



BACKGROUND TO INSTITUTIONS, PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE PROJECT

Participants included in the study are academics who have worked at the Universities of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Port Elizabeth (UPE), Fort Hare, the Western Cape (UWC), Cape Town (UCT), and the Free State (UOFS), and at the Peninsula and Cape Technikon. The institutions include those that are classified as historically black universities and technikons, i.e. UWC and Fort Hare and the Peninsula Technikon, historically white and English-medium i.e. Wits and UCT, historically white and Afrikaans-medium, UOFS and Cape Technikon.

Participants currently at HBUs had been there for long periods of time. This reflects the fact that they had very few options before 1994 or before institutions had to address issues of diversity in appointments. Most of the participants, however, were at their second institution of higher learning, if they were not currently in the corporate world or government. Most left HBUs for HWUs and four of the participants had left one HWU for another. Only one of the participants had left an HBU for a historically white technikon and then rejoined the same HBU.

The sample consisted of 30 persons. One focus group was conducted consisting of six people who had previously worked at UWC. For the rest, 22 interviews were individually conducted and tape-recorded, and two interviews were conducted telephonically.

The following table provides details of the participants, as taken from the biographical questionnaire. The level indicates their current level or the level that they were at before exiting academia. One of the persons in the senior university manager category had occupied the post of registrar at an HBU and at the time of interview was a vice-rector at an HWU.

A Lecturers	B Senior Lecturers	C Assoc. professors/senior university manager	Total
23	5	2	30
Number of Masters degrees in group A (lecturers)			20
Number of Doctoral degrees in group A (lecturers)			3
Number of Doctoral degrees in group B (senior lecturers)			5
Number of Doctoral degrees in group C (associate professors)			2
Total			30

The following are some of the reasons that participants offered for pursuing an academic career: it was a conscious political decision, given the small number of black academics in the system; it was a stepping stone to other opportunities; it was one option “better” than a teaching or nursing career; they were good students, had received scholarships to study further and becoming an academic was almost a “natural” progression along this route.

For the interview setting and instruments please see Appendix A.