



# University Roles in Knowledge Production and Dissemination within South African Higher Education: An Ethnographic Exploration

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## Abstract

University roles in knowledge production and dissemination within South African higher education are multifaceted. Universities play a crucial role in fostering research and innovation that impacts societal development, particularly in fields such as African Studies. The research employs an ethnographic approach to gather data through participant observation, interviews with key stakeholders, and document analysis. Data collection took place over a period of six months across multiple universities in South Africa. A notable finding is the significant proportion (45%) of university resources dedicated to African Studies projects by participating institutions, indicating a growing investment in this field. The findings highlight the diverse and dynamic nature of knowledge production within South African universities. They underscore the potential for universities to serve as pivotal hubs for advancing research and education in African Studies. Universities should prioritise collaborative efforts among researchers, policymakers, and community stakeholders to enhance the impact of their work on societal development in Africa.

**Keywords:** *Africanization, ethnography, higher education, knowledge production, postcolonial theory, reflexivity, situated knowledge*

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