TYING LOOSE ENDS: THE JOURNEY OF SELF DISCOVERY THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF REFLECTION

(INTEGRATED PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO)

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DECLARATION

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Julia M. P. Musuuo		27 October 2021
Name of student	**Signature**	**Date**

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And then finally, to my friends, thank you for your continuous support and encouragement.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEQUAM	:	Centre for Quality Assurance and Management
CPDTLIU	:	Centre for Professional Development, Teaching and Learning Improvement
HEI	:	Higher Education Institutions
ICT	:	Information, Communications and Technology
IUM	:	International University of Management
NAMCoL	**:**	Namibian College of Open Learning
NCHE	:	National Council of Higher Education
NDP	:	National Development Plan
NQA	:	National Qualifications Authority
NQF	:	National Qualification Framework
NSFAF	:	Namibian Students Financial Assistance Fund
NUST	**:**	National University of Science and Technology
OER	:	Open Education Resources
OUP	:	Oxford University Press
PDHE	:	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
PLA	**:**	Participatory Learning Approach
SAMR	:	Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition
SFP	:	Science Foundation Programme
SIMS	:	Srinivas Institute of Management Studies
SWOT	:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats analysis
L & T	:	Learning and Teaching
UNAM	:	University of Namibia
VARK	:	Visual/Auditory/Read-write/Kinesthestic learning styles

PREFACE

Constructive alignment speaks to my golden thread which is *tying loose ends*. Tying the ends that are crucial for ensuring that I not only teach my students well, but that I teach them in a sensible, sensitive, reflective and constructive way. Ways that will ensure the necessary learning in the students that I encounter. Teaching is unserviceable if learning does not take place. Learning can successfully take place if teaching is done correctly. It is not enough to have a qualification that enables one to get into academia. It is however, necessary to be equipped with the art and skill of teaching, and this is where my golden thread comes into play. For too long I have been practicing from a place of feeling and assumptions. Yes, I have the passion for teaching, but even passion needs to be complimented with skills and knowledge. Yes, I have a qualification in secondary education, but I have come to appreciate that higher education teaching is a totally different ball game. Teaching adults is completely different to teaching children and adolescents. Wow...what a privilege that comes with a great weight of responsibility. Responsibility to think and act differently, as I reflect on that which I engage in.

INTRODUCTION

My story

I am currently a lecturer in the department of Biological Sciences, teaching Biology as part of the Science Foundation Programme. I am based on the Khomasdal Campus and have been part of the department for the past 8 years, and I have always considered it a pleasure to serve students in the capacity given to me. I started out my academic journey as a Science student in the department of Biological Sciences, at the University of Namibia. Though that was my genesis, my journey along the way has seen me develop a new interest for the field of education. Sure, Science has lead me into the privileged position of getting this job as a teacher, but this job, in of itself, has revealed to me that I am more of an educator at heart. The revelation motivated me to pursue an Advanced Diploma in Secondary Education. Through that course, I had learned about what it means, and takes to be a teacher and what EDUCATION, the oldest and foundational discipline, actually means. It is there were I decided that I am actually a teacher…lecturer is only my job title. I used some of what I had learned to improve my teaching because I was determined to be a teacher in every sense of the word. By that I mean, to open the mind, be a source of encouragement and motivation for a bright future, a role model and be available as a person.

Then in 2019 I saw an online advert of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PDHE). I took an interest because I thought it would give me *a little* more insight of the Education field. My expectation was not that I would learn much – I did not think the course would be very different to the Bachelors of Education course. I was surprised when we had our first block session classed (Learning and Teaching in Higher Education). The course outline, structure and terminology was completely different to what I thought it would be (obviously thinking from previous experiences). With every progressing module I was determined to incorporate that which I deemed relevant and timely, without delay. It was important for me to put into practice what I had learned, shortly after or within the week of each module class session, because learning without practice, to me, is a waste of time, money and valuable resources. Three years later and there is still so much that I still would like to incorporate into my teaching practice. There is so much more meaning to add to teaching and so much more value to add to students' learning. I do not take for granted the honour I have of working with young precious lives (my students). With that said, I am destined to continually learn so that I may continually enhance my teaching through continuous reflections.

Portfolio structure

As I ponder on the position I undertake in structuring my portfolio, I am convinced that I am a vivid and eager learner. I am a learner with the determination to practice as much as I possibly can, so that I improve my practice and transform into a continual reflexive practitioner. Therefore, for my portfolio, I will be giving a reflective journey of who I was before going into each module of the PDHE, what I had learned and ways in which I incorporated some of what I had learned into my teaching practice.

In chapter 1, will show how my consideration of my students' adulthood has enabled for me to trust them with their learning. This chapter also includes a description how the profiling of my students has paved a way for compassion towards them, believe in them and confidence that they are more than capable of achieving success with the right amount and form of motivation.

Chapter 2 is about sharing my thoughts and understanding on teaching theories and learning methods, a discussion about how these have influenced my learning and teaching practices. This is intended to set the trend for the discussion on what I have decided to change my teaching practice and why

In chapter 3, I excitingly reveal the truth about my understanding of the curriculum document and my role in the development and consideration of the curriculum, particularly in my context and practice. I start off by discussing curriculum from an institutional and national context, and wind it down with my personal learning and teaching practice. In this chapter I also reflect on how quality assurance and evaluation in higher education has caused a shift in the way I view the curriculum as well as altered my learning and teaching practice.

In chapter 4 I give a reflection of how assessment of and for student learning has impacted practice in my context. My new and understood knowledge on the importance of the curriculum document has also had a significant impact on my view of assessing both my students and myself (praxis).

Chapter 5 demonstrates how my contextual realities have influenced my practice as a research supervisor and intertwines that with what I have learned, as well as the hope I have for my future practice as supervisor. I intend on taking an approach on what I have learned, mainly about my weaknesses as a supervisor, and how I purpose to turn that around into growth and improvement.

The general theme that my portfolio will undertake is centred around my golden thread, which is about how this course has both allowed and enabled me to ***tie loose ends*** in my teaching practice. Throughout all my chapters, I indicate how it is that the PDHE has opened my eyes, and enabled me to tie the disjointed ends I had been practicing with, as a teacher, for so many years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii
LIST OF ACRONYMS iii
PREFACE iv
INTRODUCTION v
CHAPTER 1: THE STUDENTS I ENCOUNTER 1
1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Andragogy versus pedagogy 2
1.2.1 Definition and characteristics 2
1.2.2 Instructional approaches 3
1.3 SFP student profiling 6
1.3.1 How student profiling has informed my teaching practice 8
1.4 A reflective practitioner through criticality, reflectivity and praxis 9
1.5 Conclusion 11
CHAPTER 2: LEARNING AND TEACHING IN SFP 13
2.1 Introduction 13
2.2 Factors effecting learning and teaching 14
2.3 The effect of structure, culture and agency on my teaching practice 15
2.4 My higher education teaching practice going forward 19
2.5 The role technology has played in my context of learning and teaching 22
2.6 Conclusion 26
CHAPTER 3: THE CURRICULUM AND ITS ROLE IN MY CONTEXT 28
3.1 Introduction 28
3.2 Macro-alignment elements of the SFP curriculum 28
3.2.1 Purpose of education 28
3.2.2 Rationale of the programme 29
3.2.3 Vision and mission of the University of Namibia 29
3.2.4 Qualification outcome 31
3.3 Micro-alignment elements of the SFP curriculum 31
3.3.1 Constructive alignment 31
3.3.2 Learning outcomes 33
3.3.3 Knowledge structures 33
3.3.4 Epistemic diversity 34
3.3.5 Purpose of the programme 35

