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Postgraduate research training: A case of the South African doctoral consortium of universities

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2008-03-31T08:01:13Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/4723

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Abstract

This study is about the program of the Consortium and how it addresses postgraduate research training. In particular, this study focuses on the need to form partnerships and collaboration in higher education because of shrinking budgets. In addition, it examined other related associations and how they assist in developing research such as the Education policy Units, Human Resources Councils and many more. Analyses were conducted on the interview responses of five doctoral students, four supervisors and three coordinators. Thematic analyses were utilized for discussions under three major sub-topics, namely, the program, students' experiences, and institutional implications. Results revealed that the program has brought together key institutions in the higher education sectors that traditionally have tended to work in isolation. In addition, the program of the Consortium brings together academics with different skills and capacities to enable students to think creatively about how they might together address difficulties, which in their individual institutions, may not have been able to solve. While there was a relationship that was observed between diminishing funds in higher education and the formulation of partnerships findings suggest that partnerships in higher education can lead to the development of more effective postgraduate research training in a developing world context.