talk. You even sound each other of ideas that you have and even for your research or something like that so it's both in class and in outside class" (AS5).

Students at SETECA also described the relationships within each of their cohorts as quite close (participants spanned three different cohorts from the school). One student described the importance of these relationships stating, "I'm really grateful for [the cohort] because we've built a really close bond with students. When we get together for modules it's just like homecoming. We just really have enjoyed being together because we're almost daily in contact on the internet" (LS6).

Chapel and Worship

Hiebert (2008) explains the importance of ritual in cultivating cultural identity and worldview. In this study, students and faculty at each school referred to the role of chapel in the campus community. The researcher attended at least one chapel service at each campus and was able to observe some of the phenomena expressed by the students. The chapel service at SETECA was the least distinctive and mentioned infrequently as a core part of community life, perhaps because those students spend the least amount of time physically on campus. Students did, however, speak of devotional and prayer aspects in their online

interactions. At AIU, contextual elements of the worship service in chapel included songs in English and in Kiswahili. The greatest distinction came at SAIACS. In keeping with Indian custom, participants removed their shoes outside the chapel. Songs reflected a mix of Indian and Western styles and included at least three languages. One student described a periodic service focused exclusively on an Indian style of worship:

> We have Indian style of worship. In any case, after I came to SAIACS for my PhD we started something called indigenous worship. It happens once a week. Sometimes we remove chairs and sit on the floor or sometimes even if we sit on chairs we sing Hindi songs or indigenous songs and worship in an indigenous way. (IS3)

Architectural Style

A lesser, but discernable aspect of contextual engagement was observed in what Hiebert (2008) refers to as "signs," notably in the architectural style of the campuses. In addition to factors such as protective walls and security guards that are so common in the Majority World, each campus had one or more buildings designed to reflect local style. SETECA and AIU exhibited this to a less distinctive degree. However, it was seen in the Latin style of the newest buildings at SETECA, as well as the unique round shape of the Kijiji Guest house on campus at AIU. In its promotional literature, SAIACS highlights some of the uniquely Indian architectural style on its campus, particularly the chapel building and the prominent dome atop the academic building. Students also remarked about this reflection stating,

> Beginning from SAIACS even the buildings, the architecture. It's a combination of West and East to give a different cultural identity. Very much we don't want to lose the Indian-ness. Especially when you look at the chapel and the main building with the dome over here. You don't have very much in

> the West this kind of thing, so just to give an Indian look. It all starts here. (IS2)

Building styles do not ensure contextual relevance, but they are what Hiebert (2008) refers to as “signs,” outwardly visible markers that reinforce cultural identity and worldview. At the schools, these serve as an affirmation of the context, a visual reminders of the place in which the students live and serve.

Engaging the Context Beyond the Campus

Students and faculty also highlighted ministry and engagement opportunities beyond the confines of the campus. Moving beyond the proverbial “ivory tower,” a majority of participants directly mentioned opportunities outside the campus that help students and faculty remain “rooted in the context” (AF3). Faculty members often referred to their own preaching and ministry involvement as a way in which the context informs their work as professors. Students, many of whom continue to serve in churches and schools during their doctoral studies, also expressed similar sentiments. In addition, the role of “Context Based Learning” at SAIACS was quite evident. Half of the students and faculty members interviewed mentioned it directly, despite the fact that doctoral students are exempt from participating in this field-based learning program (IS2, IS5, IS4, IF2, IF3, IF4). The program, however, clearly shapes the culture of the institution. At NEGST, assignments and field based research required students to engage their broader communities. This was especially evident in the Islamic Studies program. Interviews with Muslims increased dialogue and helped to break a pattern in which most churches do not regularly engage with the Muslim community (AF6). One long time faculty member described some of the changes taking

place at SETECA over the last decade; changes that he attributes in part to the presence of the doctoral program and that most of the current leadership are either professors or students within the program. He reported:

> I see a new focus on the context around the seminary that has come out of this program. Just in the last few years the seminary is saying we need to get out and reach the community around us. That is something we didn't have before. It was on leadership - being out there and having people follow us. Now it is seeing the community that needs reaching out to. (LF6)

The context remains before students and faculty continually, a value, clearly expressed by faculty and students, as contributing to the contextual engagement of the PhD programs.

Other Contextual Realities Evident on Campus

Spending extended time at each campus served as a reminder of some of the regular challenges that face students pursuing their studies in doctoral programs located in the Majority World. However, most of these challenges are "regular life" in these contexts. For instance, in both India and Kenya, power failures happen regularly. In fact, such power outages occurred during most of the interviews in Bangalore and occurred at least daily in Nairobi. At SAIACS, a generator provides power to the library, dining hall and academic buildings, allowing these spaces to function within minutes of a power outage. However, student and faculty residences often experience extended blackouts because of the general overtaxing of the power grid in the city.

Stressed infrastructure affects power supply (and the water supply in Bangalore) and internet bandwidth in all locations. Slow internet access, especially during peak times of the day, affects research and communication for the doctoral students. It also

impacts the outside mentors and the development of online courses and ongoing interaction. Online access at SETECA is generally better, which is critical for the program. However, that does not hold true in every location in which the students participating in the DET program reside. In addition, students from Cuba also face certain online prohibitions from the government that are part of their own contextual reality.

Realities of life in the Majority World, such as the prevalence of poverty, were evident as one walked near each campus. Issues faced by family members, often made known through prayer requests shared in chapel also remind participants of the context in which they live. During the interviews at NEGST, one student was still recovering from a recent bout of malaria. He came to the interview stating it was the first time in several days he had been able to get out of bed. Malaria is not uncommon among students and families in Kenya.

Finally, the most common topic mentioned by every student and a large majority of the faculty had to do with the constant financial pressures faced by participants in the doctoral program. While financially strapped students are not unique phenomena anywhere in the world, the pressure felt by those in these programs seemed even more acute because of the context. Students look to the schools for scholarship support. The schools are looking to the churches to help as they do with master's level students. However, churches may be less inclined to give toward scholarships for doctoral students because the graduates do not return to serve the churches directly in pastoral roles as they do with master's degrees. The schools themselves seem to face significant financial challenges, a reality evident on one campus in the midst of a publicly acknowledged crisis. However, the researcher also noted

that for many of the participants, like the erratic power supply, such financial pressures are simply "regular life" and served as one more reminder that the students were studying within the context.

The "doctoral journey" includes much more than the official curriculum. Community interactions and other aspects related to the physical situation of the campus all contribute to the "kind of place" in which the doctoral program happens. Participants explained that these informal aspects keep the programs constantly connected to the context. Such realities are, therefore, not distant or disconnected from the theological reflection, research and application that comprise the three doctoral programs.

Dissertations

Responding to the Local Needs

In keeping with the trends in the literature on doctoral education, each of these programs places a value on dissertations that are "socially relevant" (Nerad and Heggelund 2008, Boud and Lee 2009). Dissertations that serve the church and address contextual issues have been one of the organizing principals for the launch of new PhD programs within the Majority World, addressing a perceived gap in the output of programs based in the West (Poerwowidagdo 2003, Starcher 2003, Vikner 2003). With minor exception, students and faculty consistently referred to the importance of dissertations that address relevant issues. Listing a whole series of problems faced by the church in Africa, one student explained his desire to do research saying, "These are issues we need to address theologically" (AS4).

Similarly, one professor in Latin America explained that the program produces dissertations that "address real and practical issues related to theological education and institutional development" (LF1). Another student explained how the needs of the community brought him to his topic, "It [my topic] just burdens me that this needs attention and I start asking questions" (AS6).

One professor, whose own studies were conducted in a way that kept biblical exegesis entirely separated from the context, explained that she now enthusiastically looks for contextual opportunities in a dissertation, stating, "In fact, contextualizing a thesis is what makes a thesis worth supervising for me now, which is a long way to come from 2006 when I thought it wasn't even anything that belonged to biblical studies. That's been my journey" (IF2). In each location, students and faculty alike regarded the dissertation as an opportunity to respond to the needs of the context with serious theological reflection.

Another common theme was the juxtaposition of relevant dissertations against those that only serve the academy. One faculty member shared, "Our approach is not just to satisfy academic curiosity, but is solution oriented. The solution has to be based on the fair academic data which requires highest level of research that should be PhD. But at the same time it will [make a contribution] for further solution to missiological problems" (AF1). Another commented:

> If the school says that it really wants to make a difference in the church and in African society both so that kind of, to me, it implies that we should at least encourage students to do dissertations that are somehow connected with current issues in Africa.... Most of the students seem to really keen on doing something that's relevant and not just a kind of academic thing like we get so often in academia: it's only interesting to ten other scholars in the world. (AF2)

Not all professors feel that such contextual engagement belongs in doctoral research, but that some pursuits can and should be done simply for their own sake,

> I, therefore I belong to a narrow school that says if there is a question worth pursuing it should be pursued in pursuit of truth. Otherwise we will become very parochial. We will not at all be able to engage significantly with vital debates and he would only have perspective here. I will be either as a Dalit or a feminist or as a two-thirds or a majority world person. My percentage will seem to be meeting a particular side or an aspect which others cannot engage so my expertise is there. Now my expertise is more as a perspectival person than as somebody who engages in scholarship …. See the relevance to India is not a question for me. When a person engages in physics or chemistry, he is not looking at relevance to India, but if he looks at tuber crops research or spices research there is definitely a relevance to India ... I don't want our people to just become rubber specialists or spices specialists. I want them to be able to engage in a field of theology. Some will do it only in contextual theology. That is rubber and spices. (IF4)

His comments reflect the concern expressed by contextual theologians that western theology is normative, and all other pursuits are perceived by the dominant culture as localized and particular (Kang 2010, Bevans 2002, Coe 1976).

Global Implications

In addition to the response to local needs, students and faculty also recognized broader implications for the theological work accomplished in the research. One professor summarized this idea saying, "It looks to me like the dissertations that are going to be produced here are going to have a lot of impact on other cultures because we are actually reflecting seriously on some concerns that I think also concern the other parts of the world are struggling with similar issues (AF5). The research will "engage the reality in Africa but in some instance also some parts of the world" (AS4). Explaining how issues focused

research has application beyond the local community, one student commented on the similarities beyond just India with other Asian or African contexts,

> For example, the context of poverty, the context of family life, the context of pluralism, the context of persecution. These all contexts are similar among Asian countries because there is a religion a pluralistic context and a struggle for existence and a struggle for Christian church to exist and develop their own theology. (IS5)

Participants viewed their attention to context as an important contribution to the global theological conversation. Some of this theological reflection and writing, they believed, will be developed and communicated through the dissertation research produced in the programs.

Motivation for Writing

In addition to the broader applicability of practically driven dissertations, several participants reflected on the motivation behind their research. Whether by faculty members who studied in the West, or by those enrolled in contextual programs, the personal narratives of the participants served as reminders that theological reflection never takes place in a vacuum. Context raises questions and issues that students seek to address in their research, “I knew why I had chosen my topic. It was not just for a degree. My research would have impact, or at least that was the hope”(IF5) explained one participant who wrote a highly philosophical dissertation.

As one faculty member noted, motivations for even the most theoretical dissertations are driven by the context (IF3). When sharing about their work, students in both biblical studies and theology referenced personal concerns and societal observations for the selection of their topics. For example, the current political situation in Sudan motivated one

student to choose his work in the book of Judges (AS1). Another has conducted research into the shepherd motif of Ezekiel in response to the traumatized church in the Democratic Republic of Congo (AS6). One Indian student explained how his research on idolatry addresses a significant issue in the Hindu context, though he does not make direct connections to Hinduism in the paper:

> I chose the topic what I'm doing. I'm looking at the iconism, the rationale for an icon even in the Old Testament, because it simply fits with the Indian reality, the Indian context. I should be careful that I'm not accusing others, other religions, but I'm providing a solid theology that anybody who reads through that will understand why idolatry's forbidden in the Old Testament without being critical or without being negative about anybody's religion. (IS3)

Interdisciplinary Aspects in Dissertations

Several of the dissertations discussed include approaches that extend beyond one discipline. This theme may reflect a more holistic view of the world or a desire to provide greater bridges between theory and practice or to address questions that are larger than one discipline can cover (Enns 2005). It may also reflect a tendency to dissertations that better fit under the rubric of "Mode 2 knowledge" that is both more integrated and "refined in a specific and localized context" (Boud and Lee 2009, 17). Literature on transdisciplinary approaches to doctorates offers further support for the use of interdisciplinary methods in doctoral research (Willetts et al. 2012).

At AIU, the initial cohort in the PhD program had an intentionally interdisciplinary approach, mentioned with high regard by several of the faculty members (and at least two students) as particularly valuable to the context.

> I'm a bit apprehensive or cautious about moving forward and not losing what we've had by, and what we've been doing with these first student cohorts of student, which was fairly interdisciplinary and very oriented towards relevance and to the church and so on.… What we need to do is, I think what the opportunity is to loosen up a little bit, have more flexibility, but what I'm afraid is because of the inertia within the university structure, the history of academia in the West, it's much more comfortable to just fall back into your kind of silo approach.... We really have to guard against sliding back into these, the compartmentalized approach. (AF2)

> The way we have structured the thing was to have a theology component in the program so since I was the head of the theology department I was involved in the crafting of the program (in Biblical Studies) so that we have all the aspects that we wanted to give students to make them think broadly about issues, not just from a biblical perspective but also from theological reflection on the issues. That was how it was planned and so there were components that addressed African cultural concepts and issues. (AF5)

At SAIACS, all doctoral students, regardless of department, complete a "double viva" that requires them to submit first to all of the Heads of Department in the school, and then to their committee that includes outside examiners specific to their field. During this first exam, they engage an interdisciplinary group, a process that encourages them to consider their work from multiple vantage points and, at times, address questions raised by those outside their fields (IF3). Instituted primarily to ensure academic integrity and to make sure every department adheres to similar standards of academic rigor, the process inherently brings an interdisciplinary dynamic to the examination.

The integrated nature of the SETECA program assumes an interdisciplinary approach, drawing together the fields of theology and education. Courses are often team-taught by professors from multiple disciplines (LF2, LF1). Each module combines one course in theology with one course in education (LS3, LF6), "so the formation is always integrated [from] both areas, and both courses are complimentary" (LS2).

Specific disciplines remain important in the doctoral programs studied in the course of this research. However, the interdisciplinary elements are in keeping with broader trends in doctoral education as dissertations focused on issues and problems and not just content. Research in these areas shifts from “Mode 1” to “Mode 2” integrative knowledge (Colwill 2012, Boud and Lee 2009) and is keeping with principles of andragogy (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011) that will receive further attention in a subsequent section.

Ambiguity in the Process of Contextual Integration in the Dissertation

While the majority of professors agreed that the schools should “encourage students to do dissertations that are somehow connected with current issues,” how that should be done is not clear (AF2). For SETECA, this was not as great a challenge as the program is more contextually integrated by design. A review of their dissertations shows, with one exception, that students have pursued highly contextual topics. At NEGST and SAIACS, however, the tension was more evident, especially in the disciplines of biblical studies and theology.

With regard to the dissertation, both students and faculty members expressed a need for a more consistent approach to contextual integration. One professor communicated his frustration at leaving all contextual dynamics to the end. “It should not be something tacked on at the end ... the vision in biblical studies, I think for most biblical scholars including even our African faculty here is first you figure out what the text means, then you apply it to Africa at the end so Africa is always chapter seven of your dissertation” (AF2). Another explained that NEGST does not have a set method for integration, stating:

> It may come by way of a chapter in their dissertation that they want to write on or it may come by way of specific application points that they are writing. Sometimes it may be, sometimes it's running through or sometimes may be some application or section at the end. (AF4)

Students, however, feel this tension often expressed in the juxtaposition between scholarship and contextual relevance:

> I think the doctoral program here, there has been a debate or maybe a struggle between like the school wants to make the doctoral program African in terms of dealing with African issues. Even in our dissertation the description of our dissertation says that at least we should make our studies relevant to African issues ... I appreciate the fact that the school really tries to ask the PhD students like to write dissertation that can address African issues because there are so many African issues, struggle between culture and Christianity in Africa and all that.... Though there are some people who think doctoral studies should not be that way but the majority here think that no, it should be that way so that it would address some problems in Africa, and I appreciate that. (AS1)

Or as one student put it, "There are those two approaches but I think that the school here as not yet defined the approach" (AS6).

One professor added clarity to this challenge, describing it as "new territory." He explained that the professors are now asking students to do something that they did not have the opportunity to do (at least to the same degree) during their own studies. Consequently, they do not know how to do it either. "He was saying you got to do this and the students said how; tell us how; we do not know how to do the research and writing that you're telling us to do. He said nobody's done it yet; you have to do it; you have to discover it" (AF2). Students find themselves caught in the ambiguity of an approach that falls outside of the historic methods. Therefore, they struggle with the newness of this kind of integration of academic pursuit and contextual engagement.

This tension is not limited to NEGST. At SAIACS, even the Biblical Studies faculty members are not fully unified on the role of contextualization in Biblical research (IF4, IF2). For students, this creates ambiguity on how much practical application should be included in the dissertation. One student expressed concern over both those in which practice "drowned out" theory while others seemed completely theoretical, without regard for practice. He offered the following solution:

> Maybe in [the] future even a PhD study in biblical studies department may incorporate, let's say twenty percentage of their writing towards at least reflection. Not everything. We should not be like the other guys, fifty-fifty, but it can be eighty-twenty or seventy-five-twenty-five, something like that. That's just my thoughts. These are my thoughts on it. (IS3)

These tensions are likely common in other programs as well, and parallel the literature as scholars ask questions with regard to the value of both "modes" of knowledge, the relationship between theory and practice, and the importance of incorporating context into the dissertation (Nerad and Heggelund 2008).

Theological Development

In addition to the production of dissertations, papers and other program outputs that engage the context, participants also expressed value in the process of developing theology. As evidenced in their comments about their own doctoral studies, many faculty members perceived a gap in theology that produces a learned theology without relevance, leaving many important questions unanswered.