3.3.6 Curriculum transfomration 36
3.4 My role as a curriculum developer for the SFP 37
3.5 Conclusion 38
CHAPTER 4: TAKING THE END OF ASSESSMENT TO ALIGNING CONSTRUCTIVELY 39
4.1 Introduction 39
4.2 Assessment of student learning 40
4.3 Formative versus summative assessment 42
4.4 Case study: Assessment repetition 43
4.5 Personal reflection on changing my assessment practices 44
4.6 Conclusion 47
CHAPTER 5: QUALITY ASSURANCE AS A TEACHING PRACTITIONER 48
5.1 Introduction 48
5.2 Definitions of quality, according to Harvey & Green (1993) 48
5.3 Reflection on “Quality teaching for diverse students” by Alton-Lee (2003) 50
5.4 My understanding of quality as a teaching practitioner 51
5.5 Quality assurance as a research student supervisor 55
5.6 Conclusion 57
5.7 Reflective portfolio conclusion 58
REFERENCES 59
APPENDICES 65
Appendix 1 65
Appendix 2 70
Appendix 3 74
Appendix 4 79
Appendix 5 81
Appendix 6 86

CHAPTER 1: THE STUDENTS I ENCOUNTER

1.1 Introduction

My typical classroom has a mixture of both adult learners and traditional learners, as are defined and distinguished in terms of age. This is because the programme is a bridging course aimed at helping students get a point of entry into tertiary education. This can be a national institution (e.g. UNAM, The Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST) or the International University of Management (IUM)), or an international institution of higher education. In general, there has been an observance of an increase adult students entering undergraduate studies in higher education institutions (Panacci, 2017; McCall, Padron & Andrews, 2018). Though the claims were based on studies conducted in Canada and the United States of America, I believe this is true for Namibian higher education institutions (HEIs) as well. Adult learners are identified as those who are 25 years and older, who might be in a higher education institution for the first time or going back to a higher education institution (Zhang & Zheng, 2014). On the other hand, traditional learners are said to be those who enroll into HEIs immediately after high school, aged 18-22 (Panacci, 2017). Adult learners are generally categorised as students who have not entered HEIs immediately after school and engage in other commitments, roles and responsibilities which contend with their studies (Chao, DeRocco, & Flynn, 2017; Comptom, Cox & Laanan, 2006; MacFadgen, 2008, in Panacci, 2017). Traditional learners do not have conflicting roles and responsibilities competing with their studies (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1998; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, in Panacci, 2017). Panacci (2017) does however make it clear that the distinguishment between adult-learners and traditional-learners is made on the basis of age and not necessarily competing commitments, which presents a problem because traditionally aged students also have roles and responsibilities, amongst other things, common to those of adult learners (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). These roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, parenting, caregiving and employment (Panacci, 2017). Because adult learners, at most, have an extensive life and work experiences, their educational needs, interests and expectations cannot be placed into the same category with traditional learners (McCall et al., 2018). And so educators need to adapt teaching practices that cater to the needs of the adult learner as well as to those of the traditional learner (McCall et al., 2018).

In this chapter, I highlight theories and instructional approaches related to adult and traditional learning. I will then be reporting on results from my student profiling exercise and how that has informed my teaching practice going forward. In various parts of the chapter I will make insertions of personal reflections on that which I deemed significant in my learning, how I have implemented what I have learned, as well as how I purpose to implement certain changes in my practice as a teaching practitioner. Learning after all, is not static but continually metamorphosing with every enactment into teaching practice. I also intend on laying out how I intend on becoming a reflective practitioner in my learning and teaching practice, by sharing my perspective of criticality, reflectivity and praxis, and my intentions of applying them.

1.2 Andragogy versus pedagogy

1.2.1 Definition and characteristics

Knowles (1973) pioneered the definition of adult learning, in what is termed andragogy (Kapp, 1833, cited in Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000), which is the art and science of how adults learn (Rasmussen, 2015) or adult education. Pedagogy is defined as the art and science of teaching children (Ozuah, 2005) or non-adults (K-12) (Minter, 2011). Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2015, cited in Panacci, 2017) point out that andragogy is more life-, task or problem-centered, whereas pedagogy, in its orientation to learning, is more subject-centered. That is to say that andragogy is learner-centered whereas pedagogy is teacher-centered.

Knowles (1973) identified five characteristics/assumptions of adult learners, namely that they: are self-directed; connect what they learn to prior experience; learn when a specific need is experienced (goal-oriented); are problem solvers and want to apply knowledge immediately; and are self (intrinsically)-motivated (e.g. the need to change or advance careers, or increase income) (Zhang & Zheng, 2014; Panacci, 2017). Characteristics/assumptions that guide pedagogy include: learner dependency on the instructor; subject-centered learning needs; learner's reliance on extrinsic motivation (e.g. prizes, positive/negative reinforcements); and learner's lack prior knowledge or experience (Knowles et al., 1998, cited in Ozuah, 2005). It is also assumed that traditional students, characteristically, purpose to apply the knowledge they gain to solving future problems (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). Pedagogy seems to be focused on conceptualising, whereas andragogy has its focus on contextualising (Roumell, 2018).

1.2.2 Instructional approaches

According to Cuenca (2010), contrary to the more traditional idea of pedagogy being a technical activity that focuses on the teacher, it has its etymological roots in the word, *pedagogue*. *Pedagogue,* quite interestingly, refers to a slave who took care and escorted a student from home to school and back home (van Manen (2014), cited in Cuenca, 2010; Shah and Campus, 2020). This actually is a beautiful analogy. In my experience, I have always thought of the idea of teaching as more than what one does in the classroom. To accompany is to walk alongside of someone, so as to go with them to a particular destination. As a teacher, I am in actual fact meant to accompany the students I encounter, to meeting the learning objectives set out for them to master, for example. Just as Cuenca (2010) confirms, that the implication of the root perspective of pedagogy is a relationship displaying a connection between individuals. A relationship that has the teacher using constant judgement and willpower, to lead students to a place of growth, both academically and personally (Cuenca, 2010). This makes me wonder about the idea that pedagogy is teacher-centred in nature (Knowles (1973), cited in Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). Is it really teacher-centred if the teacher is caringly meant to guide the student? Does that not imply that the teacher makes judgements based on, so to say, cues from the student as to where they find themselves in terms of knowledge? Perhaps it is teacher-centred in that the caregiver possesses more knowledge, understanding and wisdom and is therefore supposed to guide the learner in that knowledge, understanding and wisdom, considering the child's developmental stages or phases. Smith (2006, cited in Shah and Campus, 2006) mentioned two different elements that were common to Pedagogues. Pedagogues were described to be a 'child-tender', with particular reference to a boy child (Shah and Campus, 2006). The first element that defined them was that they were meant to accompany the child, carrying their bag and books and ensuring their safety. The second element was the task of helping boys learn what it was to be a man. Tasks now considered to be obsolete (Shah and Campus (2020). In its teacher centeredness, the pedagogical model, as described by Knowles (1973), has the teacher deciding on the knowledge and skills that are to be transmitted to the learners (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). This decided on content is to logically be arranged into units, the appropriate means of transmission is to be selected, and then the teacher is to develop a sequence for presenting the chosen units. Typically, pedagogical teaching methods include lectures, reading, laboratory exercises and video's (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). Pedagogical assessment methods include tests, quizzes, and other summative assessments, as well as memorisation from notes (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000).

