

Identities of Academics Lacking Doctoral Degrees: A Narrative Inquiry

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KEYWORDS Communities of Practice. Self-efficacy. Postgraduate Supervision

ABSTRACT Academics who lack doctoral degrees are seen as peripheral participants in the academic community. The aim of the study on which this article is based, was therefore to investigate the identity formation of academics employed by the University of South Africa (UNISA), and enrolled for their doctoral degrees, and to use this insight to provide suggestions for socialising them into the academic community. Two theories were found useful as conceptual framework, namely the Role Identity Theory and the Self-efficacy Theory. In the empirical investigation, a narrative inquiry approach was used. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight participants, from whom three were selected for follow-up research. The study was significant for revealing that interventions need to target internalised identity with regard to positive values; high expectations and goals; relevant exposure; constructive supervisor support and the handling of multiple roles.