As an illustration of this gap, one Latin American faculty member commented on the seminary's approach to theology, stating, "We don't study any longer like theology

from the systematic perspective. We do that from a historical perspective, which is mostly Latin American" (LF1). One Indian participant shared, "A lot of theology we are still with the Western theology. But studies that can really address the Indian context, indigenous theology with Indian theology [are needed]" (IS5). An African professor explained this gap generated by an inherited theology saying:

> I think we are struggling as African Christians. We still live in the past and I think that's where the Western, the Western things from the West, and try to fit them in here. We have done that all our lives as African Christians and we are not seeing any drastic change in the way Christianity has taken root in Africa. I think it is because of the approach. It has not addressed the culture. It has not penetrated a culture. I think what we are trying to do now is to think seriously about the culture and reflect on the culture and see how Christianity can address the cultural contextual concerns which people don't normally want to dive into because it's complicated. (AF5)

Theology, like Sadler's flower, does not often flourish when it is transplanted without regard to the context of the soil in which it will take root (Crossley, Chisholm, and Holmes 2005). The instigating questions, content and approach vary from one context to the next. Participants reflect the critique of inherited and indigenized Western theology instead of internally developed theology (Coe 1976).

In response to this gap, faculty and students have identified a need to generate theological reflection from within their contexts, not simply relying on formulations that were developed at a different time, in a different context, addressing different issues (Bevans 2002). Throughout the interviews, students and faculty gave a number of examples of this need for a different hermeneutical and theological approach. One professor illustrated his point about the need for evangelicals to have more interaction with Liberation Theology and its methodology because Liberation Theology places a value on understanding the context,

particularly with regard to issues like oppression, poverty and violence. Using the example of violence perpetrated by the government, he cited the prophets and the need for a broader exegetical perspective:

> I'll read exegetical commentaries by well-known evangelicals in the states and think, these guys don't, they don't get the point in this particular passage. They're talking about the fact that the king is killing people because they know that Obama, whether you like him or not, he's not going to go out and kill anyone, kill any of our people. [But here] that's what they were doing. That's what happens here so people go, oh yeah; oh really, yeah; oh yeah, I know somebody that got killed like that. (LF2)

Latin Americans read these passages differently and consequently begin to formulate a theology related to power, violence and public life that differs from that developed in the calm of the West.

Considering a different topic, one African student mused about the importance in orality for cultivating African theology:

> For example, if you are talking about African theology say for example, developing African theology. What paradigms are we using to develop those? Are we using the same Western structures to develop the African theology or are we engaging the way the Africans? For example, the Africans are more oral, even today, in spite of the progress of learning .... How do we engage the oral aspect of Africaness to capture their theology because they do their theology in singing, daily singing, even as they wash, they walk in the farms? All those kind of theologies are there, but they are lost because the Western style is documentary, written.... Those kinds of aspects of Africaness that we see that needs to be captured even in the learning process. Of course, we should encourage Africans to be at the forefront of developing that but those are, because you discover that most African theologians today are still products of the Western style of theology. They're products of the best theological seminaries in Europe and America and most of them are influenced by those patterns. How do we develop what is authentically African that will connect with the African context? (AS5)

Similarly, one Indian student explained his dream for developing more authentic and meaningful Indian theological reflection:

> Just a wild dream kind of thing would be something like what we were talking about: to be able to conceptualize stuff from within the country, but, again, being in touch with the larger reality of India, not living in the cocoon that we do. I think, see, as long as we're sitting in the cocoon what we're getting from the West is good enough. It's when we want to interact with the real India, when we want to interact with realities is when the need had changed in our understanding. (IS1)

Conceptualizing theology from within, changing understanding and thought, begin to move toward developing new theological methods that are better suited to the context (Chan 2014). Another student reflected on this process,

> I've given a good bit of thought to the challenge to learning how to think and learning how to not only learn theological content but how to do theology and how to do theology contextually ... when you have completely foreign programs or foreign materials, a lot of time those materials and programs are designed to answer questions that people aren't asking. This program has a lot to do with helping us understand how to develop programs that from their very design, respond to questions, felt needs, real needs, needs that are part of the context. (LS3)

One student sees some budding success at AIU stating, "There's a lot of engagement with African writers who have written about the global Christian movement, so in that area there is some more engagement with the African context and the issue of trying to develop an African theology and all those sort of things so there is in that aspect" (AS5). Another student referenced a course that helped him in developing a theological methodology, "There was another course which was designed to help us contextualize, but I think what it did is to help us know, to help us see how Africans have interpreted the Bible, and not in too much detail but how Africans have interpreted the Bible, that dialogue

between African context and the biblical text and essentially it give us the categories" (AS2).

As different theological approaches develop they also provide an opportunity for the scholarly work to speak back into the global theological dialogue. The theological insights have contextual relevance and value to the global church:

> The way Africans reflect on culture and deal with the issues we are facing can become insightful for the West as they look at issues about culture and how they deal with them and respond to them. I think these reflections from Africa will in the long run be beneficial to the global church. (AF5)

One of the Indian professors shared his view of the importance of engaging Indian writers and developing a theology from within the context stating:

> One of the things I do is I encourage that our people ought to go back to our Indian theologians and get well-versed with them Indian philosophers, get well-versed with them before we could be, then because then you are bringing something to the table even in a global conversation. You are bringing something that is very unique where you are bringing your own context but also enough goes in, mixed in, from the other context as well. Otherwise you become a mere echo of the Western theology which you lose your voice. You are not the voice. You become a mere echo and that's something I motivate my students to be the voice, genuine voice, from our context. (IF6)

Another faculty member also voiced a strong opinion that the Indian voice and theological perspective is vital to the global conversation:

> In other words, one evidence that we are Indian will be the engagement, critical engagement, with Western perspectives on some issues. I think we have a voice that needs to be heard on the global academic discussion that will by virtue of its distinctiveness, or even disagreement, it will show that this is an Indian contribution to what the truth of theology is. I don't think that it qualifies to be Indian by adjunct title references in the content that this is an Asian or is an Indian issue. It's not just application that makes a PhD Indian. We ought to, and we do, we ought to be allowed a place in the global discussion and we will claim our place in that global discussion on the grounds of truth alone: that Indians have a perspective that's distinct and not any less seeking to be faithful to revelation. (IF3)

One of the dissertations at SAIACS (subsequently published by Wipf and Stock) also commented on the need to engage Indian writers. This scholar received encouragement to engage Indian writers as an important place for new scholarship and ongoing theological development.

> I was surprised to see that most of the research proposals by the doctoral candidates focused upon Western theologians. In reaction the SATHRI coordinator, Samson Prabhakar, asserted that Indian Students must interact with Indian theologians because we had an obligation to Indian theology. He stated that while Western theologians and theologies had been often dealt with from various angles, as Indian scholars we must dialogue with our own to improve our discipline. For indeed if we did not interact with our scholars, who would? (Kumar 2013, xii)

Faculty and students have stated a need for new theological methods that address the issues most pressing in their own contexts. Continued development of contextually rooted theological methods will help to counter the dominance of the Western theology resulting largely from imbalance of material and intellectual resources (Wuthnow 2009). Participants expressed a need for both the engagement in a process of theology and relevant outputs as important components of the doctoral programs.

Value of Global Engagement

While much of the conversation in this research focused on how the doctoral programs engage their local and cultural contexts, participants continued to note both the importance of context as well as a broader global awareness and engagement. One participant explained this value describing the doctoral programs at AIU:

> In all the three programs that we now, the biblical translation, and what we call the intercultural studies, and also the PhD in theology, they are all focused on some of the contextual issues that we are facing here in Africa. We also

> recognize that the church is a global church so we also engaging other concerns outside of Africa so we say that we are doing a contextual thing in a global context: whereas we're addressing our issues, we are also looking at what is going on around the world and speaking to some of those issues and concerns as well. (AF5)

Such awareness helps ensure that contextual interests do not become parochial in scope (IF4), but can engage the global debates as voiced in the previous section. Stakeholders discussed two primary elements of the programs that helped students (and faculty) become more globally engaged.

Study Trips for Students

Most of the participants noted the need study trips for students during the research phase of the doctoral program. Study trips provided access to a number of resources not available in the libraries of the Majority World institutions (LS6). In addition, such trips created opportunities to engage with other doctoral students; learning from peers and receiving additional input from Western faculty members (AS1). All three schools strongly encouraged such trips, but in each instance not all students have been able to participate. SETECA participants noted the inability for Cuban students to travel to the US (LS1, LS6). Funds have limited opportunities for some students in India and Africa. However, a trip for several months remains the ideal plan at those schools (IF3).

Visiting Professors

A second area of engagement described by the participants was through visiting professors. As these programs were created, they had a need for external lecturers and dissertation supervisors. Renowned professors, such as Andrew Walls at NEGST, add

credibility to the programs and increase the global awareness of the students (AS5). One faculty member at SETECA expressed a desire for more globally known visiting faculty in order to enhance the reputation of the program (LF1). One Indian professor described the nature of global engagement on campus explaining that while situated in India, sees a significant number of faculty from other countries come through as guest lecturers and for international conferences. “There is quite a lot of intermingling so actually there’s a lot of global conversation happens here itself because of that participation which is good” (IF6). Faculty and students alike also had ideas for further enhancement of the global engagement through programs like a global scholar in residence (IF3) or through invitation to faculty from other Majority World contexts (AF2, LS3).

Needs

After the ongoing struggles with finances, participants most frequently identified access to resources, specifically books, as a significant need within the designed structure of the doctoral programs. The lack was particularly evident for resources related to the context, but included access to a greater number of books, regardless of their relation to the specific context.

The participants’ comments resonated with the researcher’s observation of the library holdings and of the bibliographies of the completed dissertations at each institution. Judging by language, titles and the names of authors, most dissertation bibliographies and course syllabi consist primarily of Western materials. Kumar’s dissertation, cited previously, exhibited a greater engagement with Indian authors. One dissertation at SETECA also drew

more heavily from Spanish sources. However, more common observations were less than 25% of bibliographies appeared to be from within the context.

Access to Resources

The first major challenge faced by students was gaining access to enough materials. The study trip to larger libraries provided a suitable solution for students who had taken one already (AS1, AS6, LS6, LS1, LS3). Each of the three schools has a relatively strong library for its regional context, but participants consider it a weakness when compared with those in the West (AF1, IF5). Some students perceived this lack of resources as a normal part of life in their context. The need to leave the region to access to larger libraries was therefore somewhat expected in that they perceive their contexts to operate most often from a place of shortage (LS2).

Choosing to study in context, therefore, meant that students opted for context over access to resources (IS2). However, with the study trips, students can "get the best of both worlds" – remaining within their contexts, but still gaining access to the stronger Western resources. (IF2). One professor suggested incorporating a budget for purchasing books, given the challenges of accessing books in context due to both library holdings and the absence of services such as interlibrary loan (IF4). Another student remarked on the irony that even when African sources exist, they are often easier to find in libraries outside of Africa, than on the continent (AS2). One faculty member hoped that the day would come when students could conduct up to 90% of their bibliographic research on site, travelling only for the final portion. When the student who was closest to completion was asked about

his own bibliography and how much of his bibliography had been found in context, he replied "Roughly maybe forty percent, between forty and fifty percent here, maybe forty percent" (AS1).

In response to this gap, faculty members shared about creating reading packets, loaning from their personal libraries and acquiring books for students during their travels to the West. However, the best solution cited by participants was the library study trips, which were greatly appreciated by all the students who had done them. Those who had not taken them yet, anticipated the usefulness of those trips.

Existence of Resources

Through the study trips, schools have found a working solution to the challenge of gaining access to resources. However, a second challenge of resources emerged in the interviews, namely that key resources do not yet exist. Several students remarked that most of their books are Western, creating a great need for resources that come from Africa, Latin America or India (AS5, LS5, IS5). SETECA students face a challenge to find adequate, pertinent Spanish language resources (LF2). One African student noted, "You can hardly fill one page of African Christian writers who have written about this Islam, which is very surprising ....You expect that by now there should be more interest, especially because it's also one of the major challenges to the African church" (AS5). Another student from India shared about the dearth of writing related to his area of research:

> I'm sounding a little arrogant but, or maybe proud more like it, it has not been looked at by scholars, especially under that approach that I have taken.... It has not been looked into even by the western scholars; Indian sources, you [have] not much. I can count let's say ten, less than ten. (IS3)

Many students hoped to find far greater numbers of contextual resources than they did. In their opinions, the problem was not one of their own libraries, but rather that the writing does not yet exist. As one student articulated, “But the problem is India doesn't have the literature. We cannot blame SAIACS. India itself, we don't have a lot of literature, especially academic literature. That is a problem” (IS5).

The solution to this portion of the resource challenge harkens back to one of the purposes of the doctoral programs, namely the need for writers. The theological work being done by the students and faculty needs to be harnessed to better resource subsequent generations of research. As one professor stated, “We need faculty to write, to write books that are more addressing to the concerns of the context so that these would become more useful tools for imparting the knowledge” (IF1). Faculty shared several barriers to writing including lack of a market and time pressures (AF6, IF2). However, there was also a clear sense that among the current generation of scholars are “plenty who can write” (LF2). Several remain hopeful that both students and faculty can publish out of their dissertations and papers as a way to increase the literature, shifting the landscape over the next ten years (AF6).

Summary

The three doctoral programs that participated in this study have an explicit value for contextual engagement. Both students and faculty perceive that the structure of the program, through the explicit curriculum and through an attention to its situated context help achieve these values. Program outputs, including dissertations, provide opportunities for not

only producing scholarly work focused on relevant issues, but also help to formulate a theological process that has value in the local context and the global dialogue. Faculty and students still see room for improvement, but value the strides that are being made in these programs, looking to them to help develop further theological reflection and much-needed literature.

Stakeholder Perceptions of Worldview and Contextual Understanding

Remaining in Context Reinforces Worldview

One of the common responses to what makes a program contextual was found in the people – both the professors and the students – coming from that context. When asked why the people matter, a common phrase was worldview. Faculty and students from within a given cultural context see the world in a certain way, they relate to and understand one another. One student explained, “I think the value here, the African is here, is more to do with the cultural orientation, or rather, the cultural worldviews. It’s a world of cultures that one can learn from. So for me that makes it African. So that the issues you are dealing with, they are not strange. They are the realities here” (AS6).

Kraft defines worldview as “the totality of the culturally structured images and assumptions (including value and commitment or allegiance assumptions) in terms of which a people both perceive and respond to reality” (2008, 12). Worldview has been deeply shaped by societal culture, leaving the individual with an assumed, tacit sense of the ways in which things operate and ought to be. It becomes the map and grid through which decisions

are made (Geertz 1973, Hiebert 2008). Operating at an almost unconscious level, these assumptions do not require proof and are difficult to challenge.

Stakeholders Immersed in the Context

Participants expressed an advantage of studying and teaching in the context was that by doing so one remains immersed in that context; experiencing it all around them, constantly. Remaining surrounded by the context comes with a level of assumed relevance. As one student was advised, “They said if you want to really serve India, you should be, you should do your PhD in India ... you will continuously engage the field as well as the academic” (IS5). Unlike those who go to the West, students perceive that those who remain in context will be inherently relevant, “Most of the people, not all of them, most of them whom I’ve seen go into the West, they end up somehow being in the West. You become a stranger in your context. I really did not want that. I wanted to study in a context that I would not be a stranger to them. It would be relevant” (AS3).

One factor contributing to increased relevance is the ubiquity of the context surrounding the students and faculty. As one professor explained, “The context is always around you” (IF3). Immersion in the context provides constant data from the places where students live and work. Another explained, “You study, but you are in your context. We go to the churches in Africa. We watch the issues in Africa on T.V. and in the media, whatever. I think that has kept, there was a valuable ongoing data to reflect on” (AS2).

Immersion in the context constantly shaped the thoughts and interests of faculty and students. One professor explained, “One of the strengths is the fact that it’s

within the context so within the context to me is like the questions students are asking and seeking to answer are not theoretical. There's a sense in which they are practical. They are things they are observing. They are things they are listening. They are the things they are seeing" (AF3). Another professor, among the very first to complete his degree in context, shared:

> For me I have experienced it in the sense that I have seen the value of being in India. It influenced me in choosing in my topic. It influenced me in shaping my topic. It influenced me in why I am, on the kind of research that I'm going to do. It influenced me on the way I critiqued. It influenced of the kind of papers I would look to present. I would see I had opportunity to present here. I had dialogue partners here at SAIACS. Of course, I appreciated the global exposure but it did, it makes me a much better - the fact that I did my training in India makes me more relevant as a teacher in India. (IF5)

Insider Advantage

Both faculty and students expressed an inherent advantage possessed by cultural insiders. The tacit knowledge of having come from within a context is something that seems to be difficult, if not impossible for outsiders to acquire (Hiebert 2008). One professor, a second-generation missionary who has spent little time in the West, explained that despite living most of his life immersed in the African context, he still remains an outsider. Insiders have a certain "gut level" understanding and conceptual framework that even longtime residents cannot fully grasp (AF2).

Such insider knowledge may prove helpful as the professors know the context and understand the conceptual frameworks of the students (LS4). The faculty themselves expressed this sentiment, using phrases like, "I am more relevant [because I am in the context]" (IF5); or "we understand the realities" (AF1); or Latin American faculty "think

more in the Latin American perspective" (LF4); and the mentors "get India and Indian realities" (IF3). Students at SETECA regarded the development of a program from within as an advantage. One student shared, "the program itself [engages the context] because it was designed by those that they really know about the Latin American context" (LS1).

Students also reflected a value in having peers who understand their worldview. Referring to some of the struggles found within his context, one student stated, "fellow Africans understand it" (AS4). Certain topics have meaning; conversations can happen in context because "here you are in Africa. You are engaging majorly with Africans of your own contexts and you are engaging with those ideas" (AS5). Several students at SETECA expressed a similar sentiment in being able to share with Latin American peers in their cohorts, both online and in person (LS4).

Participants described this insider advantage easily, but without direct justification, demonstrating the tacit dynamic to worldview. This is consistent with the idea that worldview manifests itself in assumptions and beliefs that remain mostly unchallenged and often unexplained (Kraft 2008, Hiebert 2008). Participants consistently declared that being in the context, interacting with both faculty and peers from the context makes the PhD programs more relevant to the respective contexts.

