

The intricacies of masters and doctoral study: A deep dive on support structures in postgraduate studies in South Africa

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1 Introduction

Tullet et al correctly posit that postgraduate study can be mentally, physically and emotionally overwhelming.¹ Similarly, engaging in postgraduate study or rather writing a dissertation or thesis requires one to appreciate the intricacies that are associated with the art of analysing vast data, technical prowess, analytical acumen, patience, but most importantly, postgraduate students are expected to possess the several key attributes.

First, it is important to note that the students who are enrolled for the masters programme in various Universities, would normally do coursework before they start working on a mini-dissertation, opt to do the masters programme based on the full-dissertation. Equally, before embarking on the actual masters or doctoral study, the postgraduate student will be required to craft a detailed proposal. This proposal, frequently scrutinised by a committee, lays out the research question, the significance of the study, the methodologies to be used, and the expected outcomes. Proposal writing is the blueprint that guides the research

* For helpful comments on an earlier drafts of this chapter, we are indebted to the anonymous reviewers. Any errors are those of the authors.

1 Tullet J et al 'Using reflective practice to support PhD students in the biosciences' (2024) *eLife* 1.

journey. Secondly, the heart of the dissertation or thesis writing lies in the research undertaken. This phase, often complex, involves data collection, analysis, and synthesis. Whether it is scouring archives, conducting experiments, or analysing vast datasets, this stage demands technical prowess, analytical acumen, solitude. Thirdly, writing the dissertation/thesis demands clarity, precision, and a commitment to academic rigor.

Crafting a narrative that is both compelling and scholarly is a challenge, requiring numerous drafts, revisions, and feedback sessions. Lastly, the oral defense, a presentation and subsequent questioning by an expert panel, is the final hurdle. It is an opportunity for postgraduate students to articulate their findings, defend their methodologies, and showcase their expertise. Whether there is a final oral defence would vary from institution to institution and often from faculty to faculty. Nonetheless, all these key attributes of research writing, ideally work in a conducive environment which has support structure for postgraduate students to flourish in the journey of writing their research project.

In light of the above, this chapter examines the support structures or scholarly engagement practices employed by institutions of higher learning that are meant to enhance and create the enabling environment for postgraduate students as they embark in the journey of masters or doctoral study.

2 The 21st century education system

Hlabangane² points out that humanity is beset by a number of intractable challenges,³ most of which can be attributed to the underlying ethos of capitalism'. Consequently, the education system provided in universities ought to respond and find solutions to this complex socio-economic challenge.

The education system of the 21st century prioritizes equipping postgraduate and undergraduate students for a swiftly evolving world by highlighting abilities such as critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and communication, in addition to fundamental academic subjects. This

2 N Hlabangane 'A single bangle does not jingle: The twinning imperative of ubuntu' (2025) *International Journal of Critical Diversity Studies* 68.

3 Since the dawn of democracy humanity has faced a web of challenges associated with poverty, inequalities, unemployment (youth unemployment) hunger and climate change.

method employs technology and promotes practical problem-solving along with project-oriented learning. Similarly, the undergraduate and postgraduate students are equipped with basic learning skills formation, competencies, essential knowledge, labour market, and lifelong learning. In general, competence is a combination of abilities, knowledge, and skills acquired during learning process of a specific discipline, as well as, the ability to apply the acquisitions successfully.⁴

Furthermore, postgraduate education should cultivate skills and knowledge that are applicable globally, enabling graduates to work effectively in diverse international contexts.⁵ This could involve understanding international law, global economics, or the cultural nuances of international business.

The world's population is predicted to grow from our current 7.3 billion to 8.5 billion in 2030 and to nearly 10 billion by 2050.⁶ Such population growth will affect a host of global issues including pollution, disease management, poverty, unemployment and depletion of energy, food and water resources. As the population grow, the postgraduate students will constantly be faced with challenges of developing tools and policies that will address these societal challenges. In this context, universities play a critical role in finding solutions to these challenges depicted above.

