

Citizen Centric Data Democratisation Framework for Data Custodians in South African Higher Education

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Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) capture and store a lot of data. This data is for employees and students using different systems. The data access to the users is restricted mainly to the departments and units that the employees belong to. The challenge at hand is that each time when employees would like to perform further data analysis, a specialist or consultant is needed. On the other hand, HEIs spend a lot of money on getting software licences and modern Business Intelligence systems. One would expect such software and systems to be fully utilized by employees, yet HEIs still spend more on consultants. Most consultants are brought for different data analysis and to interpret data. HEIs also spend on training employees on data, yet many still rely on consultants and data experts to have understanding of data. Therefore, it is clear that HEIs employees both administrative and academics lack data democratization.

The study aims to answer the following question:

How can Higher Education employees be engaged to develop a Data Democratisation Framework in South Africa?

The study is based on systematic review using secondary data available of HEIs in South Africa. Data is gathered on systems used by HEIs and data management related issues faced by employees. Results are presented on the data illiteracy among employees and data democratization issues. Based on the findings and through engaging selected HEIs employees, key components of a data democratisation framework are presented. The study shows that participants or data custodians would want to be empowered and have more access to the data that they deal with. Employees require skills and training that enables them to self-manage data and perform data analysis.

Key Words: Data democratisation, data literacy, data access, High Education Institutions, Data Custodians

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