Insider advantage, however, must also be tempered by the fact that the tacit nature, may at times also lead to an incomplete view, much like the fish asked to describe water. Often multi-cultural perspectives can add an awareness that insiders cannot see because of their inherent insider perspective (Ameny-Dixon 2004). Outsider perspectives can add clarity to understanding the assumptions and framework of a worldview. Yet, the

participants primarily stressed the value of a common worldview in their responses.

Outsiders with Significant Experience in the Context

All three schools have missionary faculty members. Each school has had Western students as well. Each of those enrolled in the PhD program because of their vocational calling to the context, usually in missionary or teaching roles. Participants described most of the international faculty members as those who are sympathetic to and quite knowledgeable of the context (LS4). All of the missionary faculty members interviewed had spent decades in their regions. Most were second-generation missionaries, raised in the context and have had far less experience in the West than they have had in their current geographic regions. For the most part, the participants viewed these outsiders as women and men who understand and value the context and contextual realities (IS3, AF3).

Even with long experience in the context, participants also voiced that outsiders do not fully understand things in the same way as true cultural insiders (AF5). One student explained his skepticism over Western faculty and expressed the need for more African professors stating, “Even so, I don’t think a Westerner would live in Africa enough to fully understand it. I am privileged that I am brought up here and this is my context but I think when I teach, when I teach or train people, the context is quite from within so I thought that’s an advantage” (AS2). Another student explained the challenge of a Western mentor, even one with long experience in the field, is not as helpful as an Indigenous mentor. “But I studied my MTh under [professor], he's a Westerner. He cannot understand. Of course, he was here twenty-one years but even he could not understand the Indian context. In that aspect

I feel SAIACS should raise Indian teachers" (IS5). While participants expressed great appreciation for outsiders who have been immersed in the context for years, they also continued to describe the very real challenge of becoming a cultural insider.

Relationship with the West

Comparative Critique of the West

While the research did not frame the interview as necessarily comparative with the West, most faculty and students made some reference to the West during the conversation. Such comparison is natural, situating the answers in an even broader context (Seidman 2006). As stated above, most participants voiced a sense that Westerners do not fully understand the context or questions that drive research in the Majority World. This critique was evident in relation to curricula, resources, and the experiences of several of the faculty during their studies in the West.

Critique of curricula did not necessarily relate directly to the current PhD programs, but rather to a sense of theological education in general. Recounting an exercise evaluating curricula from schools in Latin America, one student explained:

> We noticed that many curriculums of our institutions were just like importing curriculums form the United States. That is sometimes natural, normal, because our institutions were founded by Americans so in some institutions were still teaching about curriculums, not analyzing, like without contextualizing with the Latin American culture. (LS1)

Another student echoed Sadler's (1979) image of the transplanted flower when he offered the following critique of inherited curriculum:

> Then see, the thing is when Western concepts, principles, theories are brought in, immediately the tendency, of course, maybe at the bachelor and master's level our tendency is just to learn it, master it and come and replicate it, repeat it to others, but at doctorate level we should be able to, we study them and also but we should be able to develop which will be appropriate, which was grown in this soil rather than transplanting or adapting. (IS4)

Another student critiqued the importation of ideas not so much in curricula, but in the questions that guide both theology and theological education.

> I just mean to say that there were some assumptions that were made that early on [in these other programs], with regards to program design, weren't necessarily tracking with the Latin American educational system and just models that were imported and incorporated and have been tremendously used but there wasn't a whole lot of reflection. When it comes to curriculum design and what should we be teaching, there have been times in this institution's history and in the history of almost any bible institute or seminary that you can think of here where basically they've just copied an existing model: this is being offered there; we should offer this as well, without a whole lot of reflection about why or what that was building to, what that was contributing to a desired end result. (LS3)

Even with indigenous faculty and an awareness of contextualizing the curriculum, most of the books still come from the West. As one student remarked, "Most of the books we have read are not from Latin America" (LS1). In India, this need for books from within in the culture is also evident:

> One of the major struggles that we have in teaching missiology here is because most of the books are not written by Indians so the issues and the perspective differ so drastically. You are not able to relate well with the content and the context, the content of the let's say biblical theology of mission, George Peter and all them. What he has to say about Indian context is very rare. We actually have to take those content, interpret that in our Indian context and then draw implications so a lot of that has to be done. I do a lot of that interaction because I believe that unless these course materials are written for our own context, we will not be able to make a difference in days to come. (IF1)

Speaking of some of the readings she has done, one student explained the process of a double reading of the resources from outside the context:

> There are two ways of interacting with that book, with those books. One way to do it is what of these books are viable in our context and at the same time how our context could model or limit or define the validity of that book and also trying to understand it their own way, trying to understand the context where those books were written and how that context influence that way of the methodology and apply it there. (LS2)

Many participants shared anecdotes about having to contextualize the resources. They found that they had to know and understand the biblical context, their own context, and the context of the Western (dominant) history or interpretation to fully understand what they were reading.

Many of the faculty also reflected on their own studies in the West, often with a critique of the lack of preparation provided for their work in the context. One professor explained how his work in the West left him unprepared for teaching in Africa:

> When I came back I realized that the notes I took at Fuller will not help me in my classroom because the concerns my Fuller teachers have are not necessarily the concerns my students have and if I start giving them that information then there's going to be problems. I have to redo my notes. Actually I don't use anything from Fuller from my teaching. I did everything right from the scratch looking at the issues, the concerns and the problems that I see we need to address here in Africa. (AF5)

Another professor explained how her work done in the UK lacked any contextualization, describing it as "dissertation that was just as guileless and bland as anybody else in Durham in that sense, in the contextual sense" (IF2). During their studies, several professors noted that they were never asked how their work related to their own contexts (AF4, IF5). When contextual elements were included in the dissertation, such application was "forced" by the

student (AF4). Another explained that while he added a contextual element to his research, he did not think his mentor understood that aspect of his research, “I was very careful because I did something on Africa, my own culture, and I said if I let just my mentor and another Fuller guide read this thing, they will pass it because my arguments are solid, they know I have argued my case, but they have no clue what I’m doing” (AF5). The contextual connections had value to the students, but they felt their mentors and programs did not fully comprehend their importance.

Perceptions of the Hegemony of the West

Noelliste (2005) asserts that Western influence is quite evident throughout all of theological education and the stakeholders perceived continued influence in the participating doctoral programs. As the programs have developed, they have been heavily influenced by the experiences of the faculty members who studied in the West. At SAIACS, consideration for the Indian context as different from the professors’ Western experiences eventually led to the PDP program as a hybrid between the US and British doctoral models:

> Because the majority of our faculty members came from the West, mostly from Europe and Euro cities, they’ve tried to impose upon us their model which was mostly a very strong self-study model.... I strongly felt that that’s not the right formula for us. Though I was a minority, I felt we needed to strike a balance. We need to provide lot of coursework, a lot of personal input on a regular basis and walking through a student through the path of their studies. (IF1)

Because of the schooling background of most Indian students, SAIACS ultimately determined that they should add a course component in order to serve the Indian context best.

Another professor commented on the Western influence on campus and the push to move beyond those experiences:

> Most of the programs were developed here even though it does have a lot of affinity with where each one of us studied: I see Trinity on campus here; I see Fuller here, depending on who was taught by who. The program reflects somehow the mentors of these people who, most of the guys who developed the program, but we have tried our best to address the contextual issues that we are facing by and large and I'm hoping that we are making some contribution in dealing with issues that we are facing. (AF5)

Participants made it clear that they did not regard the Western presence as necessarily negative, but rather such presence helps contribute to a more global conversation on each campus (IF6). Still, the tension over the influence of the West was evident as the participants expressed both an appreciation for, but also a desire to develop something different from the West that would be relevant to the local context.

Some participants indicated a bit of an inferiority complex in describing how people often view things from within the context as inherently inferior to those from the West. This mentality may stem from a long colonial history, which also has ties to the missionary movement and to the development of theological education (Caldwell 2010, Crossley and Tikly 2004, Hiebert 1987, Poerwowidagdo 2003). One professor acknowledged this sense of inferiority stating, "Then there is a, just a kind of a mindset within our people in India. At least, it's like if it comes from outside the country it's always the best and that's something" (IF6). Another Indian professor noted her initial fears related to her reception as a female professor. The only other woman teaching at that time was a missionary, the participant commented, "Then again, its apples and oranges because the class might accept a Westerner more readily than they would one of their own" (IF2). According to one

professor, this internal sense of inferiority has developed over time, through repeated external messages, “You probably run across this in other places but I just feel Africa has been told for so long that it has nothing. It’s to receive and not to give and yet there’s quite a bit now that I think we can say to the rest of the world that would be enriching to the rest of the world” (AF2).

Overcoming the inferiority complex will be a process, and as the professor above indicated, students and schools are beginning to find their voices. Two of the faculty interviewed, one at SAIACS and one at SETECA earned their doctorates within the context. In fact, for the professor at SAIACS, this was quite important as validation of the quality of the SAIACS program. He explained, “in a sense for me it was an important decision for SAIACS to say yes we want to be non-Western that we are willing to invest in non-Western for our own faculty. And I'm the first proof of that. That SAIACS is good enough as an option not just for other people's faculty but for our own faculty” (IF5).

Stakeholders in all settings expressed a sense of suspicion from the broader theological community toward their contexts. This suspicion again echoes the literature where Western theology is viewed as normative, while local theologies are marginalized (Kang 2010). The West has defined the theological boundaries for the rest of the world, creating a challenge, particularly for evangelicals whose theology does not fit neatly into those (Western) frameworks. This was evident with regard to the Latin American and African engagement with Liberation Theology (LF2, AS4). In India, one professor expressed his frustration saying:

> You have like some of these great Indian theologians and many times we will not even go there because there's a historic mindset that has been told this is the particular, the limit has been set for us by saying this is the boundary for you guys to think and you can't engage beyond that, or things like that so our people, generally they think they are liberal. (IF5)

In addition to suspicion toward indigenous theologies, participants voiced a tension between what is considered scholarly or academic and that which is contextual or relevant. One student recounted the tension within the program over the role of contextualization in a PhD program, "when I started my PhD program I was told with other, my colleagues, that the PhD research contributes to the scholarship, not to the community" (AS6). Similarly, another student expressed the sense that anything that addresses African realities is inherently not scholarship:

> I know so many examples like there are today books written on hermeneutics and maybe on biblical scholarship, there are so many examples that are given in the Western perspective. Then, can we give example from the African perspective, which I think yes, but we are not doing that way because we think sometimes if we do that it's not scholarship.... If you want to say we want the problems or what we are doing here address African problems, we may be missing scholarship. Then, sometimes if you think only of scholarship because there is this mentality of whatever we do maybe in doctoral studies, the quality we should be having from that scholarship should exclude any African reality, but for me, I really want to see both coming stronger. (AS1)

Similarly, several participants expressed a sense that the "academic approach" was Western while an applied approach was relegated to the local contexts and therefore not scholarly. One student summed it succinctly, stating, "Western approach is that you to write for the scholarship, while with the African approach ... wants to see how the community will benefit from your research" (AS6). Another referred to the "Western pattern" which only pays "lip service" at best to context, focusing on the theoretical with little regard for the

context (IS3). Several of the participants expressed their desire for more holistic, integrative approaches as expressed in the block quotation above (LF2, IS5, AS1).

New approaches, ones that maximize rigorous scholarship and contextual relevance, were clearly desired by the participants. While strong on the contextual nature of the PhD program at SAIACS, one professor spoke with a sense of resignation that a colleague currently pursuing his PhD in the UK would not have such opportunities because she doubted anyone at the school in the UK knew how to supervise such contextual elements in an Old Testament dissertation (IF2). Even within the context such changes are difficult. As one professor explained, overcoming entrenched models requires countering "centuries of inertia" (AF2). He further shared a story of a student, who went for his library study trip to the West; he had designed his research to incorporate contextual elements into his exegetical work. However, as he interacted with Western theologians, his research design shifted more and more to a standard, "Western" model. "For a PhD student, they're not powerful enough. They're not really powerful enough to resist the weight of the academia pressing them in a certain way" (AF2). Some of the participants hope the creation of a cadre of scholars prepared on the soil might begin to shift those realities.

Regarding the Context as an Advantage

Despite the challenges, suspicion and, at times, sense of inferiority, the participants almost unanimously expressed the advantage of studying in context, and doing so in ways that do not simply copy Western education. Therefore, participants saw a unique

role for the programs, located within their contexts to address the gap in training at the doctoral level.

One of the advantages is creating a unique environment where scholars, who share a similar worldview, can address meaningful issues through thoughtful theological reflection. Context and shared worldview become an advantage to engage patterns in theology that differ from the West. One professor explained about his context in India, "We're likely to foster more questioning of traditional Western theology more readily than in a Western situation. In other words, we are actively looking for Majority World dialogue partners" (IF3). An African student expressed an advantage to train "students to think like Africans because the more we think like Africans, the more we'll be able to address African issues" (AS1). Participants intimated as much in other geographic regions as well. One professor stressed the importance of the community in creating something that breaks out of the traditional (Western) paradigms:

> It's really hard to work up a head of steam or to get a critical mass maybe is a better way of thinking about it, so that you get a community of students who are supporting in each other in a slightly different approach and what I would see is a hopefully more African approach to the discipline, which would be intellectually respectable partly because of the academic community here but hopefully producing stuff that other people will find interesting and valid. To me, the fact that it's located here is an advantage rather than a disadvantage. (AF2)

One professor expressed a hope for an even greater indigenous identity:

> I would like to see this become more indigenous, more truth of the soil and true to the context where we will make a difference in preparing men and women who would understand and grapple the issues of the context much more effectively. The problem is not easy because you are struggling with lack of resources; you are struggling with people who are not fully trained in the context.   Most of our people are trained abroad. When they come back

> they bring that perspective. We need to really train more people within. (IF1)

Another student expressed the need to build on the recognition of the growth of the church in the Majority World. As the locus of much of the growth of the church, the Majority World has an important role in shaping the theology for the global church of the future:

> As we think of Africa, to also open our eyes that it is also going to engage the global, let's say it is going to engage the global interest. We are thinking, we are seeing Africa, that with Africa also please think of others because very soon, as people have been saying, it is maybe Africa that is the hope as far as Christianity is concerned. (AS4)

These theological reflections will have value to the global church as scholars write about issues that are local, but have global interest. One professor considered such writing a "gift to the whole church" (AF2) Another encouraged this thought, so that new scholars do not simply "echo the West" but bring a new voice to bear, originating from within the context (IF6).

Advantage of Peers Who Share Worldview

The advantage of engaging with like peers emerged as a common theme, referenced by a majority of both faculty and students across all three contacts. The peer community at each school consists of both a diverse, multi-national community that at the same time generally possesses a commonly shared worldview. The literature supports consideration of a unity in the broader cultural worldview (Reagan 2005, LaBute 2006), while also recognizing the diversity found in contexts as broadly defined as African (more than fifty nations), Latin America (twenty-four nations) and India (a diversity of regions). Two distinct benefits of these peer interactions emerged in the research.

Providing for Intracultural Critique

Stakeholders in each location noted the broader diversity of the peer community and how, through interaction with this group, they gained better insights into their own regional contexts. Students come from different countries, different theological and denominational backgrounds (LS4; IS5). One student explained how this diversity helped him:

> In my group, I was in Argentina. There was a fellow in Brazil and another two fellows in Cuba, Guatemala, but we were continually tracking together and it was very rich to be able to reflect deeply on our own context and apply what we were learning to the ministry that each of us were involved in locally, but then to read how our colleagues in the program were applying the same insights to their own context and to be able to interact and give them feedback and receive feedback from others with regards to what we were doing. (LS3)

One of the African students explained that as the community interacted, including students from up to a half dozen African nations, they began to share perspectives and cultural practices, gaining clearer and broader insight into "Africa" in both its commonalities and its unique diversity (AS3).

Through interactions with others from their regional context and worldview, the students were better able to discern both the common contextual values and the unique values and practices found within their region. As one participant shared, going to the West would have provided for a greater international and ethnic community, but would have lacked a depth of people from within the broader context (IF5). This diversity, while simultaneously sharing common worldview seemed to create a unique opportunity for "intracultural critique." Instead of seeing themselves as representatives for all Africans (or

Indians, or Latin Americans), through their community interactions, students gained deeper insights into what is broadly contextual for their regions, and what is perhaps better regarded as more local, or tribally contextual. For example, one student shared about burial rights and family relations, discovering considerable diversity between Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya. He discovered that his experience represented much more of "an" African experience, rather than "the" African experience (AS3).

A diverse group of people, united with a common worldview, provides an opportunity for participants to learn, ask questions, discover what remains closer to a universal experience, and what is truly unique to their local context. Intracultural critique seemed of value to the participants, and one that they would likely not encounter in a similar manner in the West.

Testing Contextual Validity of Research

Another value of academic peers from within the context and worldview was found in utilizing the community to test contextual validity of the research. The professors shared a diversity of experiences through their own, predominantly Western, doctoral studies. For some, particularly those in applied fields like Intercultural Studies, contextual elements were required for the research. Several professors in other fields forced contextual dynamics into their dissertations completed in the West (AF4, LF6, IF3, AF5). Others conducted their work without any attention to their home context (IF2, IF4, LF2). For those that pushed for the contextual element, their experiences likely mirrored that of one professor whose supervisors "did not have a clue" about his contextual element. They could evaluate the

validity and coherence of the argument, but they could not offer any insight into the contextual aspects of his research.

By contrast, the student communities in these three PhD programs could pose questions, challenge assumptions, and posit ideas to push the study forward because they did "get" the context. In the same way, respondents believed that professors from the same worldview also better understood not only the research, but also the student motivations for research on a certain topic. Students felt they did not have to justify the contextual application and validity of their research (AS3). Mentors from within the context simply understood (IS5). Peers from within the context offered constructive and insightful feedback that might be unlikely in the West (AS2).

Through structures such as the Doctor Club, cohort groups, and online forums, students were better able to "reflect theologically and contextually" with their colleagues (IF3). In presenting and critiquing their work, the students brought "expertise to each other's work" (AF6). Colleagues asked questions (LF2), pushed ideas (LS4), and learned from alternate models of ministry (LS1).