The important matter is how universities use this knowledge in mentoring and building future generation of postgraduate students who will play a leading role of transforming society. Saidi argue that 'postgraduate education is an equally significant part of higher education, and perhaps one with more fundamental influence on global economies, health, governance and social justice'.⁷ Similarly, postgraduate students

4 AT Makulova 'Theory and practice of competency – based approach in education' (2015) *International Education Studies* 183-184; AT Odularu and others 'Global competitiveness and competency among South African university students in the twenty-first century' (2022) 12-13 SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4259835> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4259835> (accessed 22 December 2024).

5 K Markey and others 'Navigating learning and teaching in expanding culturally diverse higher education settings' (2023) *Higher Education Pedagogies* 1-16.

6 United Nations 'The world in 2100' <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population#:~:text=The%20world%20population%20is%20projected,surrounding%20these%20latest%20population%20projections> (accessed 20 December 2024).

7 A Saidi 'Promoting access to, and success in postgraduate education in South Africa: A synthesis of emerging issues'(2024) *South African Journal of Higher*

must be supported through mentorship programmes and other initiatives, such as conference attendance, writing retreat seminars and also coaching them on how to successfully complete their studies within record time. These support initiatives are critical in enabling postgraduate students to address the challenges alluded to above.

Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh and Jyrama aver that the lecturer-student relationship when seen in a mentorship context highlights the problems associated with the strong power position the lecturers hold within the academic community.⁸ As discussed by Hall et al educators might implicitly, and even explicitly, provide only one possible path for student learning and a singular image of their future careers, thus limiting the potential learning paths that, for example, external mentorship could provide.⁹ Hence, there might be a tendency to guide students toward specific (accepted) tacit and explicit knowledge rather than offer a diversity of learning paths and contexts.

Postgraduate supervision helps the masters and doctoral students to develop critical research skills, navigate complex research methodologies, and ultimately complete their studies successfully. It also promotes the development of a fortified research mindset and provides a crucial bridge between theory and practice.¹⁰

3 Who are the postgraduate students: Issues and challenges

The Council on Higher Education ('CHE') has acknowledged that 'while the scholarship of teaching and learning has typically focused on undergraduate pedagogy, in recent years the spotlight has turned to postgraduate education'.¹¹ Postgraduate education includes advanced studies pursued after earning a bachelor's degree. It offers specialized

Education 3.

- 8 K Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh & A Jyrama 'The role of mentorship in universities: The knowledge management framework' (2022) Proceedings of the 23rd European Conference on knowledge management (ECKM) 705-714.
- 9 L Hall & L Burns 'Identity development and mentoring in doctoral education' (2009) *Harvard Educational Review* 49-70.
- 10 M Cekiso and others 'Supervision experiences of postgraduate research students at one South African higher education institution' (2019) *South African Journal of Higher Education* 9-23.
- 11 Council on Higher Education 'Models of postgraduate supervision and the need for a research-rich culture' (2023) 1 <https://www.che.ac.za/file/7269/download?token=CHhcauQL> (accessed 24 December 2024).

knowledge and skills in a particular area, frequently resulting in qualifications such as masters and doctoral degrees. These programs may be focused on coursework, research, or a mix of the two

According to the CHE the rise in literature on postgraduate studies has paralleled the enormous growth in masters and doctoral enrolments around the world. The 2022 Doctoral Graduate Tracer Study suggests that 60 percent of doctoral candidates study part-time in South Africa, a statistic that has remained unchanged in the last two decades.¹² This varies by field with students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields of study being more likely to study full-time and being more likely to be funded.

