



## COMPARE Forum: The idea of North-South and South-South collaboration

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### Introduction

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The idea of having a *Compare* Forum focusing on the above title was first discussed with one of the Editors of *Compare* during a PhD defence in Oslo in 2011. The PhD dissertation itself was linked to a larger project in which researchers from the North (Norway) and the South (South Africa) had been collaborating in educational research for over 10 years. Despite the fact that North-South collaboration is not a new issue on the agenda (King 1985) it is still a timely topic to explore, particularly given the recent growth and moves towards North-South-South collaboration or even *South-South Cooperation in Education and Development* (Chisholm and Steiner-Khamsi 2009). Thus, any discussion of research collaboration, whether North-South or South-South, is seen as an ideal topic for comparative education, particularly when exploring why there should be collaboration at all and if so what are some of the challenges. While it may be argued that the difference between North-South and South-South collaboration may simply be a question of geography, King (1985) reminds us that collaboration is not necessarily between equals and that collaboration at times ‘appears to be a process initiated in the North, and in which the South participates, as a counterpart’ (184). Ultimately, the differences go beyond simple geographic location to issues of funding and power, something that each of the contributions will touch upon in their own way. While cooperation may mean working with someone, it does suggest that one partner provides information or resources to the other, while collaboration suggests a more equal partnership in which researchers work alongside each other. For the majority of our contributors, we use collaboration as opposed to cooperation, although the literature is not always so clear on this distinction.

Ultimately, this Forum allows researchers from very different backgrounds (geographically and academically) the opportunity to explore some of the issues of collaboration between researchers/academics in the North and the South. The four contributions to this Forum





































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