In this process of collective critique, scholars do not get a "free pass" on the contextual dynamics of their research. This group better understands the thought process, and sometimes patterns of thought and expression, of the researcher and is consequently better able to serve one another in the community.

Contextual Values Evident in the Doctoral Programs

According to Hofstede (2001) and House (2004) all three research contexts exhibit a group of common contextual values including strong in-group collectivism, high power-distance and strong humane orientations. Stakeholders addressed these and other contextual values as particularly important to their own contexts. The participants regarded certain values as helpful to the PhD program as it attempts to engage the local context.

Community

Faculty and students across all three research sites commonly used the word "community," a term related to in-group collectivism. Participants gave example of cell groups, cohorts, retreats and other gatherings as activities that provided opportunities for the expression of community. In each case, the participants expressed a strong identity with their particular communities, who were a source of encouragement and care during the academic work. The participants reported this strong sense of community both in both on campus and online virtual environments.

One professor explained how this value on community is not only helpful for interpersonal relationships, but is also essential in his department of theology and development,

> We value community. We value relationships and these things are very critical when it comes to development so development doesn't just focus on material prosperity because it is important because, but even when people have become rich and they have wealth, that wealth is shared. It's not retained by one person because out concept of community. (AF5)

African students commonly spoke about their studies in terms of “we,” rather than “I” and spoke of the importance of living life together, interacting inside and outside of class (AS3, AS4, AS2). In their minds, this sense of community was a critical piece of their identity as Africans.

In a similar way, students in both India and Latin America spoke of the importance of cultural identity found in community. One student referred to a “giant family system” in which people look after one another (IS5). At SAIACS, participants frequently cited the common meal and small groups as important aspects of community life.

Despite the fact that they were only together physically four weeks a year, the SETECA students all stressed the strong value of community within the program. Weekly interactions online have helped to create a closeness of relationship disproportionate to their time together. One student referred to the sense of “homecoming” when the group meets for their two-week module (LS6). Another shared about community, “as Latin Americans, we like that” (LS4).

Hospitality and care for one another also held strong value for the participants, exhibiting the humane orientation described in the GLOBE Study (2004). Students spoke of caring for one another, even to the extent of making sure some who were financially strapped had enough food for daily meals (AS3). As with the value of community, many Africans identify strongly with hospitality and take pride in being able to care for others, offering food when they meet together (AF4). Even in an online environment, students look to know each other’s families, pray for one another and offer counsel to each other extending themselves beyond their academic work (LS2).

Holistic Approaches

Another cultural value that emerged was that of a more holistic approach to both academics and life. This approach is in keeping with cognitive research on Western and Asian mindsets (Nisbett 2003, Chan and Yan 2007, Peng and Nisbett 1999) and in understanding culture and worldview (Hiebert 2008). In this sense, African and Latin American approaches seemed to align more closely with those in Asia than the in the West. At SETECA participants described their holistic approach as desiring to develop the whole person, in knowledge, character and service, values they applied even at the doctoral level (LF2, LS3). At SAIACS, they also articulated of the broader holistic approach, desiring a sense of unity between academics and life (IS6). One professor spoke of looking to see doctoral research as devotional, drawing the student toward God, not just as an intellectual pursuit (IF5). So too in Africa, the unity of life and studies is quite apparent. Things are not easily compartmentalized (AS3, AS5).

Relationships Between Students and Mentors

Participants, especially students, indicated a very high regard for the authority of professors, consistent with the cultural orientation toward high power distance. At the same time, however, both students and faculty indicated the close and open relationships between faculty and students. One student in India summarized this dynamic stating,

> In India, in Indian system you respect the teacher so much and you know we take them since they are our teacher we do not lose the respect to them. For example, a course the student teacher relationship is very good and teachers are approachable but at the same time students don't lose their respect, and that is very much seen here in SAIACS as well. (IS2)

Activities such as meeting at the homes of professors, open door policies and a holistic mutual interest in family and ministry life demonstrated that despite high power distance and high regard for the position of the professor, both students and faculty place a great value in relationship and community within the school (IF6, IS5, IF1, AS3, AF1, AS5, LS4). The tension may also reflect a high degree of ambiguity tolerance, also common within much of the Global South (House and Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program. 2004).

Worldview that Considers Global and Contextual Perspectives

This research focused on the contextual engagement at the three study sites. However, in every interview, participants also made reference to the globalized reality of the church today. While attempting to address contextual issues, the schools do so with global awareness. They seek to guard against parochialism (IF4) and look for ways to contribute to a larger global discourse (LF3). As on professor summarized, "we are doing a contextual thing in a global context: whereas we're addressing our issues, we are also looking at what is going on around the world and speaking to some of those issues and concerns as well" (AF5).

In a rapidly changing, globalized world the definitions of a particular context become more fluid. Cultures continue to evolve over time. As one professor stated, "Africa is not the Africa of twenty years ago, and it is important the program engage the context of today and not a historical image" (AF4). The same can be said of Latin America, where one professor commented about the rapid changes in Latin America over the last thirty years, "I

have trouble defining Latin America anymore" (LF1). In India, cities are growing quickly through internal migration (IF1); a gap is growing between the rural and urban mindsets (IS1). Western and Eastern cultures are less distinctive, and one student spoke of a more integrated view toward what it means to be Indian, explaining, "It should not be like the culture of the past. Culture is changing. Every generation the culture is different. What I sense, every twenty years the culture is changing so we have to apply that in the cultural context without losing its essence" (IS6).

In addition to cultural shifts, participants perceived that local context contribute to a greater global engagement as well. Participants highlighted the opportunity for theological voice from the Majority World to speak to issues in their own context and also back to the global context. They also expressed a desire to speak to other similar contexts spread geographically throughout the Majority World. One student shared about the similarities that help students look beyond India to other Asian or African contexts:

> for example the context of poverty, the context of family life, the context of pluralism, the context of persecution. These all contexts are similar among Asian countries because there is a religious pluralistic context and a struggle for existence and a struggle for [the] Christian church to exist and develop their own theology. Sharing the gospel is a similar context almost. But in the Western context I have seen there it is totally different. (IS5)

Another participant from SAIACS felt strongly that the contextual perspective they develop is not just for India, but must serve the global theological dialogue, "I think we have a voice that needs to be heard on the global academic discussion that will by virtue of its distinctiveness, or even disagreement, it will show that this is an Indian contribution to what

the truth of theology is" (IF3). This is the "gift" to which one professor referred as contextual theology contributes to the global church (AF2).

Finally, in order to create an even greater access to global thought and to share their own thoughts more globally, several participants suggested visiting faculty come not only from the established institutions in the West, but also from the ranks of other schools in the Majority World. "I think it would be so interesting for African students to have visiting scholars from Asia but who've been struggling with similar issues" (AF2). Another student expressed a similar view from Latin America stated, "they could look for professors more specified or with experience teaching in other continents than just North or Latin America, but more global" (LS2). Leadership at SAIACS suggested not just guest lecturers, but also perhaps a visiting scholar in residence serving in a cross-cultural capacity from another Majority World setting (IF3). Such exchanges within the Global South might prove interesting as they bring a difference in outlook, but more likely from a generally similar worldview.

Needs

Participants from all three locations consistently listed a need for more supervisors, particularly from within the context. They expressed a need for supervisors who understand the context, the motivation behind the students' dissertations, and for whom justification of certain contextual elements may not be necessary. At AIU, one student estimated that 70% of the supervisors come from the West (AS1). In India, they have very few PhD's who can supervise dissertations (IF5). Faculty turnover at SETECA has created a

need for new, younger faculty who can supervise, especially Latin American faculty who live in the context (LF6).

Summary

This section has examined participant responses related to the theme of worldview and contextual engagement. In the participants' view, those from within the context have a distinct advantage in understanding the context. They are from within the societal culture and have a tacit knowledge of how it operates, the values held within society, and how these come to bear in the development of theology that responds to the relevant questions of this context. Certain values, particularly related to community and care for others are highly valued and seen as important within the program if it is to engage the context. However, even as the programs seek to be highly relevant to the context and address issues of importance to local communities, such work is set against the broader global realities and can and should be done as part of larger global theological discourse.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Adult Learning Practices as Engaging the Context

Within the interview protocol, the researcher asked student participants to describe the courses and curriculum found in their respective doctoral programs. Professors were asked to describe their teaching, particularly how it engages the context, and what, if any, modifications they had made from the ways in which they were taught. Participants described what they perceived as helpful practices for contextual engagement. However, in coding the responses, a theme emerged that was not so much contextual, that is one of

distinctively African, Indian or Latin American teaching dynamics, so much as quality adult learning practice.

These practices demonstrate how the contextually engaging doctoral programs focus on issues addressed related to both the content (what) and the method (how) of the PhD experience (Caldwell 2010, Shaw 2010). Several principles emerged that represent adult learning theory as reflected in the literature. These practices include: a learner focused approach, discussion driven classes, the role of the teacher as facilitator, use of student experience and engaged learning. In addition, in keeping with one of the express purposes of the PhD program, a theme of how to help PhD students become effective teachers also emerged.

Learner Focused

Stakeholders perceived the most relevant teaching began with the learner rather than with content that the teacher should transmit for the student to receive. This represents a move away from what Freire (2000) termed the "banking model" of traditional education in which the teacher approaches the student as an empty vessel to be filled by the instructors knowledge. At it's inception, the DET program at SETECA placed "the focus on the learner and what he can acquire rather than dumping information on him like some, even graduate programs tend to do" (LF6). At SAIACS, this shift of pedagogical focus is important to the PhD program – and the rest of the school.

> I find SAIACS extremely relevant for today's context because of its higher education pedagogy. So I think that's part of how I teach. I see great value of pushing students to think and rewrite and focus on their papers. Because I feel that it's changing Indian thinking. Because I think it contributes to a new

> pedagogy that Indian education needs, whether secular or higher theological education. SAIACS impact on India will be shown not just by producing leaders, but by producing thinkers. (IF5)

Several professors remarked about the impact of prior schooling on the doctoral students whose previous education has not prepared them well for research. Participants from both Guatemala and India particularly noted the rote memorization approaches to education in their contexts. One professor from India explained:

> Education [in India] is in a huge mess. The educational system emphasizes rote learning. Emphasizing me [as student] accepting what the teacher says. Education that does not appreciate research but only appreciates dictation. Appreciates dictation, copying, repeating what is said. As education goes it is really not learning. It just preserves knowledge which has value. But if the knowledge has to be challenged it does not have the tools to challenge. It doesn't have the tools for using creativity of thinking fresh. (IF5)

A second professor echoed the sentiment that prior schooling sometimes makes it difficult for Indian students to engage in critical thinking or creative problem solving: "because of our Indian system of education, we've not been taught to think creatively. We just do what we've been taught to do. We are good at replicating, at borrowing other people's ideas" (IF2). In many places, students have difficulty making a shift from content focused teaching to learner-focused education. Prior schooling has conditioned a dependency on the teacher, hampering creative, generative and critical thinking (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011).

Another faculty member explained the shift from traditional pedagogy (lecture based) to the learner focused practice of andragogy (Knowles 1980).

> Now we talk about andragogy. In these last few years, very consciously SAIACS has organized seminars to understand how adults learn and we found out that it's not only by giving them regular input, teaching input, but it is by peer interaction: seminars, raising issues, case studies, issues for which they

> have to come with answers bringing them to a level where they can come up with their own answer, they can take a position and all that. (IF1)

This approach places the focus on the learner. Classroom activities move from teaching tasks to learning tasks, which students at SAIACS have found a "very good thing for India" (IS3). While perceived as contextually engaging, this shift is consistent with a move throughout adult education in general and specifically within the broader field of doctoral education as well (Colwill 2012).

Echoing Mezirow (1991), one professor at AIU explains his intent to help students see knowledge as something transformative, "Knowledge is not just information but to transform your attitude, your worldview, your attitude and even your heart so you can love them more than ever because you know them and you know why they are doing what they're doing." (AF1).

This view of knowledge pushes the faculty to encourage students to develop critical thinking skills in order to identify assumptions, take in new data and create new frameworks for changed behavior (Mezirow 1991, Cranton 2002). In the move from student to what the Carnegie Initiative calls "stewards of the discipline," skills in critical thinking and assessment of assumptions are vital (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006). While not using the terminology, the description of teaching style by several professors indicates a move toward learner focused, transformational learning. For example, one professor in Kenya said, "That is what I've been doing here as I teach. I challenge my students to think and reflect on issues and not just [to] say [that] because somebody has said something it is right." Instead, they learn to think biblically and theologically. They are told

to draw from their own knowledge and experience, “not to just repeat what others have said” (AF5).

SETECA’s course on Teaching and Learning in Latin America directly addresses a number of these issues and theories for adult learning. Interestingly, despite his role historically in Latin America, few of the students at SETECA had known Paulo Freire prior to their studies. The banking model of teaching is dominant throughout Latin America – and most of the world (LS5, LS3). Yet, when students were exposed to Freire and adult learning practices it made sense to them in their context (LS5, LS4, LS2). One student has embraced this shift to andragogy in Latin American theological education as her dissertation topic (LS4). At NEGST, one professor observed how his reading of Freire has influenced the interactions between faculty and students in the doctoral program (AF3).

Several students addressed how the teaching in their doctoral programs has brought transformation in them. One shared the following:

> when you talk about how my own thinking changed, there’s just a lot of these things that I hadn’t given very much thought to. Just had some basic assumptions about what was good theology and what was bad theology and what was good, solid education and what was flaky and a lot of that had to do with my own training and my own experiences but I hadn’t given a whole lot of thought about whether or not that was true or whether or not that was relevant or whether or not that was applicable to Latin American context in a way that would truly bring about the sorts of results that we were hoping to achieve. (LS3)

Students and faculty saw the shift from content focused lecture to learner focused transformational andragogy as one way that doctoral programs better engage the context. Students are encouraged to critically assess input, draw on experience and move toward the creation of new knowledge – a primary act of the doctoral experience.

Discussion Driven Learning

Both faculty and staff commonly described teaching that engages the context as utilizing a lot of discussion. The interviews confirmed the educative value of discussion present in the literature. In discussion, the teacher creates spaces to listen to the student and then builds on their existing knowledge base (Vella 2000). One professor described his teaching technique, “in my classes we have primarily discussion, I don't generally teach much, so in the discussion I will usually ask them [questions]” (IF5); Discussion allows students to push into ideas and explore them in greater depth (Colwill 2005). Another professor explained that small group discussion helped his classes engage the context, “as a result, lot of the Indian context comes out very well in some of our small group learning” (IF6). Still another said, “We don’t have normal classes. We don’t just have a teacher in front of the students” (LF3). One of the African students later added, “The format of the seminars, the seminars were not just teaching. It was discussions, which meant that majority of the people who were discussing were Africans, the cohort members. Even within the seminars themselves the African, engaging fellow Africans was a live factor” (AS2). A professor explained, “Africans, we like dialogue and talking to each other so my teaching is a combination of when I have for pass on information I pass on information but I pass on information that I open up the class to discuss and internalize those information. I would say that it’s very interactive” (AF5). An effective teaching method, dialogue builds on collaboration and that moves toward the collective creation of new knowledge and meaning (Colwill 2005, Isaacs 1999).

In addition to classroom discussion, professors noted the use online blog formats (IF3), small group discussions (AF6), and weekly online discussion (especially for SETECA) (LF6) as ways they continued discussion. In every case, a high priority was placed on students learning to present material and to give and accept critique. Such discussion not only promotes learning, but also begins to socialize the student into their the future role as a scholar (Lee and Danby 2012).

The cohort models at SETECA and AIU allowed for increased opportunities for dialogue and discussion among the doctoral community. Participants from both programs made near unanimous mention of the value of cohorts, particularly as a structure through which the contextual value of community was better developed. They provided a vehicle for greater interaction. At SETECA, weekly structured online interaction took place for the first two years. The cohorts no longer officially post and respond after students move into their dissertation stages. However, building on the strong relational fabric of the model, the two students who were in the writing phase spoke of continued interaction and ongoing, life-long relationships because of the cohorts (LS1, LS3). African students expressed similar views, particularly around the community that develops in the cohort and the value it may have later in their academic careers as the relationships extend far beyond graduation (AS5, AS2). SAIACS does not have cohorts. However, at least one participant from India remarked that students might do better in a cohort model instead of being scattered across disciplines and without this sub-grouping in the broader community (IF6).

Role of the Teacher

Stakeholders perceived the teaching role of the professor as vital for helping doctoral programs engage their contexts. This was particularly true as the role of the teacher shifted from that of content distributor, to the one guiding, shaping and encouraging dialogue (Vella 2002, Friere 2000, Cranton 2006). This shift draws upon the experience of the students and places the focus on the learner instead of the expertise and knowledge of the teacher (Knowles 1980).

At SETECA, professors began this shift prior to the start of the doctoral program. One professor described it saying, "The style of the class was more participative of the students - presenting things, investigating, bringing into the class - so the teacher was more like a facilitator in the master's degrees. It was more after the doctoral style of the classroom, dynamic of the class" (LF1) His colleague further reduced the distance between student and teacher in his description, "[Students] are just learning, learning and sharing for another and sharing their experience. The professor is not just a facilitator ... he's not just an expert that is giving, but he's not just the facilitator. He's the partner" (LF3). The professor joins the student in the academic journey, learning with and from the student.

In addition to the role as facilitator, the role of mentor is crucial for the doctoral student and one through which some stakeholders reported the program engages its context (Watkins 2000). Mentors were described as relational, pastoral and concerned with the lives of the students (IS5, IF1). More than a third of the professors used the term "open door" policy to describe their accessibility. At AIU, accessibility of professors was seen as an extension of African hospitality, "The professors are very affable, accessible. This is the

thing: we are experiencing African hospitality, or good African cultural experience are still vibrant through the program" (AF1). At AIU and in the SETECA model, stakeholders perceived the professors as participating members of the cohorts, not just outside evaluators (AF4, LS2).