The high percentage of part-time postgraduate students has significant pedagogical implications. It cannot be assumed that these students will forge their own support networks within the student body or connect with others in their field through informal on-campus exchanges. Instead, enabling environment and opportunities for such communities of practice need to be provided. Abiddin et al notes that the number of postgraduate students keep increasing and striving for excellence, good resources at this level are of vital importance.¹³

The report of the Doctoral Graduate Tracer Study further indicates that 33 percent of doctoral candidates are self-financing, 30 percent are financially supported by the universities that employ them, only 22 percent receive funding from South African funding agencies (such as the National Research Foundation), 8 percent rely on international funding agencies, and 6 percent receive funding from an employing organisation that was not a university.¹⁴ The issue of funding is repeatedly indicated in the literature to be the main reason for lack of completion of postgraduate studies.¹⁵ Similarly, 'models of supervision

12 J Mouton and others 'A national tracer study of doctoral graduates in South Africa' (2022) Report to the Department of Science and Innovation https://www0.sun.ac.za/scistip/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/National-Tracer-Study-of-Doctoral-Graduates-in-SA_DSI-approved.pdf (accessed 24 December 2024).

13 NZ Abiddin and others 'Attrition and completion issues in postgraduate studies for student development' (2011) *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities* 15.

14 Mouton (n 12).

15 M Motseke 'Reasons for the slow completion of masters and doctoral degrees by adult learners in a South African township' (2016) *Australian Journal of Adult Learning* 424-441; L Nwosu and others 'Systematic review of key success factors in postgraduate studies' (2024) *South African Journal of Higher Education* 83.

and the nurturing of a research-rich culture can enhance postgraduate retention, and also it is critical to focus on increasing the funds available for postgraduate studies'.¹⁶

Alongside reflections, about how models of supervision and the nurturing of a research-rich culture can enhance postgraduate retention. It is critical to urgently focus on increasing the funds available for postgraduate studies and also invest in postgraduate funding scholarship. Furthermore, at Unisa programmes such as Improvement Qualification Programmes ('IQP') have also proved to be useful,¹⁷ in particular for staff members who contemplate to complete their doctoral qualifications. In short, IQP is a programme that enables full-time staff members to take three year academic leave, to work on their doctoral studies. The IQP has yielded positive results, in that a number of staff with doctoral qualification had increased at Unisa during the year 2015 to 2019.

It is submitted that postgraduate education should not be a privilege for the few, yet in South Africa, a staggering 40 percent of students are locked out due to a lack of funding.¹⁸ Tertiary institutions and funding institutions can do more to bridge the gap and help postgraduate students access funds to further their education faster and with less hurdles.¹⁹

According to Henley Business School a well-educated workforce can go a long way to building our economy, but with education out of the financial reach of many, our development as a nation will continue to be hobbled, unless tertiary institutions and financial institutions step up to be innovative with regard to the financing of postgraduate students.²⁰

Similarly, understanding who the postgraduate students are in South Africa is vital to creating the appropriate spaces for postgraduate education. Typically, there are few spaces in the academy to reflect on the structure of the curriculum and the pedagogical approaches used at postgraduate level, especially at the doctorate level. While

16 Council on Higher Education (n 11) 1.

17 Unisa 'Employment at Unisa' (2023) <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/About/Employment-at-Unisa/Learning-&-development> (accessed 24 December 2024).

18 Henley Business School 'The funding gap has left too many students in SA behind' (Daily Maverick) 24 April 2024 <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-04-24-the-funding-gap-has-left-too-many-students-in-sa-behind-this-needs-to-change/> (accessed 30 January 2025).

19 Henley Business School (n 18).

20 Henley Business School (n 18).

curriculum renewal, student evaluation, and quality assurance are a regular characteristic of undergraduate programmes (and honours and coursework master's programmes), they are less common at the higher levels of study. This allows the *status quo* to remain largely unchallenged. A consideration of who the postgraduate scholars are, which is offered only in the broadest of brushstrokes herein, should be central to decisions about the model of supervision to be selected.

