

The Effect of Skills Development Programmes and Leadership Opportunities Brought by Transformation: A Case of the Durban University of Technology

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ABSTRACT Dramatic changes are taking place in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa. However, the poorly coordinated transformation programmes are being implemented by leaders who have limited capabilities. This study aims to investigate the influence of the skills development programme on the realisation of the transformation agenda and explores leadership opportunities available in the post-merger and incorporation era at this university. This study employed an exploratory method where in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 28 university leaders in middle and senior management positions. The study findings revealed that the majority of the research participants felt that the influences of the skills development programmes on transformation were accidental, as trainings offered were irrelevant and unresponsive to their particular needs. The research participants also claimed that there was no evidence of leadership development and succession planning, and no leadership opportunities in this university, as strategic positions were occupied by Indians, at this university which was a merger of a predominantly Indian and a predominantly White Technikons in 2002.