This accessibility is not without tension, particularly related to the dynamics of power distance (Hofstede 2001). One professor recounted how, in order to help students see him as a colleague in the classroom, he requires students to call him by his first name. Many students have resisted, but he sees this shift as vital to creating authentic discussion in the classroom:

> Like I said that is a pedagogical shift that we are trying to do. One of the ways I do it is I make them call me [first name], I don't make them call me sir. And they really resist that initially. In fact I say it is a power play to reduce power. In fact once they quit calling me sir and start calling me [first name], and I insist on it, I cannot even continue the class until they say [first name]. And it becomes a joke, they make fun of me and I allow that humor on me, I allow them to laugh at me, to make fun of it. And then what happens then I become a person who they can talk to. And then we have really great discussions. We can talk about anything. And then at that point, I use their less guards. Now they are not trying to impress me, they are just sharing, And then I use the ideas that come from the discussion and relate to each other. (IF5)

Stakeholders described these shifts in the role of the teacher as helpful for contextual engagement. In India, the access to professors was deemed culturally important and helpful for success (IS3, IS2). In Africa, access to the professor was seen as an extension of African hospitably, a strong cultural identity marker (AF3). One Latin American student characterized this access and engagement saying, "it's Latin American. I like it" (LS4).

Students as a Source of Knowledge

An additional theme found in the literature on adult learning practice emerged as stakeholders referred to the students as a source of knowledge in the program. In keeping with Knowles (1980) and others, the professor brings a level of expertise, books and other course materials to provide content, but the experience found in the student and his or her colleagues also plays an important role as an educational and contextual resource to the course.

Professors shared the belief that students bring an important aspect of the course curriculum from their experience. At SETECA, teaching experience is requisite for joining the program because, as one student described it, their colleagues and their institutions become "part of the curriculum" (LS4). Students learn both through reflection on their own experiences as well as drawing on the life experiences of others. (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011; Knowles 1980). Another professor affirmed the value of student experience, stating, "Then of course, at master's and PhD level you expect students to be able to have insights and allow them to share those insights" (AF3). The participants' reflections indicate they did not view this as just better teaching, but more contextually engaged education. The literature also indicates that non-Western cultures place greater validity on experiential knowledge than their Western counterparts (Choi and Nisbett 2000, Boduroglu 2009, LaBute 2006, Shaw 2010). Both students and faculty saw contextual value in drawing on this knowledge.

Andragogy draws on the experience of the student as an important contribution to the learning process. Students both present content, and, through dialogue,

questions, and other interactions such as the online forum, contribute to a mutual learning environment. Participants described the value of peer interaction as important, contributing out of diverse knowledge and drawing on their teaching and ministry experience in ways that help their individual learning and contribute to the class (IF3, AF4, LF6). As one student said:

> It is so interactive, the program. The professor doesn't come to dictate on the issues. It's rather, it's a research. You do your research so that when you come to class you are presenting from your own perspective and people ask questions and somebody also brings it from his own perspective and it's all about learning. It's all about learning. (AS3)

However, students as resources accomplishes more than just good adult learning theory. Stakeholders perceive such learning approaches as contextual as they draw on the experience and tacit knowledge of the participants. Experiences are inherently contextual. Drawing on that knowledge, roots the participants in the context. As students engage with the broader experiences of their colleagues, they come to know the context better (LS4). One student shared about the process:

> One of the things, really the dynamic of each class that I like the most is the, I mentioned earlier, that the learning is communicative learning with interactions with other students. You learn from them and they learn from you and that enrich all the process so that the professor or the teacher is the guider of that interaction. (LS2)

A professor shared about how she has brought indigenous literature and story into her biblical exegesis classes to help the students bridge the gap between text and context. As she shared this story, she told of how when they turn to examples from Indian literature and the students made all sorts of application, drawing on their own experiential knowledge and sharing it with the class:

> The minute you said alright, so now we've understood this text; we're going to compare it with or let it speak to an Indian text, comparability in text. Then immediately they found they were an authority on the Indian text because they felt it belonged to the world of the Indian text and that they were competent enough to say something from its point of view sometimes through experience, sometimes through stories that they had heard or sometimes just by being Indian, nothing more than that. It became a much more engaging class and much more vocal class simply because we were playing one text off against another text. Somehow the whole Ecclesiastes text was no longer floating somewhere in the stratosphere. It was somehow tethered down to the ground to the south Asian sphere and even into their own lives. (IF2)

Indian literature and stories form the narrative of their worldview (Hiebert 2008). Students became more engaged as they drew on their "expertise" and built new connections to their areas of study in the scripture.

Knowles (2011) suggests that good adult learning theory recognizes the students as another resource alongside the expertise of the teacher and the books or other materials used in the class. In addition, participants recognize that the resources students bring from their experience helps build stronger contextual connections. Student experiences have not taken place in a decontextualized vacuum. When shared, they bring issues of context, relevance and applicability. Some of this knowledge may come very direct previous experience, or as illustrated by the example above, may lie in a tacit understanding of worldview and culture – "just because they are Indian" (IF2). Students simply "know the context from the inside," (LS4) and are therefore able to make important contextual connections, connections that are even more prevalent when the student remains immersed in that context. As professors recognized the experience of the students as an important contribution to a course, they created space and a mechanism through which students have been better able to bring the learning to bear on their own cultural and societal contexts.

Engaged Learning

Both faculty and students referenced engaged, active learning opportunities as a part of how their programs participate in the context. The literature that shows that adults learn best through active engagement in the learning process, rather than as simply recipients of knowledge to be poured into them as is common in certain traditional education modes (Knowles 1989, Vella 1995). One professor said they designed the DET program at SETECA as they did because students "learn best when they are involved" (LF6). Examples of the use of outside contextual resources such as movies, indigenous literature, and trips may engage the student in experiences beyond the classroom. In each location, students have unique opportunities to then meet with other students, share from their experience and receive feedback from their colleagues.

Freire (2000) refers to the cycle of praxis, moving from theory to practice and back to theory. Remaining connected to their ministry and service, students are better positioned to move back and forth from the theoretical to the practical. In her work in Organizational Development, Colwill (2012) stresses the value of the role of the scholar-practitioner, a model that has value as many of the doctoral students as they continue in their teaching, ministry and leadership roles. Students engage in the praxis cycle as they actively applied what they were learning; and engaged in a process of self-reflection on what they were doing.

At SETECA students cannot join the program if they do not have teaching experience or administrative experience and remain engaged during their studies. While not required by the program, by remaining in context, many students are able to remain in

ministry, full or part-time, during their studies, perpetuating the praxis cycle. As one SETECA student observed, “The student keeps playing the role as, for example, as a rector, as a dean, as a professor. The student keeps living in Latin America, Guatemala, Peru and all the countries so that keeps the people with the feet on the ground of the context” (LS1). A professor in Africa contrasted the AIU experience of remaining engaged in ministry with that of studying in the West saying, “when they come here they don’t do as we used to do at Fuller, and just stay [at the school]. They [our students] come here for some time and then they go back to work” (AF6).

This movement back and forth between theory and practice creates a more holistic, integrated approach to learning. Studies are not separated and segmented from ministry. Rather, academic work is part of life (LF3). Such a view addresses the common critique that theological education is too fragmented, too entrenched in silos that separate theory from practice, learning from doing, and the academy from the church (Farley 1983, Kelsey 1992). One student summarized the value of the praxis cycle, stating that the students “almost simultaneously during that process, they combine theory with practice so it’s highly contextual the things we are learning during those discussions and the class” (LS2).

Praxis also led to the development of the student’s identity as a “scholar practitioner.” Scholar practitioners bring both theory and experience together to inform academic research, decision making and action in the field (Colwill 2012, 17). Identity as scholar practitioners has several advantages. First, it helps address gaps identified in the literature on the preparation of doctoral graduates that notes that doctoral graduates are often under prepared for the real work they engage after degree completion (Golde and Walker

2006, Nerad and Heggelund 2008). By moving back and forth between theory and practice, students keep focused on issues and their implications during their research. In addition, they become more conscious of the multiple identities they hold as scholars who are occupied with knowledge creation, dissemination, and other professional (or ministry) engagement (Colwill 2012). This awareness helps in the move from academic consumer to colleague practitioner; one of unique outcomes of the PhD process in comparison to other levels of education (Maki and Borkowski 2006).

Faculty participants demonstrated a strong awareness of preparing graduates for faculty roles, as this is a primary purpose for the doctoral programs. In doing so, faculty play a role in increasing student awareness and confidence in their roles and abilities as scholar-practitioners. One faculty member spoke of helping students realize "they are colleagues with the faculty rather than they are dependent on the faculty" (IF5). Adult learning practices, affirmation of student experience, and engagement in the praxis cycle help develop this.

The integration of theory and practice described by the participants reflected the role scholar-practitioners play as boundary spanners, having "one foot in the world of academia and one foot in the world of practice" (Huff 2001). Such individuals have a concern for both theory and practice, look to generate new knowledge and improve practice (Colwill 2012). These traits resonate strongly with the desired outcomes of the contextually oriented doctoral programs and the aspects of adult learning that participants perceive as having a positive impact in helping the programs engage their contexts and develop socially relevant research.

Creating Space for Non-Western Cultural Values

Much of the adult learning theory discussed above has been developed in and for Western educational systems. Yet, participants clearly identified them as vital for contextual engagement within PhD education. Quality doctoral education reflects Knowles' (1980) four principles of cultivating self-directed inquiry, valuing experience as a learning resource, life application, and problem (instead of content) oriented. One reason for the strong resonance that such practices encourage contextual engagement may stem from the fact that they create space for certain non-Western cultural values that was not evident in more traditional content-oriented education. Reflecting on the learning practices at SETECA, one professor said, "I don't know if the methods are that significantly different from one context to the other. Rather than Western versus non-Western I'd say it's probably traditional versus nontraditional. We do vary from the traditional" (LF4). Such variance creates new space that participants view as non-Western.

One of the common values that participants described as strongly present in each doctoral program was the sense of community and collaboration. Students from the two schools utilizing a cohort model particularly noted this value. When asked why so much collaboration was encouraged, one professor at SETECA responded, "because ministry is collaborative" (LF6). The rationale was not cultural, but practical. Still, students and faculty cited collaborative approaches as an important way that programs reflect and engage their cultural contexts. As one student remarked, "There should be some more incorporation of the way Africans learn, not more like the Western style of learning, the kind of communal

learning, the kind of communal cooperative partnership of learning and all those sort of things" (AS5). The participants viewed opportunities for collaboration as contextual.

Valuing discussion and the experience of students, adult learning practices create space for a value on orality and the use of stories. This theme emerged particularly among African respondents. One of the professors at AIU explained why he used stories frequently in teaching:

> When you are talking about the core values in this institution I decided to use stories. Not because I was saying this is what works best for the African context, but I know they are more effective than point one, point two, point three in people relating to here ... but that is not a conscious planning. No matter what I meant to say, I have not said because I'm speaking an African audience let me use this term, but because what I'm dealing with is best dealt with in stories, let me use them. I don't know if I was speaking to a group outside the African context probably I would have used a little different approach other than the stories. (AF4)

In reference to a course that included a section about African writing, one student reported, "one of the faculty members tilted it towards writing the African way, bringing in stories, bringing in something that's authentic from an African perspective and even in terms of language" (AS2). At least two professors spoke of capturing the oral resources – the stories shared by the elders – that have never been written down (AF3, AF6). Adult learning practices create space for stories and andragogy validates the experience of others as a learning source.

Finally, adult learning practices allow for non-linear, non-Western thought patterns (Nisbett 2003, Peng 2006, Kaplan 2001). This pattern was particularly evident in the African context, although less direct approaches in writing and thoughtful reflection were also evident in the other locations as well (LF4). One professor had a particular interest in

engaging non-Western thought patterns. He felt strongly that the school, and the doctoral program in particular, should give more credence to the differences in thought patterns evident in Africa. The professor explained, “I think there’s a huge amount of evidence that shows that language and culture influence how you think to a great degree and certainly in things like higher level kinds of thinking such as would be done in exegesis and in explaining theological concepts to audiences and stuff like that” (AF2). Another student contrasted the very direct, Western approach with a more circular African approach:

> For example, in the Western system, in introduction you having to tell your completion, where you end up, but again, when you come to completion where you end up. When you come to completion, then you do not have to put new ideas on new things. But in Africa, introduce and you have also to tell things in half completions and also you go round about. You do not go straight to say things. (AS6)

Non-linear patterns align with the work of Kaplan and others on cultural thought patterns (Kaplan 2001, Nisbett 2003, Elmer 2002).The stakeholders perceive learning approaches that accommodate these patterns as contextually engaging.

Needs

In the same way that the importance of worldview highlighted the need for more dissertation supervisors and mentors from within the context, the importance of good adult learning practices highlights the need to help PhD students learn to teach well and in contextually relevant ways. The literature in doctoral education shows a consistent need for helping doctoral students develop their teaching skills (Boud and Lee 2009, Golde and Walker 2006, Walker 2008). Stakeholders articulated a great need to help students learn to teach because so many of their graduates, at both the MA and the PhD level, do so (IF4). At

SAIACS, up to 80% will take on teaching roles (IF2), creating a need to equip teachers "who will make a difference" (IF1). At AIU, students also expressed a desire to become better equipped to teach as this is what so many will do after graduation (AS3, AS2, AS5). At SETECA, teaching experience is requisite to the program. Teaching teachers to become better educators is a core value of the program (LF6).

However, for many, teaching skills are underdeveloped, especially with regard to the adult learning practices mentioned previously. Schooling in all three contexts relies heavily on the banking method and rote memorization. Educational approaches that move from content transfer to models influenced by Freire, Knowles and Mezirow were new to many of the student participants (LS3, LS5, IF2, AF3). Overcoming this conditioned dependence is difficult and often requires a transformational learning experience (Knowles 1980, Mezirow 1991).

Engaging in these practices, even as students, will help the doctoral candidates learn the skills of more effective teaching. In their graduate studies, and especially in their doctoral work, the students have encountered a new model that begins to erode the entrenched model of their earlier schooling. They both learn skills and become socialized into their new roles as more effective faculty members. One professor shared her approach:

> We want PhD's who can teach and write. See now, both of these are God given skills, God given gifts, but besides being God given gifts they're also skills that can be developed so we need to do more for our PhD's to teach them how to use all that gain in these ways, to be able to articulate all that gain through either writing or through communication, verbal communication. Sometimes we find that the PhD's have no clue what to do when they stand in front of a class and they can be so boring and so dry and you know the fellow has content but you wish he'd say it more attractively. (IF2)

For this reason, the professor places a great deal of value in modeling how to bring context into courses on biblical exposition (IF2). Students naturally emulate that which they have seen and begin to learn how to teach in a way that engages the context.

Professors and students expressed a need for more teachers able to integrate their work more holistically. With a focus on solving problems instead of content, adult learning practices help reduce the fragmentation of knowledge and the silo approaches to theological education that receive frequent critique in the literature focused on theological education (cf. Farley, Kelsey, Cannell). Adult learning practices encourage integration, a move toward holistic “Mode 2” knowledge that exemplifies the work of scholar practitioners (Boud and Lee 2009, Colwill 2012). One of the SAIACS professors echoed this desire in shaping doctoral students who exhibit integrative approaches. “At least we’re training them not to think of ministry and academics in dichotomies but as one meant for the other: academics meant to serve and service to use academics. They are learning to think like that” (IF2). Several faculty members stressed the importance of cultivating PhD graduates who can do integrated research, teach and write in ways that will make a difference.

Summary

The above section traced the stakeholder perceptions about what Dimmock and Walker (2000a) refer to as the core technology of teaching and learning play a vital role in how a PhD program engages its context. The practices that stakeholders labeled as particularly useful for helping PhD programs engage context fit closely with the practice of andragogy and transformative education. While an awareness of Freire was evident in all

three settings, participants generally did not have a technical vocabulary or mention theorists such as Knowles and Mezirow by name. However, the approaches described as most successful by the participants, clearly followed the theory expressed in the adult learning literature.

Adult learning practices prove helpful for students during the praxis-oriented learning cycle as doctoral students, as well as help develop a set of required as they move from “academic consumers” toward colleagues (Maki and Borkowski 2006). Most of these approaches were discovered pragmatically, seeking what works rather than what was contextual. Because they draw on the experiences and expertise of the students, they become inherently contextual as all of that resource comes directly from the context.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This research explored stakeholder perceptions of the contextual engagement of three select PhD programs located in the Majority World. Each of these programs had a stated mission to serve the church and society within their own context. Each began their PhD program to meet a specific perceived need for the preparation of more faculty and theological leadership to serve the church within their regions. In addition, they explicitly intend to so in ways that directly engage their own contexts. This research has asked the question of how stakeholders describe that engagement within the doctoral programs.

The research focused on schools that implicitly and explicitly intend to engage the cultural contexts in which they are located. Respondents affirmed this intent, and the researcher sought to better understand the stakeholders' perceptions of how contextual engagement took place in their respective doctoral programs. In the analysis of the data, their answers fell into three broader categories of program design, worldview and cultural values, and adult learning practices. The first two were expected, but the third was unexpected, at least as the participants in this research described general adult learning practices as particularly contextually engaging.

The purpose of this research has been descriptive, seeking to provide a framework for understanding stakeholder perspectives of the contextual engagement, if any, of the PhD programs. The three schools can make their own evaluation about whether or not

what has been described reflects well on their own objectives for contextual engagement within the programs. The findings here aim to provide descriptive categories to further the conversation about these matters. One advantage of organizing the data in themes is it avoids direct comparison between the programs. The only evaluative opinions of the doctoral programs are those expressed directly by the participants. Caution should be used in extending this research to other schools. However, the framework and questions utilized and the conversation generated may prove helpful to other schools seeking to understand their own process of contextual engagement better.

This research has occurred in the convergence of two unique historical moments for evangelical doctoral education at institutions located in the Majority World. The first is the rapid growth of evangelical PhD programs in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Since 2003, more than 15 such programs have begun. This growth has occurred organically, with little exchange between the schools. Only in the last few years have the accrediting groups and coordinating body of ICETE begun to work with the schools directly on their PhD programs, establishing the Beirut Benchmarks (appendix 5) and subsequent marks of excellence.

