

TEACHING IN A RURAL – BASED AFRICAN
UNIVERSITY: WHAT STUDENTS WANT

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Introduction and background

- The African rural based universities are faced with a significant number of students who find it difficult, if not impossible to cope with university work.
- In an attempt to meet the needs of students, a number of South African universities established intervention teaching programmes as early as 1980 in South Africa as described by Adams (2009); du Plessis (2006); Agar (2007).

Introduction and background

- Despite the support programs in place, support of university students particularly in rural areas remains a challenge (CHE, 2010:60., Agar, 2007:68; Adams, 2009:135).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- UNIVENS' teaching and learning objective is to increase the throughput, graduation and retention rates, which is a National priority.
- Given the kind of existing student support facilities, the success and graduation rates of registered nursing students are not in line with this objective.
- As yet, there is no scientific data available about the expected nursing students' support programmes as perceived by students at UNIVEN.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- To determine the students' perception of the necessary academic student support programmes at UNIVEN.
- explore the kind of academic student support programmes that students' want at UNIVEN
- To make recommendations

RESEARCH QUESTION

- What kind of support do students want from rural universities for them to succeed academically?
- What are the students' perceptions of the academic student support programmes ?
- Which recommendations can be made regarding academic student support programmes?

RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGNS

- A qualitative study design was followed.
- Focus group interviews were conducted to collect data from respondents

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

- The population consisted of 221 nursing students who registered for a four year Baccalaureus Curationis (BCur) degree
- A purposive sampling procedure was used to select participants.
- 48 students were sampled and participated in the study

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Permission to conduct the study was granted by the ethics committee of the university
- Participants' anonymity , confidentiality and consent were respected

DATA COLLECTION / ANALYSIS

- I collected data through focus group interviews.
- Focus groups consisted of 10- 12 participants
- Data was analyzed using Techs' method of open coding (in Creswell, 1996:142).

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

- Several themes, categories and sub-categories emerged from the analysis of raw data.

Profile of the sample

Course level	Number
Year One	10
Year Two	14
Year Three	13
Year Four	11
Total	48

Discussion

Presentation of data is according to themes and categories that emerged from the analysed data, relevant quotations and literature control.

Table 2 indicates the summary of themes, categories and sub –categories.

Themes

- Four themes emerged from data analysed. Results show that students want the following:
 - Learning support
 - Emotional support
 - Financial support
 - Social support

Learning support

- How to prepare for exams
- Lecturers class attendance schedule
- Lecturers academic support
- Time management
- Time management during clinical practicals
- Accommodation

Emotional support

- Giving informed about opportunities ahead
- The university being there for them
- Someone to guide students in academic activities
- Show students how they can cope in life
- Help to concentrate in class

Emotional support

- Guidance by the university structures
- Role modeling by lecturers
- University playing its role in helping students solve their problems
- Regular assessment by the university psychologist
- Senior students

Financial support

- How to get Loan or bursary
- To be paid for practical session activities
- Settlement of account (those who are owing)
- Financial support

Social support

- Students to select whom to share the room with
- A person to listen to them and to talk to
- Allowing them to express our feelings
- University staff to be there for them in times of distress

CONCLUSION

- Students want comprehensive programmes
- Programmes that are not comprehensive and do not include what students want contribute towards the students' poor academic performance.

RECCOMENDATIONS

- A mental health support programme should be developed based on the results with the aim of supporting students towards their academic success.
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THANK YOU