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**Abstract**

This article assesses international partnerships by observing research collaboration dynamics of International Relations research groups of MERCOSUR. We contest the models based on center–periphery or North–South divide as we built our assessment to explain the collaboration dynamics both in an international and regional level from the agent's point of view. We moved beyond Scientometric analysis and conducted an exploratory case study with interviews, a focus group and a questionnaire. We demonstrate that, despite asymmetries, researchers from the South do not have a passive role in the interactions and exchanges, as there is space for reciprocity and agency. We argue that integration of research through international partnerships is pragmatic and the condition of autonomy varies according to the features of the groups, their positions within the field

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and the prestige of their researchers. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)