

Empirical Exploration of Perceptions on Attitudes Pertaining to Foreignness and Diversity in Tertiary Institutions in South Africa Using the Staffs' and Students' Lenses: The Case of the University of Fort Hare

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ABSTRACT Incontrovertibly, the current attitudes surrounding “foreignness and diversity” and its ramifications continue to paint a bleak picture for the nation of South Africa and could have devastating and perfidious effects towards its bilateral and multilateral relations, as well as negatively influence its direct foreign investment. This research sought to explore the attitudes surrounding “foreignness and diversity” displayed at one of the formerly disadvantaged universities in South Africa using the perceptive lenses of students and a few staff members. The research used a qualitative design, was exploratory and descriptive in nature, and used an interview guide as a data collection instrument that saw 24 participants subjected to in-depth interviews, and six staffs subjected to a focus group discussion. Findings indicate the following attitudes surrounding the state of “foreignness and diversity”: making international students live in a state of fear, impedes their socialization with the locals, negatively affects scholarship of learning, stifles the spirit of cooperation and collaboration in academic issues between the local and international students, and offers an opportunity for international students from various countries to form strong caucuses. The paper suggests strong anti-xenophobic education, security to be beefed up at the campus, and carrying out seminar and educational forums to educate the students on the phenomenon.