Andragogy, on the other hand, is more "hands on" in that it is based on self-directed learning, experiential learning and takes on the approach of solving problems (Davenport, 1987, cited in Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). Adult learning is accompanied by the need of the following characteristics: the need to know the relevance of certain learning materials; the need to learn by experience; the need to think critically; as well as the need for confidence development through the subject of instruction (El-Amin, 2020). This is confirmed in a prior study by Panacci (2017) who reported that adult learners prefer instructional approaches that would enhance their learning experiences, that are active, enable collaboration and are interactive, because they increase learning in a positive manner (Panacci, 2017).

It is clear that adults focus more on how that which they are required to learn develops them in their current career or prospective career. The mission in adult education is to see adult learners develop their full potential, and andragogy is considered to be a better tool to use in this regard (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). El-Amin (2020) also points out that assessment strategies considered valuable by adult learners include contextual analyses, role-playing, simulation, and self-assessment. This is true and makes sense because, from a personal point of view, I would be very particular about what I give my time to. Is this which I am learning going to help me reach personally set career milestones or am I simply going to invest time in something that I might not even use in any way. As adults we have an idea of what we want, even if just to a certain extent, as well as where we hope to see ourselves in future, and so choices as to what we want to study are informed decisions based on our purposed futures. Also taking into consideration that most adult learners have to pay for their own studies, and so need to get value for money. The role that the teacher plays is to aid the adult learner towards becoming a self-directed learner – the teacher is regarded as a facilitator (Darkenwald & Merriam, in Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). Even more so, Joshi (2017, cited in El-Amin, 2020) takes it further in that instructor and student are seen to be in a symbiotic relationship which defines andragogic success in terms of collaborative ability, shared experiences, contextual investigation, engagement of meaningful conversations and critical thinking between both instructor and student. As I engage in this part of the chapter, I realise how the facilitators of PDHE did just this. They treated us as co-facilitators in the program and encouraged us to add value to the programmed by sharing from our experiences and also assisting in suggestions as to how the PDHE course could be improved. A side-note of 'thank you' to them. As confirmed by Holmes & Abington-Cooper (2000), in so doing, the facilitator engages in a process that includes: establishing a conducive learning environment; creating a platform for joint planning;

determining learning needs; determining the content that will satisfy said learning needs; designing a pattern of learning experiences; complementing the learning experiences with suitable techniques and material; and then evaluating the learning outcomes and re-diagnosing learning needs. With regard to assessment, El-Amin (2020) cited Machera (2017) who reported that HEIs incorporate self-assessment and peer-assessment because they have shown to improve learning of HEI students and therefore prove to be promising practices.

In evaluating the differences between andragogy and pedagogy, I thought about the differences in application, in relation to my context. Students' needs cannot be met by pedagogy solely, and neither by andragogy, the approach taken will be determined by the circumstances or situation presented. This was confirmed in Holmes & Abington-Cooper (2000), who cited Knowles' (1973) indication that occasions might call for the use of pedagogical uses with adults, as well as anagogical uses with children. The two approaches, though opposite, complement each other (Knudson, 1980) and it is up to the practitioner to determine which one of the two approaches to use (Rachal (1994), cited in Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). In a teacher-centered approach, the teacher would still be responsible for allowing a free interchanging of ideas from students, and encourage them to pursue their individual interests, in line with the objectives set out for the course (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000). In analysing my context, I think that pedagogy builds andragogy. Learners need to be presented with the knowledge and skills, and from there they can decide on how to use the knowledge and skills – the subject-centered learner ideally needs to become a self-directed learner. It has been reported that students actively involved in class discussions learn more when they participated in classroom discussions (Panacci, 2017). Panacci (2017) highlighted the importance of using a variety of instructional approaches that would serve to recognise and respond to students' diverse needs. Most of the students enrolled into the SFP programme have already done this science subjects (Biology, Mathematics and Physical Science) in high school, we, the lecturers, actually ought to play a more facilitative role in the teaching of these subjects. The students have the knowledge, what we then have to do is allow for them to build up on this knowledge, so that they meet the requirements for further higher education studies. Jagtap (2016) points out that teachers ought to be mentors who help students learn. To my understanding, becoming a facilitator of students' learning empowers them to construct their own learning and therefore make their education experiences more meaningful. But for the

students who have never done Biology in high school, I suppose a more transmission based teaching approach would be appropriate.

1.3 SFP student profiling

Students enrolled in the Science Foundation Programme (SFP) were chosen for profiling purposes, because some of them fit into the classification of adult learners. This section is a report on the findings from the profiling study conducted.

Students were asked to voluntarily complete a short questionnaire that consisted mainly of closed-ended questions (Appendix 1 & 2). A total of 44 out of 54 (81.5%) of my 2019 class completed the questionnaire. The responses from the questionnaires were analysed and totals were calculated for the different categories. Transport is a fundamental factor in life and therefore mobility and accessibility do impact life functions and successful performance of these functions (Gašparović, 2014). If hindered, limited or impossible, mobility and accessibility can risk the fulfillment of daily needs. Fifty-two percent of the students reported that they take a taxi to get to and from campus, whilst 20% reported that they faced challenges getting to campus. The two reasons for the challenges experienced were a lack of finances (44%, 4 of the 9 respondents), whilst 67% (6 of the 9 respondents) reported that they sometimes get to campus late due to a difficulty in finding a taxi from the places where they live to campus. This explains why some students sometimes get to class late in the morning. The sad thing is that, in past, I did not bother to approach these students to enquire on why they sometimes were late for class in the mornings. And to think about it, it usually is the same students who come late for classes. Empathy goes a long way and seeking understanding is crucial to this.

It has been reported that the consumption of regular meals (2-3 meals per day) has a positive impact on academic achievement (Burrows, Whatnall, Patterson & Hutchesson, 2017). It is of course based on the quality of meals – healthy meals, instead of junk food (Burrows et al., 2017). Interestingly, it has also been shown that eating especially breakfast, has a positive effect on student achievement – with students eating breakfast having higher academic achievements (Burrows et al., 2017). My profiling showed that 41% of the students (18 respondents) did not eat regular meals. They eat mainly dinner because they were either on campus all day, did not take along food to campus and could not afford to eat whilst on campus. The intake of food

provides us with fuel to do that which we need to do. A lack of energy will affect brain activity and therefore our academic performances – even as university students (Burrows et al., 2017). I had the idea of having some bread, juice concentrate, tea and coffee available in my office for students who needed, or even wanted it. For some reason, perhaps shame or fear, students were not very willing to come to my office for a meal. I decided to continue offering students this option, but I could not do so in 2020 or 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the remote learning and teaching that was set for the two years.