Singh succinctly remarked that 'building research capacity of postgraduate students equips them with the necessary skills so that they are able to produce quality research in the minimum prescribed time'.²¹

Similarly, Horn and Van der Merwe opined that to ensure that postgraduate students acquired relevant desired knowledge and practical skills which add value to the workplace, the correct assessment approach is key which is also influenced by teaching and learning practices in universities.²² Furthermore, in addressing the issue of throughput rate, Daniel notes that the quality of supervision remains critical to completion rates and postgraduate research experience.²³

On the issue of postgraduate supervision, the pattern that has emerged over the years, is that value of postgraduate supervision and institutional support in enriching the postgraduate student experience cannot be regarded as less significant. In fact Wisker and Kiley aver that the research supervisor's role continually evolves in response to students' experiences.²⁴ Consequently, the supervisory role is becoming more challenging because most postgraduate students come from various ethnic, cultural, political, economic, linguistic and educational backgrounds.²⁵ While their attraction and retention are paramount for

21 RJ Singh 'Challenges and successes of research capacity building at a rural South African university' (2015) *South African Journal of Higher Education* 191.

22 TG Horn & L Van Niekerk 'The patchwork text as assessment tool for postgraduate law teaching in South Africa' (2020) *Obiter* 293.

23 BK Daniel 'The role of research methodology in enhancing postgraduate students research experience' (2021) *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods* 35.

24 G Wisker & M Kiley 'Professional learning: Lessons for supervision from doctoral examining' (2014) *International Journal for Academic Development* 125-138.

25 E Fragouli 'Postgraduate supervision: A practical reflection on how to support students' engagement' (2021) *International Journal of Higher Education Management* 8-10. Postgraduate supervision faces significant challenges, stemming from both supervisor and student factors, and exacerbated by factors like online-only supervision and diverse backgrounds. These challenges are being addressed through initiatives like online support systems, improved communication, and the promotion of hybrid supervision approaches.

educational institutions, managing diversity dynamics is a significant challenge for institutions. Mohamed et al concur that supervisory challenges are attributed to rising expectations in most postgraduate programmes and graduates' quality.²⁶ There are also supervisory challenges associated with the marked differences between taught and postgraduate research degrees; masters and doctoral levels supervision.

4 Ensuring the global participation of postgraduate in knowledge production

For students to participate effectively in this changing world, they must understand it. The 21st century postgraduate student will sell to the world, buy from the world, work for international companies, compete with people from other countries, manage employees from other cultures, collaborate with people all over the world, and solve global problems.

In education, global competitiveness can be characterised as the set of skills and factors that support individuals' personal and professional productivity in their communities and in the world.²⁷ Being globally competitive today requires developing global competence. Equipping students with specific hard skills to compete in a global job market is important, but cultivating their abilities to effectively share ideas and communicate across cultures in appropriate and respectful ways is critical. Equally, it is important for postgraduate students to develop soft skills competencies known as the '4Cs'; which denotes creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.²⁸

26 R Mohamed & H Judi 'Postgraduate students experience in research supervision' (2017) *AIP Conference Proceedings* 1.

27 AT Odularu and others 'Global competitiveness and competency among South African university students in the twenty-first century' (2022) 12-13 SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4259835> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4259835> (accessed 22 December 2024).

28 B Thornhill-Miller and others 'Creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration: Assessment, certification, and promotion of 21st century skills for the future of work and education' (2023) *Journal of Intelligence* 2-11.

5 Current practices and support structure provided to postgraduate law students

According to the CHE 'rapid increases in postgraduate numbers have led to questions about the best models to be used in supervision'.²⁹ The CHE maintains that 'across the world there has been a move away from the one-on-one model of postgraduate supervision to cohort, team, and project-based approaches to providing support to masters and doctoral students'. The cohort model of postgraduate supervision involves grouping students enrolled in a particular program within a discipline into a collaborative learning cohort.³⁰ This model intergrates traditional one-on-one supervision with set seminar sessions, fostering collaboration, collegiality and shared learning experiences among students and supervisors.

