

Partnership in Higher Education: Trends between African and European Institutions

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Woldegiorgis and Scherer provide a useful and needed examination of current trends in higher educational partnerships across multiple domains between Africa and Europe. This is accomplished in a multitude of ways. Divided into ten chapters, the research is both complimentary and representative of a large swath of countries and stakeholders across both continents. It includes case studies of current higher education partnerships and how they are impacted by internationalization. This volume hopes to “stimulate a new generation of scholars who are inspired to work on and understand the paradigms of higher education partnerships within an ever changing international and global context” (vii). The issues highlighted within its chapters include quality assurance standards, joint degree programs, curriculum development, a study of the higher education partnership between Maghreb and European institutions, and the internationalizing of higher education through service learning. These and other endeavors are seen as a fostering the quality of teaching, learning, and research.

An overarching theme throughout *Partnership in Higher Education* is the belief that collaboration and international partnerships are essential to the health of all institutions of higher learning desiring to successfully navigate across different national boundaries, as well as within the global marketplace. It is expected that these strategic alliances “should be based on principles of mutuality, reciprocity, equality, accountability, and shared responsibility” (204).

A colonial legacy shared amongst African higher education institutions continues to impact them and provides a crucial point of reference for matters of collaboration and partnership with their European counterparts. Common challenges faced by higher education on the continent include coming to terms with an inherited colonial education infrastructure, poor and unstable governance, segregation along colonial lines of language, brain drain, and unequal donor-recipient relationships.

Another key challenge for African universities in a postcolonial context has been finding new ways to align their academic programs with their countries’ own national interests. Finding ways to support local and regional economic development, the eradication of poverty, and the promotion and sustainable use of natural resources remains imperative.

The relationship between African and European institutions of higher learning is evolving and there needs to be continuous dialogue on matters of policy and practice, particularly in this era of globalization. All collaborations and partnerships need to consider sustainability, funding, capacity, political commitment, mutual trust, and shared interests.

Although *Partnership in Higher Education: Trends between African and European Institutions* does not offer any new partnership models, it does provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the issues and trends in twenty-first century African institutions of higher education.

This book would be welcomed addition to anyone engaged in collaborative research or joint education programs with partners in other countries. It also provides a useful reference for understanding postcolonial educational theory in a real time, and for any educator working in a multicultural setting.