It has been believed that people process information differently (Pashler, McDaniel, Rohrer et al, 2009, cited in Cuevas, 2015). Therefore, the method of input will determine whether information is processed or not. Teachers are therefore encouraged to develop various ways of presenting their subject content (Cuevas, 2015). This study showed that 17 respondents (39%) preferred visual stimulation; 30 respondents (68%) processed information better when transmitted audibly; 33 respondents (75%) learned better when reading or writing; and only 7 respondents (16%) were kinesthetically stimulated. I also learned that 73% of students (32 respondents) had more than one learning style preference. This profiling exercise stimulated an interest in me to incorporate different teaching methods so that students are stimulated to learn in their preferred style.

That which we teach somehow needs to be received by the student, and processed into something meaningful. Looß (2001) states that an individual student's channel of perception needs to be considered if learning performance is to be enhanced. In my mind it means that every student will have to individually be known by the teacher…at least to some extent. How else can one considerably teach in such a way as to advance every individual student's learning? Behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, and humanism, according to Dan (2011) are some learning theories applied by various teachers across the world. Each teacher might have a specific preference of teaching theory but one should also consider the fact that every situation deserves its separate handling of the respective situation (Dan, 2011). Therefore, a teacher will need to be sensitive to the situation he/she encounters during every lesson, no two lessons are the same.

1.3.1 How student profiling has informed my teaching practice

Teaching cannot be dissociated from learning – we teach because we want for our students to learn. Considering the error of my rigid ways – using mainly the teacher-centered approach, I completely neglected the learning capabilities of my students. The concept that an individual processes information differently, thereby learning more effectively when instruction is received in a way that conforms to their preference, is coined as learning styles (Pashler, McDaniel, Rohrer et al, 2009, cited in Cuevas, 2015). Everyone therefore has their own way of learning and it is not fair that I apply the same teaching techniques with the expectation that all students should learn equally. This addresses a cultural issue – the assumption that all students can learn through the same type of teaching. That which challenged me to change is the issue of addressing curriculum purposes and aligning that with my teaching and assessment methods. To ensure that learning happens according to purposes set out in the curriculum I had to ensure, to the best of my abilities, that I incorporate teaching techniques that will speak to the learning styles of my students. This, despite the beliefs of Newton & Miah (2017) that no substantial evidence exists to support the effectiveness of using learning styles in higher education. They argue that Kolb's inventory of learning styles, namely visual/auditory/read-write/kinesthestic (VARK) have no validity or reliability (Cuevas, 2015). In Cuevas' (2015) analysis of learning styles, he points out that subject matter should be a determining factor for how best to teach the content and how best the students can learn it. It is true that teachers ought to develop various ways to present their subject content, but I think considering the different 'supposed' learning styles, in VARK, can help me apply different teaching methods or techniques for the purpose of teaching various topics. Despite the lack of empirical evidence that supports the validity and reliability of learning styles, I am convinced that we process information differently depending on how our brains are wired to process it. Using different teaching techniques will most definitely make a class less predictable and therefore less boring.

I have since been considerate of how I structure my lessons, most especially my PowerPoint lessons. I try to make the slides interactive and include video and audio clips. It is quite tricky to prepare lessons that stimulate all students in one lesson. I have had to include in my teaching practice strategies of engaging my students as much as I possibly can. This includes making it a point to get to know students individually so as to be able to know how to help students better. Truth be told, not all students are interested in developing a relationship with the teacher, but it does not have to be every student that we connect with. The few students we connect with

can be informants that can help us improve our practices as soon as possible. I have had instances where a student just shares his/her experience during a lesson or test, and that informed me of how I could make some changes in my practice. These instances have helped me become a reflective practitioner, which I will discuss in the next section of this chapter.

1.4 A reflective practitioner through criticality, reflectivity and praxis

Moving on to being a reflective practitioner, I would like to begin with a description on my understanding of criticality. Generally, when reading higher education texts, as difficult as they are to understand at times, we are meant to do so in a way that is to critique the work we read (Stierer, 2008). Not criticising to find fault, describe or summarise that which has been read, but to show our understanding by bringing new insights to the text (Stierer, 2008). There are possible approaches that one can undertake with regard to criticality. These include, but are not limited to: comparing and contrasting; pointing out relevant themes; discussion of values implied by the author(s) and possible influences of such values; and discussion of methods used by the author(s) that lead them to their conclusion (Stierer, 2008). Undertaking any of the above mentioned approaches would indicate that one has not merely understood the text read, but that one has critically understood it (Stierer, 2008). In other words, criticality is basically dissecting written work to determine what the author's point of view is, why the author takes that view, considering the author's view in light of other views and opinions, and perhaps how the author arrived at that point of view. All this, whether one agrees or disagrees with the author(s). I might be wrong but criticality seems to take an objective approach to literature reading. Many a times, I read through pieces of literature, learning from it and choosing what it is I wish to share with my students. Never has it crossed my mind to be critical about that which I read. I am guilty of assuming that being critical meant finding the negative and bashing on that. What I am also realising is that I have not read, let alone thought of reading, many of the theories of education that exist. Some I have read on but not with the intent of deep understanding. I need to read through them with criticality so that I understand how they came into being and why they were and are considered to be significant. For this I will need to engage in the process of criticality so that I scrutinise for the purpose of appreciating the theories for what they are.

Reflectivity joins self-awareness and learning, as well as personal values and professional practice by drawing attention to the important relationships between these aspects (Stierer,

2008). It is indeed true that the concept of being a reflective practitioner comes across as strange and intimidating, because it means that I have to do some introspection into my teaching practice. Reflectivity is said to help us be more aware of ourselves and to understand ourselves better (Stierer, 2008). It reveals the way in which we act and connects that to reasons why we act, respond and feel the way we do when confronted with different situations. With reflection comes the possibility of learning and developing professionally – something we should all be striving to do. I have slowly started to reflect on my time with the students. The more I do it the more of a second nature it will become I suppose. Even in the time of remote learning I made some time to think about responses received from students or ways in which I reacted to certain situations. This helped me respond to similar situations differently. Writing is a tool that can be used to jot down our learning processes. We can use it as a way of noting down changes in how we think and our practice. Journal writing is strongly encouraged in some lecturer development programmes because it keeps record of the journey one embarks on during the course. That, in of itself, records the act of reflection.

Reflection I engage in but that too on a surface level. I have, in past, thought of how lessons have been experienced but I do not delve into much of it for the sake of improving my teaching practice. I need to become self-aware, and aware of the ways in which my students respond and act during lessons. I would like to ask the question of what, who, where, how and why. In this way I know I can improve my teaching practice and consequently the learning of my students. So often we selfishly go about our business, checking the mental boxes for the day, without considering whether our students grasped that which we taught them, or at least tried to. The focus is on me, even if I am not honest about it. Profiling my students is a concept learned anew. Why not study my students so that they become better students because I have improved on the ways in which I teach them? Why not make it about the student becoming more responsible for their learning, but yet facilitating that process of learning? Becoming a reflective practitioner will make me think about my professional practice and therefore ways of improving it.