The team-based and project-based approaches to supervision involve dividing supervisory responsibilities among a team of supervisors, particularly in larger projects or for students working on multiple aspects of a larger research theme.³¹ This approach, often seen in multi-disciplinary projects, can help alleviate the workload on individual supervisors and provide students with access to a broader range of expertise.

Similarly, CHE acknowledge that postgraduate students need to undertake their studies within a research-rich culture with multiple opportunities to see research being modelled, to practice their own knowledge creation attempts, and to get feedback from peers and expert researchers.³² It is not only the supervision model used but also the research culture in which it is implemented that has implications for the experience of the postgraduate scholars.

29 Council on Higher Education (n 11) 2.

30 N De Lange, G Pillay & V Chikoko 'Doctoral learning: A case for a cohort model of supervision and support' (2011) *South African Journal of Education* 1-16.

31 C Christopher 'From Group-based Learning to Cooperative Learning: A Metacognitive Approach to Project-based Group Supervision' (2010) 11 *Informing Science: The International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline* 73-84; De Lange (n 30) 1-16.

32 Council on Higher Education (n 11) 2.

The literature clearly evidences a worldwide move to more collaborative approaches to postgraduate education.³³ The drivers of such moves are multiple. Current practices provided to postgraduate students vary in terms of tutelage and financial support. First, in terms of tutelage student are provided supervisor who will assist them to complete their masters and doctoral program. In other universities, external experts are appointed to assist with the supervision and oral defense of postgraduate students. Similarly, once registered students are required to defend their proposal *viva-voce* before a Committee. As discussd above, in order to ensure quality assurance other universities invite external experts to sit and evaluate the postgradute proposals. Albeit, this practices is done in other Universities. Henceforth we argue that these practices ought to be practiced in all universities to ensure quality and consistency.

5.1 Introducing a compulsory research methodology module in the curricular

Enrolling for postgraduate qualification at any institution of higher learning in South Africa is a daunting task. In particular the prospective postgraduate students are required to juggle personal, family, financial and social matters with their academic work required to complete his/her studies. In enrolling for postgraduate qualification most universities have a set of rules that all the prospective students ought to comply with. On the one hand, prospective students are required to complete their qualification within the prescribed time period determined for the completion of the qualification in question.³⁴ For example, if one is enrolled for a masters program he/she will be required to complete his/her studies within one/two years. On the other hand, for LLD or Phd the candidate will required to complete his/her qualification within a period of three/four years. The period of completing ones postgraduate studies varies from one institution to the other.

Despite these prescribed period required for the completion of a postraduate qualification, postgraduate students face a myriad of

33 Council on Higher Education (n 11) 1; Universities South Africa 'Towards Collaborative, Curriculated Postgraduate Education' (year unknown)https://aecrs.usaf.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/Towards_collaborative_curriculated_postgraduate_education_by_Sioux_McKenna.pdf (accessed 24 December 2024).

34 Council on Higher Education (n 11) 2-3.

challenges, which include, among others, financial challenges, inadequate preparation for postgraduate studies; potential supervisor issues³⁵ and time management issues which hinder them from completing their studies in record time. Henceforth it is important to introduce compulsory research methodology module which will just assist the postgraduate students, especially at the master's level to navigate the slippery terrain of academic research writing.

6 Growth in postgraduate number

Postgraduate enrolments have increased rapidly across the South African higher education sector in the last decade. The National Development Plan calls for 5 000 doctoral graduates to be produced per year by 2030.³⁶ When the plan was published, this seemed like an unrealistic target given that the country produced only 1 420 doctoral graduates in 2012.³⁷ However, in 2020, the country produced 3 546 doctoral graduates suggesting that the higher education system is on track towards meeting this target.³⁸