Development of indigenous programs represents a next step in the maturation of theological education in the Majority World (Cunningham 2007). The rapid growth of doctoral programs responds, in part, to meet the need for more and better-trained faculty who will serve in Majority World seminaries and Bible schools. They have been created in part to reduce the cost of faculty development and decrease the duration of the time students and their families spend out of context during doctoral studies. In addition, the programs

intend to meet a perceived gap in the doctoral training earned in the West, especially with regard to the development of more contextually relevant training. To meet their stated objectives, schools must not simply emulate Western designs, albeit in closer proximity to home. To do so would not address the identified gap related to contextual engagement.

The following sections will consider the outcomes and implications from the data presented in the previous chapter in the areas of program design, worldview and culture, and adult learning practices. It will present some additional observations and recommendations related to the doctoral programs presented in this study, as well as share recommendations and encouragement in light of the unique opportunities afforded these three schools (and perhaps others) as they continue to develop their doctoral programs. Finally, it will present some opportunities to extend or expand this research in the future.

Intentionality and the Importance of Addressing Gaps

The three programs considered in this research began their doctoral programs to intentionally to engage their respective contexts. As stated previously, this research did not try to determine whether or to what degree that objective has been met. It has assumed that contextual engagement has taken place, the research, therefore, attempted to describe the perceptions of that engagement as reported by the faculty and student stakeholders.

Issues of Achievability

As anticipated from the literature, participants described the ways in which the design of the doctoral programs addressed issues of achievability. Stakeholders perceived

programs in context as more accessible, demanding less time away from the context. In addition, stakeholders ascribed a lower total cost for the programs than degrees earned abroad. The research did not seek to measure time or cost, but the participants believed the programs have achieved that objective.

Many of the participants also addressed a perceived advantage in minimizing the need for social and cultural adjustments after degree completion (IF1, AF6, AS4). Participants based this assessment on the observation of others who struggled to re-acclimate after spending time abroad. Stakeholders considered the challenges significantly mitigated by remaining in context because the students remain connected to the issues and worldview that will hold greatest importance for them in their future ministry. Many students not only remain in context, but quite a few are able to continue in their ministry positions, whether teaching, pastoral work or other Christian service during their studies. Some students continued in their places of work or ministry because of the proximity of the program to their home. For example, two of the students at SAIACS lived in Bangalore and taught at neighboring schools, jobs they maintained during their studies. Several of the scholars at SETECA were already faculty members at the school and intended to remain so after graduation. Several students in both Bangalore and Nairobi had moved to campus for the duration of their studies and will relocate back home after graduation. They anticipated much easier periods of than some of their colleagues who studied abroad. By design, the SETECA students remained at home, traveling only twice a year for modular courses. They remained engaged in their work throughout the process. In every case, the participants anticipated an ease of social and cultural integration. Given the transformative nature of

doctoral education and growth and change through engagement in their academic work, other personal adjustments and assimilation may be required, but they anticipated relative ease in social and cultural re-acclimation.

Contextual programs have an advantage over programs developed in the West in issues of achievability. Students do not have to leave their home contexts for years at a time, with many continuing to serve in their teaching and ministry roles during their studies. However, remaining in ministry also has an impact on the doctoral experience. On the one hand it keeps students grounded in practice, but it also affects completion times. In each location, some students have made slow progress (AS3, LS3, IS2), in part because they remain engaged in ministry during their studies. Doctoral work at a part-time pace happens slowly but with a benefit of continued practice that often informs research. With regard to relative cost, the reported tuition expenses remain less than those of programs located in the West in an absolute sense. However, cost remains a significant challenge, as evidenced by the fact that almost every student and the majority of faculty addressed the financial pressures of doctoral work. Students look to schools for scholarships. Schools look for funding to keep the programs afloat. The researcher’s own work with ScholarLeaders International continues to demonstrate the costly nature of graduate theological education. Graduate programs, especially at the PhD level, are not sustained by tuition alone (Smith 2013). Therefore, while the absolute cost remains considerably less than a degree in the West, it remains relatively significant for the participants in the programs. Stakeholders perceive that the programs help address the issue of achievability and therefore provide more students with access to doctoral level education.

Dissertations of Contextual Importance

A second anticipated outcome was evident in the perception that the dissertations address issues relevant to the context. Demonstrating the value of this outcome, several faculty members remarked that their own research in the West was not as effective in regard to contextual engagement. Those who did include an element of contextual engagement "forced" those components into the Western framework (AF4, LF6, IF3, AF5). Others said they did not even try, producing quality work but without any attention to their home contexts (IF2, IF4, LF2). Some of the professors, while grateful for their experience, were also critical of it. One described her dissertation as "guileless and bland" and now sees contextual engagement as an integral part of meaningful research. Another was even more critical of his entire time, stating that he was not able to use virtually anything from his doctoral studies as he began teaching back in Africa because it remained irrelevant to his context (AF5). By contrast, both faculty and students in the study perceived a great opportunity to address real issues with what the CID would identify as "socially relevant" research (Boud and Lee, 2009). Several respondents expressed the desire that this relevant research would lead to publication and serve to augment the literature within the given disciplines.

Contextual Engagement Beyond Research Topics

In keeping with the idea of the "doctoral journey," participants described the importance of more than just the explicit curriculum of courses and dissertation in engaging the context. The implicit curriculum, the combination of interactions, structures and

opportunities that contribute to the “kind of place” in which the program happens matter greatly (Eisner 1994). Outward signs such as cultural dress and architecture or rituals such as communal meals and chapel services kept participants mindful of the context (Hiebert 2008). Informal interactions, with peers and professors, also contribute contextual engagement. The process is ongoing as they walk, talk and eat together. Much of the socialization of scholars also happens outside the explicit curriculum and certainly outside of dissertation research. Students learn to be stewards of the discipline and to move toward their new roles colleagues with their mentors as they interact in the academic space, make presentations, and engage in conversations that will help prepare them for their role as scholars and (academic) practitioners (Gardner and Mendoza 2010). Supervision of a thesis may be formal, but mentorship incorporates much more than feedback on chapters. All of this contributes to the “doctoral journey” (Walker 2008).

Defined by what is not addressed, the null curriculum can be difficult to determine, as it is largely an argument from silence. However, questioning what a curriculum (defined in the broadest sense) does not cover can prove helpful to this topic as well. In describing their own research at Western institutions, several professors remarked about how they were never even asked about the value of their work to their home context. The absence of such questions may indicate a low value for such engagement. Similarly, if one goal of the doctoral programs is to produce graduates who can teach, absence of activity in the curriculum to achieve that end is noteworthy. The shift toward a more robust understanding of the doctoral curriculum helps to turn attention to some of these areas about which traditional programs have often remained silent.

Literature and Resources

Among the most common observations by participants in this study was the gap in available literature through their institutional libraries. This gap occurred in both the access to resources and in the existence of contextual resources. The libraries at each school represent some of the strongest collections among evangelical schools in the Majority World. However, their holdings represent a small fraction of those found in many schools in the West. One student framed his choice to remain in context as a choice to give up access to resources (IS2). Nearing the end of his writing, another student remarked that less than half of his bibliography could be accessed through the institutional library within the context (AS1). These realities will not quickly change. In the short term, study trips to libraries abroad provide a solution to this gap. Even if a student could obtain the majority of his or her resources in context, such trips would have value as they provide an opportunity to engage a more globally diverse academic environment. They provide an opportunity to share ideas and engage another diverse group of scholars in the doctoral journey. Study trips provide both a solution to the challenge of accessing literature and an opportunity for global exchange and institutional partnership that have value beyond closing an existing resource gap.

The second gap of existence of contextual resources will require a longer-term solution. As several participants noted, engaging existing work by indigenous authors has great importance and both students and faculty should pursue these authors whenever possible. Stakeholders noted their attempts to engage these works when possible. However, as both students and faculty remarked, for many topics, indigenously generated resources just

do not exist. The long-term solution for this gap is to encourage more writing. In a sense, the current students can be the solution for future generations of scholars in their contexts.

The participating institutions have expressed a desire to help meet this need and to cultivate writers through the doctoral programs. One professor shared a hope to see the literature base in her field increase in as short as a decade by encouraging students to publish from their dissertations and from their other papers and coursework (AF6). The literature on doctoral education addresses the need to not only train students for their future work, but also to socialize them into the habits and practices of a scholar and steward of the discipline (Boud and Lee 2009, Gardner and Mendoza 2010). In order to develop writers, schools with doctoral programs also need to model publication in the faculty, foster cultures of writing and publication and provide guidance and encouragement for students to publish articles. Sadly, many faculty members have low expectations of publishing because of the many demands placed on their time. (Boud and Lee 2009, Starcher 2004). Understanding the role of ongoing research and publication among the faculty members at the their participant schools lies beyond the scope of this study and may prove an area for future investigation. However, anecdotal reports indicate this remains a challenge that merits further attention as part of the long-term solution to address gap in the existence of contextually focused and generated resources.

Theological Development

Student and faculty participants identified a need to generate theological reflection from within the context, rather than simply relying on theological formulations

received from the West. Participants felt this was important because they perceived a gap in the answers provided by inherited theology and theological approaches. The professor who remarked that they no longer teach theology from a systematic viewpoint at SETECA, but have shifted to a more Latin American approach from a historical perspective illustrates this gap (LF1). The examples in the previous chapter provide insight into three major themes with regard to moving toward a developing a process for doing theology that originates within the context, but benefits the global church by contributing to what Hiebert has called "supracultural theology" (1985, 91).

First, respondents described the shortcomings of inherited Western theology. Participants in each location spoke of how some of what was received has left important theological questions unanswered (IS5, AF5, LF2). If all theology is contextual, then that which was developed in one time and place, cannot be expected to answer all of the questions in another place (Bevans 2002). Such theology does not penetrate the culture (AF5), and leaves much of the context unaddressed by the theological reflection generated at another time and in another place. This is not to say that local theologies cannot speak to contexts beyond those in which they were immediately conceived. Rather, such dialogue is crucial as the global church listens and learns from one another. Local theology has value for the local community, but also for the global church through this interchange. The problem is not in engaging non-indigenous theological reflection, but in the assumption that one theology (in this case the dominant, "Western" theology), is universal and all others particular (Chan 2014).

In response to this gap, participants wanted to help generate more theological

reflection from within the context. One student commented on the "wild dream" of conceptualizing theology from within India (IS1). One of the African faculty members lamented the pattern in his context of continually trying to make foreign ideas fit, but with little lasting fruit (AF5). A Latin American student expressed a need "to not only learn theological content, but how to do theology and how to do theology contextually." Too often inherited programs and materials "answer questions that people aren't asking" (LS3). Rather there is a need to consider paradigms and approaches so that they do address those questions being raised within the context. Writing about theology in Asia, Simon Chan has stated "Asian theology is about the Christian faith in Asia" (Chan 2014, loc. 99). This is a simple statement of how to engage the process of developing a theology from within. It considers not just the learned theology, but also the lived theology of a community. As new theological reflections are generated, bringing the Christian faith to bear on the particular issues and realities of the context, changes in understanding – of God, the issue, and the self, will take place. Conceptualizing theology from within and changing understanding and thought, begin to move toward developing new theological methods that are better suited to the context (Chan 2014).

As these formulations and reflections take shape, the next step is to speak that truth back to the global church. Engagement with the global church allows the broader body of Christ to function as a hermeneutical community (Cathcart 2009; Chan 2014). Each contextual expression contributes to a deeper understanding of truth in ways that fill gaps, ask new questions and make up for the finitude of each particular context. One professor voiced a strong opinion that the Indian voice is vital in the global theological discourse:

> In other words, one evidence that we are Indian will be the engagement, critical engagement, with Western perspectives on some issues. I think we have a voice that needs to be heard on the global academic discussion that will by virtue of its distinctiveness, or even disagreement, it will show that this is an Indian contribution to what the truth of theology is. I don't think that it qualifies to be Indian by adjunct title references in the content that this is an Asian or is an Indian issue. It's not just application that makes a PhD Indian. We ought to, and we do, we ought to be allowed a place in the global discussion and we will claim our place in that global discussion on the grounds of truth alone: that Indians have a perspective that's distinct and not any less seeking to be faithful to revelation. (IF3)

Theological reflection from within these contexts has an important role in bringing the global theological discourse closer to truth. Without it, the global church suffers. Contextually generated theological reflection benefits the universal body of Christ. This is "the gift" that one part of the body brings to the rest (AF2).

These contextual contributions are important because they give voice to theological reflections not already in the conversation. The words of one Indian professor are poignant as he encouraged students to make their unique contributions to the broader discourse:

> you are bringing something to the table even in a global conversation. You are bringing something that is very unique where you are bringing your own context but also enough goes in, mixed in, from the other context as well. Otherwise you become a mere echo of the Western theology which you lose your voice. (IF6)

Examples given by both faculty and students during the interviews illustrate some of the gaps in existing theological frameworks as well as some of the rich theological reflection already in process. Inherited frameworks have not proven satisfactory for dealing with issues of barrenness, governmental violence, reconciliation, systemic poverty, corruption among leadership or the many facets of Islam, to simply name a few items shared

by faculty and students. These are not just contextual issues that require pragmatic solutions for the church, but theological issues that require thoughtful, biblical reflection that will have value locally and globally. However, they need frameworks, a process for engagement and theologically reflective women and men who can help the church understand the implications of the Christian faith, lived in the midst of them. Those leaders also need to find that voice and bring the gift to the global body of Christ. Figure 2 visually depicts process that synthesizes the needs expressed by the participants for a process of doing theology that is meaningful to the context, but also engaged in the global theological discourse.

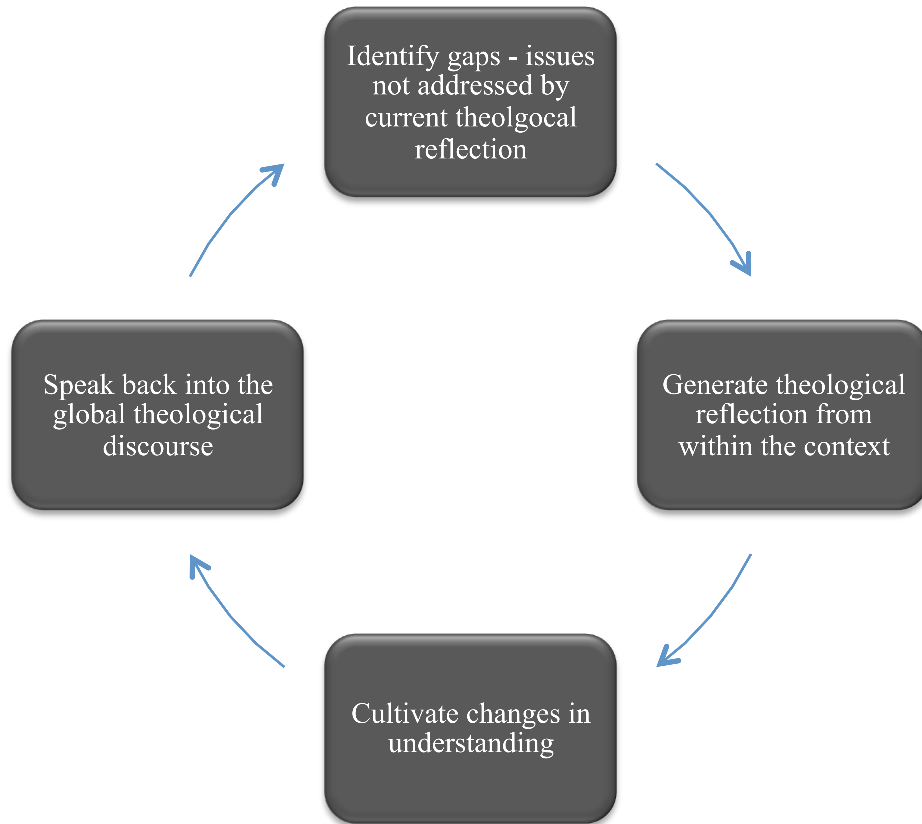

Figure 2. Cycle of Theological Reflection, created by the author.

The literature reflects both reluctance and openness toward theological shifts that make room for non-Western voices to speak into the global theological discourse. Despite a growing recognition that all theology is contextual and that Western theology is not a universal expression of truth that answers all theological questions, introducing new ideas, and especially new processes can be challenging. As one faculty member described it, “centuries of inertia can be difficult to overcome.” For this reason, new theological

communities are needed to help bring about change. As he stated, one doctoral student is unlikely to be strong enough by herself. However, both the literature and the interviews indicate a desire for a new cadre of theologians developed from within, pursuing the internally generated questions, which can speak to the global church (Samuel 2002, Caldwell 2010).

In addition to groups of individuals from within one context, opportunities may exist for communities of theologians across the Global South to learn with and from one another around specific theological issues. Several participants remarked on the fact that while diverse, the church in the Majority World has great similarity in both worldview and the issues encountered across its breadth. One faculty member spoke very directly of the desire to engage dialogue partners from other Majority World settings (IF3). Whether within one institution or between several across the Global South, doctoral programs have the potential to be some of the loci for communities engaged in contextually-rooted theological reflection.

Wuthnow (2009) has written that despite the growth of the church in the Majority World, both the material and intellectual resources of the church remain in the West. Doctoral programs can play a role in developing scholars, who, through engagement in a process of theological reflection, can shift some of that equation. The church, both locally and globally needs more contextual engagement, bringing the Christian faith to bear in the places where the people live.

Challenging the Dichotomy between Academic Excellence and Contextual Relevance

In the course of the research, several participants juxtaposed a value for academic excellence against that of cultural or contextual relevance. Students expressed the dilemma of whether or not the work should be scholarly or relevant: “when I started my PhD program I was told with ... my colleagues that the PhD research contributes to the scholarship, not to the community” (AS6). Furthermore, the theme of contextual suspicion was evident in the opinion expressed by some that Western approaches were more academically valid, while that which was contextual was of a lesser value. “Western approach is that you to write for the scholarship, while with the African approach, ... wants to see how the community will benefit from your research” (AS6). This mentality maintains the hegemony of Western approaches, ascribing a universal nature to them. It continues to marginalize contextual engagement as perhaps interesting, but not important to true scholarship. Several participants expressed this frustration, including the one professor who remarked, “you apply it to Africa at the end so Africa is always chapter seven of your dissertation” (AF2). Contextual engagement had been treated as an after thought, a section that can be addressed if time and energy remain, but not critical to the theological reflection.