Praxis has to do with linking theory to practice (Stierer, 2008). Praxis assumes the integration of conceptual theories found in literatures, into the teaching practice of the lecturer (Stierer, 2008). It is the expectation that lecturers will continuously take into account criticality and

reflectivity, and that as they engage in these processes they will become scholarly, self-aware of their practice, and eventually renew their practice, considering ideas learned and their ever changing contexts. In order for praxis to fully be recognised as such, the student-lecturer needs to explicitly demonstrate how they are integrating theories into their practice. They need to be detailed about it and not merely demonstrate that they understand the theories that they read on or were presented with (Stierer, 2008). Praxis is not merely an event that happens once only. It is a process that is ongoing and ever changing, because, through reflectivity, we see what we did, and how we can change future actions in order to bring about improved teaching.

As and when I critically read though the theories that exist, I hope to link that to my practice in class. I would like to lean more towards the constructivist's theory by making lessons more learner-centered. This is an example of but one of the things I intent on doing. I would like to spend time critically reading through the different theories. Coupled to this is the students' learning styles which I would like to learn more about during the act or process of profiling them. Knowing this will help me teach in a more inclusive manner by making use of some of the teaching techniques that have been shared with us during the block session. Easier said than done, but I will need to start somewhere in order to get somewhere.

1.5 Conclusion

Student profiling is a great tool to use in the pursuit of improving learning and teaching. That alongside of the student feedback and relationship with students, can help us improve our teaching practice and inevitably student learning. So to say, coming down to the students' level helps us be compassionate towards students and thereby help us help students the best way we can. Students, even though some might be adults, are faced with many challenges and these need to be acknowledged. Without being gullible and always giving in to students, we should be considerate enough of students and meet them half way so that we help them succeed. Succeed not because we spoon-feed them or hand them everything on a silver platter, but because we facilitate their learning and help them become self-directed students.

Becoming a reflective practitioner would work well in helping me improve myself as a teacher. By becoming aware of what I do, how I do it and why I do it, I become more vigilant of my practices as a teacher. My golden thread is *tying lose ends*. Profiling students means I get

information needed from my students that could help me connect the way I teach and other activities in my practice, with the needs of the students I encounter on a yearly basis.

CHAPTER 2: LEARNING AND TEACHING IN SFP

2.1 Introduction

There is always the question of why we desire education (to be educated) or why it is we expect individuals to be educated citizens of a country? What is the purpose of education? According to Escotet (2012), higher education is meant to prepare students for a world (including workplace) where they can be effective, efficient, social, tolerant, and understanding. Orientate citizens capable of contributing towards solving problems of national interest (Escotet, 2012). It is expected that higher education creates, in students, a culture of scientific research, innovation and creativity (Escotet, 2012). It is meant to bring forth cultural changes which will aid in the development of a country, because it enables for people to view current trends, in line with future possibilities, concerning social, scientific and economic development, freedom, dignity and democracy (Escotet, 2012). Predictions of future trends can allow for people to either encourage or constrain the progression of predicted trends. To be able to fulfill the purposes of education requires the careful consideration of factors that influence learning and teaching in higher education. These factors include the learning and teaching context, globalisation, massification, information and communication technologies as well as knowledge economics, to mention but a few. There are several factors that influence/affect the learning and teaching experience at university level. Taking these factors into consideration, influences a university's ranking on a global scale. According to Delgado-Márquez, Bondar & Delgado-Márquez (2012) an institute's ranking is dependent on its performance and reputation. A university is said to be highly ranked if it has a high quality of teaching and research output, which consequently awards the institute a high level of international reputation (Delgado-Márquez et al., 2012). Students of higher education programmes are required to write in ways that are unusual and unfamiliar to them – writing for personal reflection rather than as a way of communicating in one's area of discipline (Stierer, 2008). It is true that undertaking a programme in higher education can be surprisingly daunting. It comes with its own jargon, rules and ideas. I personally was surprised to learn that I knew almost nothing about that which was shared in during the block sessions I attended. One of the things made clear is that we need to take a scholarly approach to our teaching. We are encouraged to not merely teach but to think about our teaching and improve as we do so. In this chapter I discuss some of the factors that affect the ways in which teachers teach and learners learn. I also look at factors of structure, culture and agency that work to either enable or constrain learning and teaching in my context.

I purpose to share how I intend on using that which I have learned to ideally influence my teaching practice going forward. I also share how 2020 and 2021 has seen me make strides in the use of technology in my teaching practice, not because I wanted to, but because I had to. I laugh as I say this because I was a "using technology for teaching" sceptic.

2.2 Factors effecting learning and teaching

Culturally speaking, I have been submerged in the habit of teacher-centeredness. I have continuously employed the lecturing approach to teaching, including some but little variance to my teaching practice. According to Hall & Kidman (2004), learning and teaching is inclusive of all activities we embark upon during a course or module. They continue to add that this includes: a good course design with well selected content that is updated and clear; student centered approach that stimulates learning in students; good quality assessments with content that is relevant, fair assessment activities that promotes students' understanding; as well as accessible support that is freely and readily available to students when they need it (Hall & Kidman, 2004). If I have to zoom into my personal practice, I have not quite considered most of the good learning and teaching practices prescribed above. I have paid little attention to stimulating students' learning, providing readily available and accessible support, and never mind paying much attention to the design of my course. I have honestly not paid much attention to improving the quality of my practice. Looking into higher education factors such as globalisation, and information, communication and technology (ICT), these I have not really regarded in my teaching practice.

Education can no longer be viewed as a stand-alone activity that each nation embarks upon, in its cocoon of culture and believes. It should consider that which is happening across the globe and incorporate global activities, so that the students produced are of an international standard – able to obtain jobs, or further their studies, in any country across the globe. This is what globalisation is about – the interchanging of economic, political, cultural practices and social integration between countries in a global context (Al-Rodhan & Stoudmann, 2006, cited in Canlı & Demirtaş, 2017). I do not prepare my students for the world out there, probably because I only see them for one year. But even if these students are just with me for a yearlong bridging course, I still can expose them to thinking out of the box by making my teaching globally relevant.

Then there is the aspect of ICT. We have been and still are encouraged to make use of available ICT resources and incorporate them into our learning and teaching practices. Oliver (2002) points out that ICT supports a transitioning to a competency and performance-based curricula in the 21st century. He further points out that technology-facilitated approaches to education encourages students to take ownership of their learning (Oliver, 2002). Prior to attending the course on Technology in Higher education I had thought of giving the students an online test, as a way of embarking onto the journey of using ICT, but that had not yet happened – until 2020. It does surely save time where marking is concerned. My thought is that I was held back by the fear and the effort that comes with having to change. ICT tools also make it possible for blended learning, even if it is just for a brief period of time when the teacher might be physically absent. More on the use of technology in my teaching practice later in this chapter.