A key driver of the increases in enrolment of postgraduate students is the national funding formula³⁹ which, since its implementation from 2004, has rewarded postgraduate enrolments and graduations in ways that encourage universities to increase postgraduate intake. This has been implemented with the understanding that having a critical mass of highly educated citizens is crucial in a 'knowledge economy' with doctoral graduates seen to be 'the drivers of new knowledge production'.⁴⁰

This significant rise in postgraduate enrolments and graduations needs to be applauded, but caution is needed given some concerns

35 Supervisor related challenges stems from lack of supervisor time, unclear feedback, different expectations, cultural background and gender-based discrimination, student's conflict with supervisors, student changing to a new supervisor, lack of guidelines stipulating supervision, poor supervision, no schedule for meetings, no records of discussions and the supervisors always too busy.

36 National Development Plan 2030, 323 https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf (accessed 20 December 2024).

37 National Development Plan 2012.

38 CHE 2023 (n 11).

39 The national funding formula allocates resources to Universities based, in part on their postgraduate student numbers. This creates a financial incentive for Universities to attract and enroll more postgraduate students.

40 National Development Plan 2012.

expressed in the national report following the recent national review of South African doctoral qualifications undertaken by the Council on Higher Education. The report from the national review notes several quality issues pertaining to the doctorate and suggests that ‘in almost all the HEIs ... increases in student numbers have put a lot of strain on the institutional systems’.⁴¹

The report further suggests that in some cases universities may be admitting students without having the necessary supervision capacity and that incentives to increase postgraduate numbers may bring about unintended consequences: One university reported that the incentivisation of supervision had previously become problematic, where supervisors may take on supervision of excessive numbers of students in order to receive the incentives, which were paid into personal accounts.⁴²

7 Ensuring that the postgraduate student publish

While publication is the currency of academic lifestyle, the common practices in most public institutions of higher learning is that postgraduate candidates who have recently completed a piece of postgraduate research and who are required to provide evidence either of having submitted an article to a journal or having published a journal article before they can graduate. In some cases, students are required to provide such proof before they are allowed even to submit their thesis.

In several areas pertaining to PhD/LLD qualification, this approach poses significant issues. The Qualification Standard for Doctoral Degrees in South Africa is based on the idea of ‘graduate attributes’ in a standard environment.⁴³ The graduate’s qualities may be divided into two categories: knowledge and skill traits. Although disciplinary distinctions will be taken into account, evaluation of a candidate’s preparedness to get the degree must take into account a number of qualities, not all of which are readily apparent in the thesis, if the Doctoral Standard is to be taken into account.⁴⁴

41 CHE 2023 (n 11).

42 CHE 2023 (n 11).

43 CHE ‘Qualification standard for doctoral degrees’ (2018) <https://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/ResearchDevelopment/Postgraduate%20Skills%20Development/CHE%20Doctoral%20Degrees.pdf> (accessed 23 December 2024).

44 CHE (n 11) 6.

It is therefore critical that universities ought to put resources in place in investing on postgraduate students to attend and present papers at academic excursions, such as conferences, seminars etc. This practice of attending conference has the propensity of encouraging and exposing postgraduate students to learn and master the art of academic writing and scholarship. Furthermore, through mentorship and encouraging the postgraduate students to present and publish from their research project, the postgraduate students will acquire valuable effective communication skill, critical thinking and problem solving skills. This might also encourage postgraduate students in joining academia.

8 The global competitiveness of postgraduate students

All students, regardless of where they live or their socio-economic status and cultural backgrounds, are equally deserving of educational experiences that prepare them to be globally competent. So, how do we as educators/academics continuously create opportunities and deliver instruction that ensures global competence for all? One option is to provide students with instructional practices that consistently engage global content,⁴⁵ multicultural perspectives and problem solving across subject areas.⁴⁶ While the definition of global competence is dynamic, these soft skills and characteristics are widely seen as what students need to be globally competent today.