Part of the problem with this view lies in the positioning of these two values, academic excellence and contextual relevance as a dichotomy; as two poles on a spectrum. Such a view means to increase one, diminishes the other. Yet, according to the participants in this study, both held significant value to the stakeholders. They saw each of the programs as academically rigorous and contextually engaged. In addition, the Beirut Benchmarks,

proclaim both as important for quality doctoral education. Therefore, the image of poles on a spectrum is not helpful because the two objectives cannot be achieved simultaneously. Rather than one line with polar opposites, the two values are better conceived of as axes on a grid as in figure 3. Pursuit of academic excellence can be done independently of the pursuit of contextual engagement. However, rather than choosing between the two, the objective of the program is to increase both, to keep the arrow moving up and to the right (as this chart is oriented). The two may not remain in absolute balance, but they can be pursued simultaneously without one taking way from the other. Reframing the mental picture can alter the approach and bring validity to contextual engagement while maintaining every standard of academic excellence.

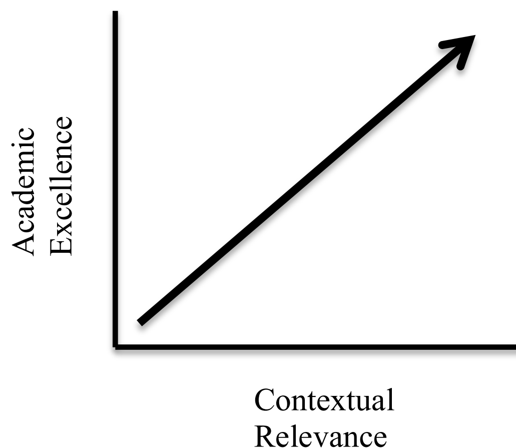

Figure 3. Optimum Contextual Output.

Implications from Matters of Context and Worldview

As anticipated, participants addressed issues related to cultural context during the course of the interviews. In each of the three contexts, participants highly valued community and relationships. Cohort structures contributed to, but were not necessary for students to develop a strong sense of community. The depth of community experienced by the SETECA students and faculty, despite the minimal time physically together, was surprising. Beginning and ending each module with the two-week in person intensive course in Guatemala, followed by weekly online interaction has built strong relationships, according to the participants. For highly relational cultures, so much interaction mediated through technology might have created challenges. However, the participants reported that they have made strong interpersonal connections and created habits of online interaction that have continued beyond the course requirements. Other schools looking to incorporate more technology mediated aspects to their programs might learn from SETECA on how they have structured the interactions that not only accomplished the learning tasks set forth in the syllabi, but also developed relationships in a contextually valued way.

The Importance of Worldview

According to the respondents, interaction with cultural insiders who share the student's worldview is more than just a comfort missed by those who study abroad. Insiders have a tacit understanding of the importance of certain research questions and methods. Students expressed that mentors who share a worldview with their students implicitly understand them better. This sense of comprehension included interpersonal interactions,

theological understandings, and even writing styles in ways that outsiders cannot. Participants further expressed that when worldview is shared, they do not have to justify the value of research, approach or impact on the church around their topic.

The Value of Intracultural Critique

In the course of the interviews, a theme emerged in how participants viewed the interaction that took place within a community that held a common cultural worldview. This group, most notably among their peers, but including some interaction with faculty members, proved to be a group in which they could "think theologically and reflectively" (IF5). Each program had formal structures or common practices (such as the SAIACS Doctor Club) that facilitated this interaction among the doctoral students. The value however, moved beyond simply making presentations and the process of giving and receiving critique. The value came as this group of peers asked questions, made observations, and probed new ideas together that stretched the group's understanding of certain contextual definitions and practices.

For example discovering which burial practices take place in multiple African contexts and which do not, helped participants further refine their ideas of what it meant for a practice to be "African" (AS3). In other instances, certain locally generated ideas had common analogs throughout the region. In each case, participants learned more about their own cultural identities and worldviews in the process.

Because worldview is largely tacit, learning about it most often occurs when new ideas that do not fit within the individual's initial understanding challenge assumptions.

The student who discovered a great diversity in burial practices had his assumptions about the unity of African beliefs challenged. His understanding of his own worldview and a more broadly African worldview were refined. This happened because other cultural insiders could challenge his thinking. Had he been in the West, potentially as a lone African student in a more globally diverse group of students, his peers might have assumed (as he did initially), that his particular experience was in fact largely "the" African experience, as opposed to "an" African experience; meaning one among many African practices.

The value of intracultural critique became especially poignant when the experiences of those studying in the contextual programs were juxtaposed against those of some of the faculty members who studied in the West. Several faculty members who studied in the West believed they had to "force" a contextual element into their dissertations and when they did, those aspects received little attention from their supervisors. One faculty member vividly explained that he felt compelled to include contextual elements in his research, but he knew that his mentor "had no clue" and they would not receive attention in his oral defense (AF5). This stands in stark contrast to the Indian faculty member who stated, "contextualizing a thesis is what makes a thesis worth supervising" (IF2).

One of the disheartening aspects of the African faculty member's statement about the lack of concern, interest or critique of his contextual work is that this clearly held importance for him. In his research in theology, he cared greatly for this element of contextual engagement and believed strongly that it mattered to the church in his home country of Ghana. Yet, the perhaps unintended statement from his mentor was that this aspect was of little importance theologically and was not the important contribution of his academic

study. This mentality reinforced the dichotomy between scholarship and context, while also leaving the portion of his work that might prove most fruitful for the African church outside of the scholarly critique by the experts in his field.

By contrast, the peer and faculty engagement with others who share a common worldview means that the contextual elements do not get a “free pass” in the scholarly work of the student. Intracultural critique allows for the ideas to be challenged, deepened, reframed and reshaped because others understand their importance. In addition, because they are cultural insiders they have a right and obligation to challenge the conclusions in ways that cannot happen if the same research is conducted in the West. Peers and faculty members may lack expertise and contextual understanding. Because they are outsiders, demonstrate a general hesitancy to ask questions related to contextual elements, thus leaving important ideas uncritiqued. However, presenting the ideas in the context of a shared worldview means that they potentially receive the kind of critique that may improve the thought and make it even more useful, to the church within that context. Intracultural critique has great value for shaping the theological reflection needed in the global church.

Implications Related to Adult Learning Practices

As previously stated, responses related to adult learning practices surprised the researcher; not that issues of teaching and learning would be important, but that the descriptors were more universal than contextual. This perhaps reflects something found inherently within the humanity of learners, flowing out of who humans are as created in the image of God. As those made in the image of the Creator, there may be certain realities about

how people learn, construct knowledge and make meaning that reflect the Creator. This may also shed insight into how humans approach truth through both special and general revelation. Such reflection falls outside the scope of this particular research but certainly raises questions about a theology of pedagogy (or andragogy) that could be addressed by others.

The descriptions provided by both faculty and students regarding what makes the teaching and learning process in the doctoral program contextual clearly reflected adult learning practices as described by Knowles, Mezirow, Cranton, Brookfield and others in this field. One member from SETECA summed this well: “Rather than Western versus non-Western I’d say it’s probably traditional versus nontraditional. We do vary from the traditional” (LF4). Yet, most of the participants described these non-traditional approaches as contextually engaging.

In analysis of the comments, it seems that adult learning practices created space and opportunity for contextual engagement in ways that more traditional education did not. Experience is inherently contextual. By engaging participant experiences through class discussion and other interactive forums, the students naturally engaged their contexts. Learner focused approaches, discussion oriented seminars, and other practices created space for new and different kinds of thinking. Unlike traditional lecture, where students simply receive content and then present that same content back to the professor in the exam, courses that employ adult leaning practices allow space for cultural and contextual values to enter into the learning process. In discussion, participants may present their ideas utilizing a breadth of logics, communication styles (such as narrative, parable, wisdom sayings, or other

less propositional modes). Learning tasks that focus on problems, instead of content, naturally create opportunity for multiple approaches and solutions. Students can utilize their experience, explore new ideas and experiment with possible solutions in pursuit of those that make the most sense of all the data presented in the problem.

Adult learning practices promote critical thinking skills as alternative perspectives are shared, assumptions revealed, and new schema embraced. Transformative learning theory provides insight and language for the process of significant shifts in assumptions, outlook and behavior. This can be especially helpful in relation to the shifts in identity students experience as they move through their doctoral journey.

Several faculty members commented on the impact of prior schooling on students as they enter into their graduate work. Products of highly traditional, content oriented systems, many have what Knowles (1980) describes as a conditioned dependency on the teacher. From the student perspective, many expressed not so much the "culture shock" described by Knowles, as a great sense of emancipation and revelation to engage learning in new ways. The identification with context, and the preference for such learning approaches reflected significant shifts in learning approach that happened for the respondents and might occur for other students as well as they engage a process of andragogy.

As SAIACS developed the learner-centered approach described by some described by several faculty members, it heightened what several professors expressed as low regard for the schooling system of India (IF1,IF2, IF5). They encountered what Knowles identified as a the need for a "preparation of the learner step" which he added to the andragogy process in 1995 because some students were so conditioned to teacher

dependency that they were not yet ready to enter into self-directed learning (2011, loc. 2088). One professor described the initiation of the PDP phase as a direct step to close this gap with students who were not well prepared by their previous schooling for the independence of doctoral work (IF1). According to SAIACS handbooks, the PDP has increase in duration over the years since the doctoral program began. This would seem to indicate a need to help students make the shift toward more effective adult learning has been evident. Given the newness of adult learning practices among most of the doctoral students, other programs may also want to consider how to help students make this transition from traditional content-centered pedagogy to a more learner-focused andragogy.

Additional Thoughts and Observations

Fitness for Purpose

From the outset, the purpose of this research has been descriptive, not attempting to make evaluation, especially with regard to how "successfully" the schools engage their respective contexts. The following comments are therefore not necessarily directed at the schools in the study, but are reflections and questions raised as a result of this study.

Among the findings of the Auburn Report was the fact that many seminaries lacked a clear purpose or had programs that were "at odds with their stated purpose" (Bleier and Wheeler 2010). The doctoral programs in this study each have clear purposes and strive to create a "doctoral experience" that helps the student move toward those objectives. These

objectives include the production of contextually relevant research, the development of much-needed teachers and leaders for the church, developing writers, and generating meaningful contribution to global theological reflection. Their approaches align with broader trends in doctoral education also call for graduates who can work well in collaborative environments, find ways to address important questions through their research, writing and reflection, and graduates who can clearly communicate about those findings in the classroom and in other arenas.

At the heart of the CID and other work on doctoral education has been the call for doctoral programs to pursue “fitness for purpose”; a more positive framing of the Auburn Report assessment that some programs are at odds with their stated purposes. In some ways, traditional doctoral education fits that description. If the hope is to produce graduates capable of teaching, producing contextually relevant research in service to the church and help students become “stewards of the disciplines” in areas such as theology, biblical studies, intercultural studies, church history, ethics, or education, schools would do well to ask how the doctoral journey contributes to those objectives. Traditionally, doctoral students focus on a highly specialized, narrow area of research. They often spend most of their time away from the classroom (unless they can secure a teaching assignment while pursuing their degree), and focus on solitary work, distant from a community of colleagues. In essence, much of the process is counter to the career skills needed after graduation. As Starcher and others have noted, few students in Africa believe research will be their primary activity after graduation. The same is likely true in other Majority World contexts. However, research is the pathway to teaching and other theological reflection.

An analogy might illustrate this gap in preparation and expected outcome. Theological education has expressed a need for women and men who can teach and train others, engage theological issues and challenges facing the church within specific contexts, and, at times, model collaborative, integrative approaches to these objectives. For the sake of the analogy, this skillset will be called “chefs.” In the meantime, to prepare chefs, they are asked to spend hours alone, pushing deeper and deeper into a narrow field of study. They are building one set of skills, but many others are considerably neglected. This skillset is is more akin to that of a line cook, someone who does one narrow part of the food preparation. Theological education would like to develop chefs, but the programs often prepare them for work in one part of the line. They acquire a skill related to the overall process of producing a complex meal, but largely have responsibility for one narrow task within the chain. The chef, however, is required to exhibit creativity, understand the complexity and availability of ingredients, cooking temperatures, mixtures of flavors, and how to prepare and present not only a dish, but an entire menu. Both contribute to the meal, but developing chefs is a more complex process than training a line cook.

Perhaps a belabored analogy, but the point is that programs would do well to consider the objectives of doctoral level education and to construct programs that help meet those objectives. Many of the programs strive to equip students for these multiple identities. However, the literature on doctoral education and the experience of the participants indicates that a gap still remains. Programs need to continue to come back to that first question of purpose and ask how each part of the doctoral journey helps students toward those ends. Boyer’s (1990) multiple terms of scholarship that reflect the range of academic and societal

(and perhaps even ecclesial) responsibility may serve well in evaluating programs on how well they prepare graduates for the robust work to which they are called.

On the Importance of Research

Lest the above comments be misconstrued, doctoral programs can and should pursue meaningful research. Within the scope of theological education, this represents a great need. Research is a primary tool in theological reflection and contributes to developing skills in critical thinking. The global church needs more women and men devoted to research as part of their calling. Schools need to foster cultures of research, encourage and reward scholarly work, and find ways to protect time for this important aspect of scholarly activity. As stated previously in the findings, research by doctoral students and postdoctoral faculty are vitally important for engaging in the process of theological reflection. Such reflection is vital for the church as it seeks to address complex social, cultural – and inherently theological – issues. Research is critical to build the literature in ways that serve both the local context and the global church. Research is essential. The question is not whether research should be the primary component of doctoral education, but rather how it should be constructed and what other aspects of the doctoral journey surround the research and writing components to best shape stewards of the discipline.

A Case for Coursework

Each of the three schools in this study utilized a coursework component. In the case of SAIACS, this component was added later and is a qualified prerequisite to the formal doctoral stage. Some of the larger conversations about developing new doctoral

programs has focused on whether programs should have coursework (often referred to as the US model) or consist of only the dissertation (sometimes referred to as the UK model). Most schools follow the path of SAIACS and claim to want a "hybrid" model that suits their needs (IF5, IF1, LF6).

Whether one model, the other, or something in between, the program design should meet their particular needs. Developing a model that "fits" is the heart of the question of matching the activity to the purpose and desired outcomes. Several participants at SETECA remarked on this outcomes focused approach in developing the DET. They sought to "begin with the end in mind" - identifying what graduates should look like and constructing a pathway for students to move toward that objective (LF6, LS3). Schools should develop doctoral models that fit their purposes.

As an implication of this research, the role of coursework deserves careful consideration. In conversations at several institutions, including those outside the scope of this particular study, the researcher has heard advocates of the "dissertation only" models do so based on efficiency. Rather than spending six to twenty-four months engaged in coursework, students begin with their research and complete the doctoral program in as little as thirty-six months. Efficiency has considerable value (and is a stated objective of both the Bologna process and the recommendations of the CID). Yet, coursework components have value in the overall objectives of the doctoral process and contribute to the development of "stewards of the discipline" in several ways.

First, the coursework becomes a sort of experiential, enacted pedagogy. In preparation of for their future roles as doctoral graduates, Dahlgren and Bjuremeark refer to

the seminar as a primary space where doctoral students are "enculturated into a research community" (2012, 56). In the courses or seminars, schools can embody the educational approaches they hope will better prepare doctoral graduates for their futures as researchers, teachers and theological practioners. One faculty member at SAIACS described how underprepared so many graduate students are for teaching (AF2). Engaging students intentionally in the classroom can be a key part in preparing them to teach. Arguably, students have spent their entire academic careers in classrooms, so such experience is not new. However, if doctoral courses differ from their previous schooling, as described by the participants in this study, then these courses have a unique opportunity to shape how doctoral students view the classroom and the task of teaching.. Coursework is one way to consider how to develop what Boyer terms the "scholarship of teaching" (1990, 23). As a desired skill for doctoral graduates, programs will do well to consider how to cultivate the ability to teach in the PhD candidates.

Courses also provide an opportunity to socialize the doctoral student into habits of good teaching. By making the implicit explicit, professors and mentors can share with students about process and rationale for their teaching. Perhaps doctoral students could team teach courses at the bachelor's or master's level as part of that learning process. In addition, through coursework, professors have an opportunity to model contextually engaged teaching. They can utilize their "enacted pedagogy" to help students move from a model of content-centered teaching toward learner focused andragogy (Dahlgren and Bjuremark 2012, 56).

Coursework can help students develop critical thinking skills. If prior

schooling has stunted the development of these skills, then some method for building the skills is required. In courses, professors can create a "step of learner of preparation" to bridge the gap between heavily teacher dependent traditional schooling and the self-directed learning of doctoral research (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2011). They can help students learn to identify assumptions and engage in processes of self-reflection and the critique of ideas.

Courses can serve to develop the skills and habits desired in doctoral graduates. These habits include: how to construct meaningful original research; how to engage in the process of giving and receiving critique; how to express ideas, challenge opinions and make meaning out of new data. Coursework at the doctoral level should be focused on process rather than mastery of additional content. Courses are one way to help students develop habits of theological reflection as described in the process of figure 2.

Courses can help students move toward their dissertation. Research seminars help students build a literature base, test ideas and refine their research questions. Assignments can help students further develop their writing skills. If integration of contextual engagement is desired, students can learn this process though course assignments, in doing so they might avoid the frustration expressed by the students at NEGST over the ambiguity of how to do that well (AF2, AS1).

Course assignments can also help develop writing skills. Not only do doctoral graduates need to be able to carry a sustained argument over the course of a dissertation, but they need to learn to write for multiple audiences, to develop capability in multiple modes of writing, and a place to experiment with other styles of writing that perhaps better engage the

context. With regard to audience, some assignments may target the academy; others might target training material for pastors. Students need to learn how to write and submit articles for publication, a skill that differs from that of writing a thesis. Courses might follow the pattern of the course described by one of the participants from NEGST where the professor designed her assignment in a way that it was "tilted it towards writing the African way, bringing in stories, bringing in something that's authentic from an African perspective and even in terms of language" (AS 2). Such an assignment provides another way to develop contextual engagement in both the "how" and the "what" of the assignment.