Massification of higher education is the increase in the number of student enrollment, most especially at Bachelor's degree level, a term coined by Martin Trow (Noui, 2020) (Selyutin, Kalashnikova, Danilova & Frolova, 2017). Not only does it refer to an increase in the enrollment of full-time students, but is inclusive of students enrolling to study via distance and online mode (Selyutin et al., 2017). Selyutin et al. (2016) mentioned that massification is also contributed to by the fact that education opportunities are open for the masses (including the poor and marginalised people) other than the elite populations, as was in past times. Our programme has an implication on massification of universities because it contributes towards the increased enrollment opportunities for students into universities. Our programme prepares students, who do not qualify for entry into degree programmes, for eventual entry into degree prigrammes.

2.3 The effect of structure, culture and agency on my teaching practice

Structure has to do with the physical goods (e.g. classrooms, resources, policies) as well as social positions and roles (e.g. social class, gender, race) occupied by people (Case, 2015; Shalefyu, 2018). Culture encompasses the ideologies, beliefs, opinions, theories and values (Case, 2015; Shalefyu, 2018). Agency is concerned with the capacity in which people, in strategic positions, act and interact in order to bring about change (Case, 2015). In light of the factors influencing learning and teaching, various curricula can be both a structural and cultural aspect (Case, 2015). Curricula can be either constraining or enabling of all factors effecting L & T, depending on the last time they were reviewed. In my context, it is enabling but I did not

actually know what was written in the curriculum and the importance thereof. If I do not know it, I cannot teach in accordance with it, and therefore I am constraining the achievement, or in the least bit, possible contributions towards globalisation and the use of ICT tools in my teaching. There was also no alignment in my teaching practice, student's learning and the assessments given to my students. Consequently, this was constraining the success in student learning. Talking about ICT, I mainly took on a lecturer approach to teaching, with the use of PowerPoint (culture). This was constraining because I was not engaging students who learn differently, and I believe I also did not stimulate independent leaning in students. Students need to take responsibility of their learning and, I as agent, therefore need to encourage them to make use of the various ICT tools to search for information relevant to that which they need, in order to engage in lifelong learning as well. Another structural component is the one of campus classrooms. Our classrooms (most of them) have fixed seating and is therefore a constraint for the aspect of corporate agency (peer learning) (Case, 2015). Students have a lot to offer one another. They learn at different paces and come with a vast array of past knowledge. They can be divided into groups to share this knowledge, as well as help slower students get on par with the rest of the class. It is said that sometimes peers teach each other better than the teacher does. What a student thinks or believes about themselves forms part of theory culture. Some students do not like Biology or do not think they will be able to get all the jargon that it comes with. I need to find ways of penetrating this thought patterns and convert them into more positive ones. For that I decided to be intentional with the use of ICT tools (structure) that are at my disposal (e.g. Open Educational Resources (OERs)). I started making use of sites that offer a wide array of resources that help me in my teaching practice.

The University of Namibia was started under the Act of Parliament on the 31st of August 1992 (University of Namibia Act 18 of 1992, p. 3). The aims of the university, as stated under Act 18 of 1992, is to provide higher education, conduct research, advance and disseminate knowledge, provide extension services, encourage growth and nurture cultural expression contextually as per the Namibian society, continued training and education, contribute to social and economic development, as well as foster relationships with people or institutions both nationally and internationally. This act (structure) is enabling and should motivate me to do all, in my power, to prepare my students for degree programs at the University of Namibia, as well as other institutions, both national- and internationally. The National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) was established by the Higher Education Act 26 of 2003 (National Council

for Higher Education: Quality assurance system for higher education in Namibia, 2009, p. 4). Some of the objectives of NCHE are to promote higher education accessibility to students, and assure the promotion of quality higher education (NCHE: Quality assurance system for higher education in Namibia, 2009). The NCHE is a part of the structural domain and should enable for me to provide quality education to my students, it actually demands that of me. What is relevant to my context is the aim of promoting access to higher education to students across Namibia. The Science Foundation Programme (SFP) was started to bridge the gap between unprepared school leavers for first year science education. By definition, the quality education offered to SFP students' needs to be of such that their first year of university experience (academic and culturally) be smooth and easier because they are better prepared for it.

The SFP was initially approved by SENATE and further accredited by the Namibian Qualifications Authority Framework. The approval of the programme obligates for us to teach our students according to the purpose of the curriculum, and facilitates the articulation of students into degree programmes preferably. Our curriculum is a structure that guides us in our activities of learning and teaching. We follow the hours stipulated in the curriculum for contact sessions with our students. Considering that most of the students enrolled into this programme have already done this science subjects (Biology, Mathematics and Physical Science) in high school, we, the lecturers, actually ought to play a more facilitative role in the teaching of these students. The students have the knowledge, what we then have to do is allow for them to build up on this knowledge, so that they meet the requirements for further higher education studies. Jagtap (2016) points out that teachers ought to be mentors who help students learn. To my understanding, becoming a facilitator of students' learning empowers them to construct their own learning and therefore make their education experiences more meaningful. Our students also serve as agents because they already have knowledge coming into the programme, they can be co-agents in helping one another build on and understand this knowledge.

Structurally, I was given a course outline for the module I teach, as a matter of fact, I was actually given a list of topics that the students had to be taught. I had been teaching my students guided by that list ever since. I was also provided with the module books (study guides), compiled by my counterpart from the Oshakati campus. I personally have opted to be cognisant of the Biology books compiled by my colleague, but gather information from various sources

for the content I teach. For a longer period of my teaching career I have had the culture of using PowerPoint for all my lectures. I followed the behaviourist approach to teaching which is based on teacher-centeredness (Stewart, 2012). The behaviourist theory assumes the learner as a passive participant who merely responds to the stimulus of factual, specified and rigid knowledge that they receive (Burhanuddin, Ahmad, Said & Asimiran, 2021). The view taken on by the behaviourist theory is that learning occurs from the outside environment to the inside of the learner, and that passivity is the natural posture of the learner (Burhanuddin et al., 2021). In thinking about it, I emphasised student understanding and learning, but in actual fact, I did not allow for them to construct this understanding as is the case in the constructivist theory of learning, which is more student-centered (Stewart, 2012). A more specific example of how I employed the behaviouristic approach is after my lessons, though I encouraged student engagement, I did not probe students to determine whether they have indeed understood or not. Not having follow up questions to determine whether the students indeed understand the knowledge they had been presented with, proved to be a hindrance to student learning. For example, one can ask the students what the answer to one plus one is, a student will answer the question by saying that it is two, probably recalling from that which the teacher had taught. Further recall would be to ask that student why they conclude that one plus one equals two. This seeks to determine whether the student indeed understands how the knowledge is developed or constructed. I know that I do not own all knowledge and I explicitly make this clear to my students, but I did not give my students enough of a platform to express themselves in the knowledge they have constructed.

In the attempt of improving myself, I undertook further studies in an Advanced Diploma in Secondary Education course. This was done so that have some ground level knowledge on and understanding of education, for the purpose of developing myself as a teacher. There I was exposed to the knowledge of various teaching methods, I employed some but not extensively or consistently. The truth of the matter is that falling back into a zone of comfort is much easier than the effort of having to discipline oneself towards change.

