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**SUBTHEME Number : 5**

**SUB THEME TITLE: The role of research in improving livelihood and addressing inequalities / access to opportunities**

**TITLE:** Postcolonial perspective, indigenous knowledge and critical theories for transforming universities and societies in Southern/Africa.

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## Abstract

This conference paper will address some problems facing Southern/African universities. Instead of detailed discussion of general problems facing universities in Southern/Africa, it will focus on universities relation to their funding partners such as the state and external donors, as well as their role as higher education institution in terms of teaching, research and the outreach/community services program. We believe postcolonial investigation into higher education helps universities to look into their past and its impact on their present. Through researching indigenous knowledge systems, they can find out about locally developed knowledge that they can integrate into their educational curricula. Concepts from critical theories could be used to analyse universities relations to their funders, their teaching-learning process, their research and their outreach to their communities. Specifically, through using critical pedagogic approach, they can prepare their students to critically view the reality of their societies, to find out their needs and to participate in the process of their transformation. On the base of these perspectives, hopefully universities could address the problems of inequalities caused by class, gender, ethnicity and race.

**KEYWORDS:** Postcolonial perspective, indigenous knowledge, critical theories, transformation, universities, societies, Southern/Africa.