

PHIWAYINKOSI RICHMOND GUMEDE

Mangosuthu University of Technology, South Africa

**LESSONS LEARNT FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE UNIVERSITY
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: A CHANGING FUNDING
SYSTEM IN HIGHER EDUCATION, SOUTH AFRICA.****Abstract:**

During the apartheid times, higher education in South Africa was predominantly accessible to a certain group of the society, rich families and white South Africans, to be explicit. The inequalities and imbalances because of the apartheid became the culture in the higher education system. To address the culture of inequality, new policies had to be developed to transform the educational system. In 1996, the late President Mandela established the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), to recommend higher education transformation strategies which would be underpinned by the key principles of equity, democratisation, development, quality, academic freedom/institutional autonomy, effectiveness and efficacy. The NCHE recommended that, HE system form part of developing a new relationship between government and higher education, within the framework of co-operative governance; funding arrangements involves the public funding framework consisting of two components; the funding formula and earmarked funding, which include institutional and individual redress funding; and that HE be a single co-ordinated system, in terms of size, shape and nature.

Previously, universities utilised two earmarked grants that were part of the State's university funding framework. Those grants were Teaching Development Grant (TDG) and Research Development Grant (RDG). They served to capacitate universities on issues concerning both teaching and research respectively. The administration and management of these grants were handled separately with universities. On the 31st of March 2017, the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) signed a Ministerial Statement on the Implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP). The introduction of the UCDP paved way for the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG). UCDP is a programme that, among other things, amalgamates the two grants (TDG and RDG) in one, the UCDG. The UCDP operates at the nexus of quality, equity, and success. Before the introduction of the UCDG, universities were required to develop a 3-year University Capacity Development Plan (2018 - 2020) for consideration by DHET. The UCDP is intended to enable an integrated approach to capacity development across three focus areas, namely student development; staff development and programme/curriculum development. Herewith, I reflect on my personal experiences and lessons learnt during the conceptualisation, development, and implementation of the UCDG at a University of Technology in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Keywords:

Teaching Development Grant, Research Development Grant, Department of Higher Education and Training, University Capacity Development Grant

JEL Classification: A00, A20