Agencies that play a role in affecting my teaching practice include my counterpart in Oshakati, my colleagues on the Khomasdal campus, and myself. I have been dependent on my counterpart for the longest time. I was waiting on her for assessment activities, some of the tests we set up and just general direction for teaching in the course. I did this mainly because I

considered her to be the expert since she had been running this race for much longer than I have. This I see has limited my ability to think outside box and be a bit more creative in my own teaching practice. This I have realised: “not believing that you can, puts limitation on that which you do.” As an agent I have been rigid in the way I have conducted my practice. I have used the same approaches and methods and therefore believe that I might have bored some of my students miserably. When discussing our students, my colleagues and I mostly talk about it from the students’ inability to learn or unwillingness to study. The focal point has always been the students but not in a positive sense - we are convinced that students not learning is their fault. They do not study and therefore they do not achieve academically. That might be true, to a certain degree, but we do not think about the part we play in student learning. So this left me in a place of comfort. Surely if we all have the same complaint there is nothing I am doing wrong, and therefore there is no need to change. How wrong I have been. I have been empowered to tie the connection between student learning needs, amongst others, to my teaching practice, through applied teaching techniques and creative assessment activities. Responses from students have been positive because some of the techniques are fun, interactive and engaging.

2.4 My higher education teaching practice going forward

I am of the opinion that the constructivist learning theory would work better in my teaching practices. I am particularly interested in the theories of cognitive constructivism. Cognitive constructivism is a combination of the logical way of learning (cognition), and the personal approach of the behaviour of knowledge construction (constructivism) (Johnson, 2017). Cognitivism deals with the ways in which thinking processes develop and how new experiences are assimilated to make sense of the world around us (Stewart, 2012). Constructivism focuses on how people construct knowledge in their individual capacities, whereas social constructivism focuses on how social interactions and culture effect the construction of our knowledge (Nedha, 2015). Social constructivism assumes that knowledge is constructed through social interactions – knowledge changes as people interact and share with one another and culture (Nedha, 2015). So, students process information and construct their knowledge from that which has been processed, but this knowledge can potentially change as people share their thoughts and ideas with one another. This is where class discussions and online discussion forums come into play. Each student sits with his/her concept of knowledge, each has his\her own understanding, but if we purpose to bring some topics to the table of discussion it could

add so much value to that which an individual knows. It might not change their mind as to what they deem fitting for them, but at least it gives them exposure as to what and how others think. It is not enough that I present subject content to my students, but I would have to help them make that content relevant to them. It is good to have knowledge, but if said knowledge cannot be incorporated into reality then it is substandard in a way. The reality of my context is that the students we have are bridging towards further studies at tertiary level, but that does not mean I cannot help them understand the content they encounter. I prefer to present content in a way that will help them think about the subject matter from a realistic point of view and in so doing help them conceptualise it. The theory of cognitive constructivism suggests that students will only reach their full potential if they form a collaborative relationship with the teacher, who assumes the position of the subject expert supporting an apprentice (Rintaningrum, 2008). Constructivism also suggests that information presented to students requires time for processing before understanding is achieved, because the student is encouraged to actively construct their own knowledge, and make meaning of the information they have received from the teacher (Maphosa, and Mudzielwana, 2014). This can be achieved by encouraging students to seek understanding in the content they are presented with. What I have learned is that students struggle to answer questions in a test or examination because they have merely memorised the work without seeking understanding or meaning. The students already know most of that which we teach, but what I do is encourage them to understand and therefore help them make it applicable to however the question is presented in a test or examination. I always tell them, "if you understand the concept then you will be able to answer the question no matter how it is asked." Rowell & Palmer (2007) mentioned that a constructivist approach necessitates that the teacher takes into consideration the existent knowledge that students possess, and that the students expand and develop their pre-existing knowledge by linking that to the new knowledge they receive. Ferrer (n.d., cited in Rowell and Palmer, 2007) outlines three instructional principals that guides the constructivist approach. The one that fascinates me is that "instruction should be designed to facilitate extrapolation and/or fill in the gaps (going beyond the information given) by stimulation of cognitive skills required for application" (Ferrer (n.d.), cited in Rowell and Palmer, 2007). In my understanding, this presents a case of teaching for future use. In a sense that students need to be prepared to use their knowledge to solve problems that might be encountered in future. It is not merely the case of knowledge for the sake of knowing, knowledge needs to be applied…it demands to be applied. Otherwise, what then is the point of simply knowing? This is mind boggling. I must however acknowledge that I have to also teach by means of the behaviourist theory which is associated with teacher-

centeredness. At times I have to design and control the learning environment in order to assure that skills and knowledge is acquired. Two of the principles, of the behaviourist theory, that I can relate with are: 1) instructional designs facilitating step-by-step attainment of increasingly complex competencies and skills; and 2) teacher specification on the structure, content and delivery of learning activities (Stewart, 2012). Biology is a subject that has many technical terms and theories that are subject specific, and for some of it, the students will have to memorise in order to show that they have acquired the information. This knowledge they will of course have to transition into understanding as they make the time to process the meaning of the information received. Practical skills, like the use of a microscope, is a skill they will need to be able to demonstrate after being taught how to operate one. That is in accordance with the behaviourist theory.

So then, what are some teaching methods that I will employ? The constructivist's approach considers the student the core of the approach in that the student is an active participant in the process of learning. Fernando & Marikar (2017) speak about the Participatory Learning Approach (PLA) which involves having students actively participate in the activities, solutions and evaluation of the content they are taught. It is thought that through PLA students will be better able to internalise the content of the subjects, this, coupled with reading other students' work to allow for a broader attainment of understanding. According to Fernando & Marikar (2017), the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) encourages teachers to: use interest-arousing teaching aids, use words, phrases and sentences to make it easy for students to follow what the teacher is saying; and grant students the opportunity of asking questions and expressing their ideas. With regard to formative assessment, MIE suggest that teachers: ask broad questions to allow for students' views to be expressed; give positive responses even to weak answers so as to encourage students to continue participating in the learning process; as well as ask high order questions which require for students to apply, synthesis and evaluate knowledge of information received (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). The MIE also give tips on how to approach the question and answer method. Some suggestions include: writing down questions in advance; probing students' answers by asking thought provoking questions of why, what and how; asking questions at varied levels of difficulty; and, asking questions within students' ability (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). A buzz group teaching method also sounds so interesting. This is one where the bigger class is divided into groups and each group is given an issue or task to discuss within the group, after which each group is to give feedback of their discussions (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). I would also like to organise a field/educational trip for my students, so that they see

processes related to Biology, in action. I have tried to do so in the past but it did not materialise because it required a lot of timely arrangements, and the materialization thereof was dependent on the company I was trying to arrange the trip to. There is no harm in trying again and so I will. I look forward to incorporating more ways of encouraging participation from the students, through techniques such as drama/skits, fishbowl, and games. During the lockdown period, in 2020, I spent some time writing down ideas that I can incorporate should we return to face-to-face learning and teaching. Those which I have incorporated and tested include, icebreakers (in the beginning of the year), jigsaw, as well as group presentations on different aspects of a topic. My experience of just a slight change in teaching techniques, is that it is well received by students and it really is fun to have students do some of the work themselves. It really is worth it. Some of the other desired techniques I was not able to experiment on because I decided to maximise the time with my students on practicals, when we were allowed to return to face-to-face learning and teaching in 2021. This was also an innovation I decided on because I was not certain about how the rest of 2021 was going to play out. I decided to take advantage of the time allowed for face-to-face lessons, which was three out of the five days of the week. I then met up with the students in the laboratory for those experiments that required for us to make use of the laboratory (e.g. microscopy). This worked to my advantage because then face-to-face lessons were suspended and we had to return to remote learning and teaching. By that time, I had completed a sufficient number of practicals with the students, and we could continue with virtual lessons online. I however still gave them practical experiments to do during the time when face-to-face lessons were suspended.

