

Embracing Diversity: The Case of EquityRes, a Student Residence at Urban University

S. Vandeyar and A. M. Mohale

Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa

KEYWORDS Diversity. Institutional Culture. Integration. Race. University Students

ABSTRACT Utilising a qualitative case study and the methodology of portraiture, this paper set out to explore how the institutional culture at EquityRes, a university student resident in South Africa, promoted interaction of culturally diverse students. Data capture included a mix of semi-structured interviews, field notes and a researcher journal. Data was analysed by means of the content analysis method. Theoretical moorings of this study were embedded in critical race theory and cosmopolitanism. Findings reveal that the design of living spaces, the consultative participatory management style and inclusive cultural and social activities at EquityRes, promoted equality and interaction of diverse students. The paper concludes by recognising that the transformation policies developed by EquityRes, not only recognised the significance of the construct of race, but were intent on curbing racial and cultural discrimination and embracing diversity. These policies were enacted in the lived experiences of diverse resident students and created opportunities for intercultural contact and meaningful interaction.