Courses naturally have a peer component to them and provide a place for presentation and giving and receiving critique. They can serve as a location for intracultural critique and help develop a collaborative approach to research. Team writing projects might help develop a skill found frequently in journals and academic works where co-authorship is quite common.

Finally, courses can help develop a greater breadth of knowledge within the student's discipline. Many of the professors in theological education must teach across a variety of subjects within, and even outside, their primary field of study. Few have the luxury of narrow specialization. To best prepare teachers for the context, they need a breadth of knowledge and exposure so that they can be better prepared for this reality. Many schools in the majority world do not have the luxury of large departments for any given discipline. Rather they need faculty members prepared to engage multiple courses and disciplines with flexibility and breadth of experience.

Role of Mentors

Participants in this research consistently expressed a need for more faculty members from within the context who can supervise dissertations and mentor doctoral students. Few faculty members have extensive experience mentoring dissertations. The newness of the programs accounts for some of this lack of experience. At the time of this research the three schools had only gradated a total of twenty students. Developing skills in supervising dissertations will be important for the growth of the doctoral programs. According to the participants, contextual engagement will be better served if those mentors are cultural insiders who understand the worldview of the students. In addition to the acquired expertise of mentoring a thesis, faculty also have an important role in mentoring doctoral students in other skills and roles they will take on as they move from doctoral student to graduated colleague. These include mentoring them as teachers, as institutional colleagues, and as members of the academic community. While much of this mentoring may take place informally, it still requires intentionality. Even those with little experience supervising a dissertation can help shape these other aspects of the student's doctoral journey.

Kairos Opportunities

Doctoral programs at evangelical theological schools in the Majority World have begun at a time when much attention has turned to the broader topic of doctoral education in general. Lee and Danby describe this as a "state of flux," the "site of great enthusiasm and innovation on the one hand, and frustration and disquiet on the other" (2012,

12). As explained earlier, many of the questions, concerns and recommendations that have arisen out of the CID and other work on doctoral education resonate strongly with those expressed by stakeholders at Majority World seminaries.

Given this convergence of factors, schools and doctoral programs may have a unique “kairos” opportunity to try new ideas and continue to shape the models of doctoral education to best fit their purposes. “Kairos”, a Greek term that often refers to a specific moment of opportunity stands in contrast to “chromos,” or ordinary time. The literature and trends within doctoral education indicate what may be a “kairos” moment that support creativity in higher education. One of the factors mitigating creativity is a desire for acceptance by the dominant forms of education. However, on both sides of the Atlantic, these forms of doctoral education face questions and calls for change. This is a time in which movement towards newer models has support from a number of sectors within the field of doctoral education.

In addition, it is important to remember that these programs began in response to both a need and a perceived gap. Several faculty members reflected on this gap, particularly in relation to contextual engagement during their studies in the West (AF4, AF5, LF6, IS2). Rather than perpetuate the same models that have not been able to close a gap in contextually engaged research and preparation, doctoral programs in the Majority World have an opportunity to try new models, not copying the Western forms that have shown certain deficiencies, as reflected by the faculty members responses to these interviews. Rather than follow the curve, doctoral programs in the Majority World have the opportunity to implement certain better practices from the beginning, something that is almost always

easier than trying to implement institutional change at a later date.

Contextual doctoral programs may be able to explore more integrative and holistic approaches to research in ways not yet done in the West. Faculty members at AIU consistently compared the current program to that first group with an intentionally integrated approach (AF2, AF4, AF5). Integrative work has begun at all three schools, ranging form the inherently integrated program at SETECA to the more traditional disciplines, but missionally driven approaches at SAIACS. Current research in doctoral education supports the creation of new models of research, not necessarily bounded by historic disciplines, that would allow for more socially and contextually engaged research in service to the church. Such approaches can help to overcome silos (AF2) and broaden the thinking and preparation of future faculty members (AF5).

Integrative approaches help address significant questions that transcend disciplinary boundaries. They may provide opportunities for collaborative, or at least complementary, research across more than one discipline. They may lead to research that incorporates both exegetical and social science methodologies, as evidenced by the work of some of the students at AIU (AS1, AS6).

While some integrative work that spans disciplines has begun in places like SETECA and AIU, such approaches can prove difficult to develop and sustain. Innovation requires intentionality and effort. As one faculty member described it, one must overcome “centuries of inertia” found in the dominant approaches. In addition, very few models exist, especially in theological education. Faculty members are unsure how to supervise such work. Team supervision may provide a solution, but is it also a new idea without many models in

theological schools.

Participants in this study have identified a need for more work in holistic and integrative approaches to research. The trends in doctoral education offer support for experimenting with these new approaches. Seminaries might explore literature related to transdisciplinary work (Willets et al. 2012). The literature out of the CID and subsequent work may provide stimulation for new ideas and encouragement for new doctoral programs to not work so hard to follow and catch up to established models only to find that the field has moved in directions they had wanted to travel all along. Theological schools may be able to find ways to make the most of this "time of flux" within doctoral education.

Recommendations for Further Inquiry

This research has focused on three schools in very specific contexts. While the schools were selected based on some of their relative strengths, they do not constitute a sufficient sample for broad generalizations. They were intentionally selected from diverse geographic regions in order to seek categories that transcend one specific context, but the research remains limited in their scope and at this point particular to the three schools the analysis and synthesis of those collective findings. The findings above may generate further ideas that create opportunities for further research that might extend this work in other areas, or build to new areas of inquiry.

Similar research considering stakeholder perceptions of contextual engagement in other areas might prove beneficial. Conducting research at additional schools in similar contexts, such as other doctoral programs in India, English speaking Africa, or

Latin America, might confirm or challenge some of the patterns found in this set of research.

By contrast, conducting similar research at schools in different contexts might extend the research and build toward categories that could eventually lead to generalizations. Hong Kong and Singapore might prove interesting contexts as they hold unique positions as bridges between the West and the Majority World. In terms of economics and socio-political power, they align more closely with the West, while in social and linguistic terms they may orient more toward broader Asian and Chinese society. In addition, contexts with less contact with English, such as Francophone Africa might prove interesting given the role of English in Western theology and what have been dominant forms of globalization.[1] Contexts like China could prove even more interesting with even less contact with the West and different operating worldview, theological constructs and sets of cultural values than those examined in this study thus far.

In addition to similar studies, other areas of investigation might extend some of the ideas put forth by the participants or through the literature reviewed in this study. The work in the CID and questions of pedagogy and fitness for purpose have also led to questions over doctoral assessment and whether outputs beyond the dissertation might every be considered as academically valid (Maki and Boakowski 2006, Shaw 2010). Some have begun to ask questions of how one demonstrates quality and effectiveness in scholarly work, while also perhaps developing output that better aligns with the purposes and desired outcomes of

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[1] SETECA is a Spanish language school in a Spanish speaking country and is therefore non-English speaking. However, it was founded by US missionaries and has close ties to the English speaking world, particularly North America. They, therefore, experience the dominance of English speaking theological education more readily than some other contexts.

the degree.

Building on themes of study trips and generating global dialogue, further opportunities for inquiry or a preliminary readiness study might focus on the development of institutional partnerships and collaboratively granted degrees. Models such as China Graduate School of Theology's recent partnership with the University of Edinburgh, the model at Oxford Centre for Mission Study, or even the alliance built by South African Theological Seminary might provide rich areas of research. Questions of how partnership impacts accreditation, access to resources, global theological dialogue, and even financial structures could all build off of themes present in this study.

Conclusion

This study explored the contextual engagement of three PhD programs located in evangelical seminaries in three specific contexts of Nairobi, Kenya; Guatemala City, Guatemala; and Bangalore, India. The interviews with eighteen faculty members and eighteen students, equally distributed among the three schools revealed three primary themes for how the participants saw the programs engage the context.

The programs began with intentionality and continue to be refined so that they best suit the objectives created by each school. Each soil needs the right program for its unique location and purpose. To draw on Sadler's picture of the flower, a plant that consists of pieces plucked from here and there and simply cast into the new soil will not flourish. Rather, the programs do best when considered from within, built toward the objectives they hope to accomplish. Students and faculty believe that intentional programs, including both

explicit and implicit elements help generate an effective doctoral journey for students. Current trends in doctoral education further support many of the desires and trajectories begun at these three schools. The literature should encourage further creativity as the schools create PhD programs that can serve their contexts – and the global church best.

Secondly, the stakeholders take seriously the broader circles of culture that surround the school. Contextual insiders have an advantage that allows for an easier sense of mutual understanding and an opportunity for a kind of critique that becomes very difficult in other settings. Intracultural critique can serve students well, helping to refine and sharpen contextual elements of research. Contextual insiders can help ensure that when contextual elements are integrated into a thesis, they are not simply given a "free pass" but are thought through with critical acumen, to better serve the church in that context.

Finally, both students and faculty believe strongly that adult learning practices provide the best learning environments for contextual engagement. Few of those interviewed, especially among the students, were familiar with the literature on adult learning, but they clearly embraced the practical efficacy. Through valuing experience, discussion driven, learner focused courses become even more contextually engaging and have proven effective and desirable on the three campuses.

APPENDIX 1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate in this research. The research in which you are about to participating is designed to explore your perceptions of contextual engagement by the PhD program at your institution. It is conducted by Evan Hunter as part of his doctoral (PhD) dissertation at Trinity International University. Please be assured that any information that you provide will be held with anonymity. At no time will your name be reported along with your responses. Please understand that your participation in this research is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time during this study.

"I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate."

Name: ____

Signed:_______________________________________ Date:____________________

APPENDIX 2

Demographic Information Students

Name: ____

Age: ________________

Gender: _____________

Undergraduate college/university: ____

Graduation date: ____

Institution for Master's level study : ____

Graduation date: ____

Current Institution for PhD Studies: ____

Program of study: ____

Progress in the program: ____

Proposed dissertation topic: ____

Email address: ____

Phone number: ____

I agree to be recorded during the interview.

Signature: ____

Demographic Information Faculty

Name: ____

Age: ______________

Gender: ____________

Institution at which PhD earned: ____

Graduation date: ______________

Location (city, country): ____

Your Dissertation topic : ____

Institution at which you are teaching: ______________________________________

Number of years on faculty: ____

Courses taught in the PhD program: _______________________________________

Additional roles you have within the PhD program: ___________________________

Dissertation topics by the students (if known):_______________________________

Email address: ____

Phone number: ____

I agree to be recorded during the interview.

Signature: ____

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

For Students:

RQ 1: How do students in evangelical doctoral programs in the majority world describe the contextual reflection within their programs?

Introduction: The purpose of this research is to explore ways in which the doctoral program connects to the context in which is it located. As you reflect on your experience, do so in light of how the PhD related to the church, your own personal cultural context and the particular issues and realities faced within this context.

1. Why did you choose to pursue your PhD?
2. Why did you choose this program for your PhD?
3. Briefly describe the doctoral program here.
4. In what ways, if any, do you feel the curriculum engages the social and cultural realities of the church in this region?
    a. Follow up: What are some of the social and cultural realities addressed by the program?
5. What aspects of the doctoral program do you believe address the social and cultural realties of the church?
    a. Follow up: Describe the papers you have written and especially describe your dissertation topic (if known). In what ways, if any, do the various output assignments reflect the cultural context of this PhD program?
6. How might this PhD program look different in the future? Are there any aspects you wish could be changed within it?

For faculty:

RQ 2: How do professors teaching in Majority World doctoral programs describe the contextual reflection within the doctoral program?

Introduction: The purpose of this research is to explore ways in which the doctoral program connects to the context in which is it located. As you reflect on your teaching experience, do so in light of how the PhD related to the church, your own personal cultural context and the particular issues and realities faced within this context.

1. Tell me about your academic journey? Where did you earn your degrees? What did you study? When did you begin teaching here?
2. Why do you teach in the PhD program? What are the strengths of this PhD program?
3. In what ways, if any, do you try to connect your teaching with the social and cultural realities of your students?
    a. Follow up: what are some social and cultural realties you try to address?
4. In what ways, if any, have you modified the learning experiences for your students from the way you engaged your PhD program?
5. Describe the student output through papers and dissertations. What, if anything, in those outputs reflects the context of the program?
6. How would you like to see this PhD program change in the future? What, if any, aspects would you like to see added or modified within it?

APPENDIX 4

EVANGELICAL DOCTORAL PROGRAM ENROLLMENT IN THE MAJORITY WORLD AND IN THE US

As of July 2013

AFRICA

School	Year Program Began	Currently Enrolled	Graduates
Africa International University Kenya	2006 (Biblical and Translation Studies) 2011 (ICS 2012 (Theology)	BTS – 11 ICS – 15	BTS – 4 ICS – 0
Akrofi Christaller Institute Ghana	1999 (Theology	16	9
Faculte de Theologie Evangelique de Bangui Central African Republic	2006 (Systematic Theology, Biblical Studies, Missiology)	10	2
George Whitfield College Evangelical Research Fellowship (in cooperation with Stellenbosch) South Africa	2002 (Theology, Biblical Studies, Missiology)	8	5
International Leadership University Kenya	2012 (Leadership, Biblical Studies)	28	0
Jos ECWA Theological Seminary Nigeria	2006 (Integrative Theology)	5	3
Nigerian Baptist Seminary Nigeria	2002 (Theology, Religious Education)	18	80
South African Theological Seminary South Africa	2008 – disciplines dependent on student and mentor	91	11
University of Shalom – Bunia Democratic Republic of Congo	2012 (Biblical Studies, Missiology)	7	0

ASIA

School	Year Program Began	Currently Enrolled	Graduates
Asian Graduate School of Theology Philippines	2001 (Biblical Studies, Theology) 2009 (Holistic Child Development) 2012 (ICS) 2013 (Education)	40	5
AGST Alliance Southeast Asia	2004 (Education) 2007 (Theology)	8	1
Center for Advanced Theological Studies India	2012	13	0
China Graduate School of Theology	2004 (Theology, Biblical Studies)	10	1
South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies India	1997 (Biblical Studies, Theology, Missiology)	11	10
Torch Trinity Korea	2005 (Counseling, ICS) 2011 (Biblical Studies, Theology, Education)	36	2
Trinity Theological College Singapore	2001 (Theology, Biblical Studies)	17	17

LATIN AMERICA AND EASTERN EUROPE

School	Year Program Began	Currently Enrolled	Graduates
Evangelical Theological Fellowship Slovakia	2011 (Theology)	9	0
PRODOLA Costa Rica	2004	85	5
Seminario Teologico Centroamericano Guatemala	2004 (Theological Education)	14	6

Total PhD Students	Enrolled	Graduates
	452	80 – Nigerian Baptist 81 – All others 161

ATS ACCREDITED PhD PROGRAMS AT EVANGELICAL SCHOOLS IN THE US

School	Program	Number
1. Asbury Theological Seminary	ICS Theological Studies Evangelization	32
2. Assemblies of God Theological Seminary	Bible and Theology Missions	3
3. Calvin Theological Seminary	Theology Reformation studies	5
4. Dallas Theological Seminary	Theological Studies/Biblical Studies/Applied Theology	35
5. Fuller Theological Seminary	Psychology SOT SIS	4 7 13
6. Regent University Divinity School	Renewal studies Bible and Theology	4 8*
7. Talbot School of Theology	Christian Education	18
8. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	EDS ICS THS	6 6 10
9. Westminster Theological Seminary		5*
10. Midwest Baptist Theological Seminary	Theological Studies	0
11. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary	Theological Studies	4
12. Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary		5*
13. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	Theology Biblical Studies Missions	8
14. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	Theology, Missions, Church Music	16

A total of approximately 184 students from Majority World Contexts enrolled.

* Numbers estimated as the school would not share this information or did not respond to multiple requests for the information.

APPENDIX 5

THE BEIRUT BENCHMARKS

Doctoral study within an evangelical Christian institution is founded on an understanding of knowledge that is more than academic. In the Bible, acquiring and exercising wisdom involves a combination of faith, reason and action. It requires

- right belief and committed trust in the living God ("the fear of the LORD is the first principle of wisdom"),
- creative and humble use of the rationality God has granted to humans made in his own image, and
- appropriate living in the world to reflect God's calling and participate in God's mission.

Doctoral study, therefore, pursued on such a foundation, will be *confessional*, *rational* and *missional*. For a Christian, doctoral study is one dimension of what it means to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength."
Within such a framework of Christian identity and commitment, the doctoral qualification will be awarded to students who are church members commended for faithful discipleship and recognized leadership, and who demonstrate the following qualities through appropriate examination:

1. Comprehensive understanding, having demonstrated a breadth of systematic understanding of a field of study relevant to the Christian community of faith, and mastery of the skills and methods of research appropriate to that field.
2. Critical skills, faithfully exercised, having demonstrated their capacity for critical analysis, independent evaluation of primary and secondary source materials, and synthesis of new and inter-related ideas through coherent argumentation, and their commitment to exercise such skills on the foundation of biblical faithfulness to Jesus Christ and his church.
3. Serious inquiry with integrity, having demonstrated the ability to conceive, design and implement a substantial project of inquiry resulting in a sustained and coherent thesis, and to do so with Christian and scholarly integrity.

4. Creative and original contribution, having produced, as a result of such disciplined inquiry, a creative and original contribution that extends the frontiers of knowledge, or develops fresh insights in the articulation and contextual relevance of the Christian tradition, some of which merit national or international refereed publication.

5. Contextual relevance, having shown their capacity, in the course of their doctoral program and in their expectation of its future potential, for biblically-informed critical engagement with the realities of their cultural contexts.

6. Ability to communicate, having shown an ability in communicating about their area of expertise to peer-level academic audiences, and, where appropriate, to non-specialists in local Christian communities and the wider society in culturally relevant ways, including their mother tongue, for example through teaching, preaching or writing.

7. Missional impact, having shown that they are committed, and can be expected, to use the fruit of their doctoral study, the skills it has given them and the opportunities it affords them, to promote the kingdom of God and advance the mission of the church (both local and global), through Christ-like and transformational service, to the glory of God.

(Endorsed unanimously on 6 March 2010 by the participants in the ICETE Doctoral Consultation Beirut, Lebanon)

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