A simple term for this is global education. This term denotes an interdisciplinary approach to learning concepts and skills necessary to function in a world that is increasingly interconnected and multicultural.⁴⁷ This curricula based on this approach are grounded in traditional academic disciplines but are taught in the context of project and problem based inquiries.

45 For example, in our tutelage of masters coursework, we often invite international guest lecturers to share their experience and expertise on selected themes in labour and social security law. So, this international exposure enables the masters students to appreciate international comparative approaches in research writing.

46 F Naz, A Afzal & MH Khan 'Challenges and benefits of multicultural education for promoting equality in diverse classrooms' (2023) *Journal of Social Sciences Review* 511-522.

47 KC Moloi, S Gravett & N 'Globalization and its impact on education with specific reference to education in South Africa' (2009) *Education Management Administration and Leadership* 278-280.

The global education approaches recognise the attitudes, skills and knowledge students need to navigate, contribute to and flourish in the world, and they integrate activities that purposefully resolve opportunity gaps among students on a daily basis.⁴⁸

Universities are important players in the global development of the knowledge economy, alongside being significant contributors to the economic development of their host cities. They are both significant knowledge enterprises, as well as the suppliers of the human and intellectual capital on which the knowledge-based economy depends. What seems under-explored is how to ensure our postgraduate student have a footprint globally.

Finally, postgraduate students ought to be exposed to the regional and global settings. This can be attained by building strong partnership with other institutions regionally and internationally, and also forging and leveraging on the existing exchange and study abroad programmes, such as your German Academic Exchange Service ('DAAD'),⁴⁹ Fulbright programmes⁵⁰ etc.

9 Conclusion

Exposing postgraduate students to the global market is part of the internationalisation of higher education in South Africa, leading in 2019, to the development of a policy framework for internationalisation of higher education by the DHET. In the light of this framework, institutions of higher education in South Africa have been called upon to

48 S Gravett *Teaching for learning in fast-changing world* (2022, University of Johannesburg) 24-30 <https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/teaching-for-learning-in-a-fast-changing-world-e-version.pdf> (accessed 24 December 2024).

49 The DAAD is the internationalization agency for German higher education institutions. It promotes international academic exchange and collaboration, primarily funding scholarships and programme for students and researchers to study and conduct research in Germany and abroad (International Association of Universities 'Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development' <https://www.iau-hesd.net/organisation/daad-german-academic-exchange-service> (accessed 24 December 2024).

50 United States: Fulbright Foreign Student Programme 2024/25 (see <https://www.internationalscholarships.dhet.gov.za/index.php/scholarships/undergraduate-scholarships/281-united-states-fulbright-foreign-student-programme-2024-2025>) (accessed 24 December 2024).

draw up a vision and policies for internationalising their programmes.⁵¹ South Africa has for a long time been one of the leading examples of internationalisation in higher education, with students coming from all over the continent. The NDP,⁵² envisions South Africa as becoming a regional hub for higher education in the African continent.⁵³

It is hoped that this chapter will add to the current discourse that advances the need to expose our local postgraduate students to international universities. Furthermore, it is submitted that this will prepare them to be well rounded postgraduate students who can survive and attend to any challenge and solve multi-faced problems which may be local and international in nature.

In conclusion, what emerges from this chapter is that there is a need to comprehensively enhance and revitalise support programmes and initiatives that will ensure that the postgraduate students enrol and complete their studies timeously.

Finally, in order to increase the postgraduate throughput rate among academics, it is important that universities invest resources in programmes that are geared towards boosting staff members to enrol and complete their postgraduate qualification. This case in point is Unisa's IQP programme that enables full-time staff members to take three-year academic leave, to work on their doctoral studies. The IQP has yielded positive results, in that a number of staff with doctoral qualification had increased at Unisa during the year 2015 to 2019.

51 O Quinlan & T Singh 'How can internationalisation regain momentum in South Africa?' (2022) University World News <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20220509145739708> (accessed 24 December 2024).

52 National Development Plan (2030).

53 National Planning Commission (2012) 327.