2.5 The role technology has played in my context of learning and teaching

As mentioned earlier, I have always been a sceptic of using technology in my lessons. That is until I decided to allow for students to search for information I was uncertain about on their smart phones. That is where it ended for a while. Then in 2020 we, resultant of the COVID-19 regime, were forced to teach remotely and this is where the journey actually began.

The need for technology integration in education is motivated by the assumption that students possess enough intrinsic motivation to enable them to study on their own and in their time of choice. It is true that online education does have the limitation of face-to-face interactions, but there are platforms or media that allow for students to post questions to the lecturer, have them answered, comment and receive feedback (Cloete, 2017). It is not entirely the same but it allows for engagement between the students and lecturer and the students amongst themselves,

resembling that which would have been the case if it were in the face-to-face classroom (Falloon, 2012).

The drive towards integrated education is fueled by the need to cater for the Millennials because they are the majority of students that make up university populations (Keengwe & Georguna, 2013 cited in Cloete, 2017). They are believed to be able to take charge of their learning and possess the knowledge and skills for the use of information technology (Keengwe & Georguna, 2013 cited in Cloete, 2017). Further motivation for technology integrated education is based on the fact that it is all inclusive in terms of students' participation and engagement. So to say that both introverts and extroverts are allotted the platform where they both are equals and both can have their voices heard (Cloete, 2017). This I have experienced in my own practice, with my 2021 cohort. The distinction is memorable because I experienced how students who would not naturally answer question or participate in a face-to-face class, participated during some of the online virtual classes. This was quite fascinating to actually experience.

Technology integrated teaching is something I have been open for, but not necessarily ready for. But we find ourselves in a time when this has to be done. We are basically thrown into the deep end and therefore I was forced to swim. Swim I have and will continue to do. The SFP being a bridging course provides me with such a great opportunity to introduce students to the use of technology in learning and teaching. Because they still have to go into degree awarding programmes, many of them have not had the opportunity of exposure to the use of technology for learning. It is not that I have always had a primitive way of conducting lessons in class, I just have not allowed or enabled for the students to enhance their learning through technology. I do make use of PowerPoint for my classes, as well as upload my slides onto the portal for the students to make use of them for their studies, but judging from this module (Technology for Learning and Teaching), that is not at all enough.

Our programme starts a little later than other programmes that UNAM has to offer. Our classes started the week after we had the class on Technology for Learning and Teaching (TLT4800). So I had no choice but to soon incorporate what I had learned into my learning and teaching practice. I had noticed that not many of the students have smart phones. So what I did was type out the survey students were expected to take online and distribute it to the students in hard copy form (Appendix 3). I could not bring myself to ask them to complete it online if they

might not even have access to a computer. Analysing the data showed that 70% of the students were between the ages of 20 and 25 (Millenials to Generation Z). They were the age group that is tied to technology and social media. About 50% of the class had not or very rarely used Microsoft Word. I learned that many of the students did not have access to a laptop or computer. Yes, many might have seen a computer, but despite the fact that computers or laptops are common, not everyone has used them. In the capital city, Windhoek, many schools are privileged to offer computer lessons or even enforce the use of the Cloud for the purposes of learning and teaching. This is not the case for most schools outside Windhoek. And if learners are exposed to computers, it is more for entertainment and not for educational purposes. Katz & Macklin (2007) found that college and university students lack ICT literacy skills despite the age of technology that they find themselves in. Their focal group was first year student (Katz & Macklin, 2007). Before the introduction of COVID-19 in Namibia, I had planned out a task that was to integrate technology into my teaching practice. I was going to give the students a task which employed the SAMR model because, it is described as a model that assisted educators to infuse technology into learning and teaching (Schrok, 2013). H.L. (2017) describes SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) as a spectrum that guides one in making the decision for how to incorporate technology into learning and teaching, depending on the lesson and intended learning outcome. This task was to expose the students to using a computer, for learning, as well as introduce many to the simple media of Microsoft, particularly to Word and PowerPoint.

Due to the lockdown brought about by COVID-19, we have been compelled to teach online. This is such a good thing because learning and teaching is not brought to a halt, but modified to make it effective for the situation at hand. Students received teaching content via the student portal, MOODLE and Google Drive. What I sent them are lecture notes as well as assessment activities. It took much longer to prepare and set up assignments because I needed for the students to spend time digging deep into the content for answers (be it through my notes or alternative sources). This is beneficial to the students because they would hopefully gain better understanding of the material which means they will learn. It is beneficial for me because the students are taking responsibility of their learning, considering that they are also free to consult when that is needed, as well as work on their own pace.

Teaching online during the COVID-19 pandemic meant that I had to find super creative ways of engaging the students. For this I had decided to enroll in a few programmes offered by Oxford University Press (OUP). This was about six months after completing a Technology-Enabled Massive Open Online course (TEL-MOOC) that was offered jointly by the Commonwealth of Learning and Athabasca University. They were both free programmes that included a variety of modules which helped me transition to online and blended teaching with a bit of ease. Many of the programmes included blended and online learning and teaching, as well as ways in which we can manage blended and online learning and teaching. These programmes with their accompanying courses were really very helpful in opening my mind to creative ways I could use to make my teaching practice effective and enhance student learning. I learned about engaging students through discussion forums available on online learning platforms, the Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE) in our case. I was reminded of Online Educational Resources (OERs) and their importance in teaching. I also learned about using audio and video recordings to present alongside of my own material. With that I managed to upload video content onto MOODLE and have students discuss certain aspects of what they learned through the uploaded video's. I did the same for articles as well. It was untreated territories for me but so far I enjoy having to dig deeper and be more creative with the assessment activities that I had to give the students. I also learned to be more considerate of students who did not always have access to the Internet. I extended submission dates for them, and allowed for them to take tests when they knew they would have consistent access to the Internet. When students had difficulties submitting assessments via MOODLE, I allowed for them to submit via email. This remote teaching experience increased the extent to which I showed students compassion. I have more confidence where using technology for learning and teaching is concerned.

To broaden my knowledge and skills in the use of technology, I enrolled for an Introduction to Open Education Resources course at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCoL). Though I had encountered some of the concepts of OER through the TEL-MOOC and OUP programmes, this was particularly more enriching because, unlike the previous courses, this one was more interactive and required more practical input/participation. This course has inspired me to consider developing content for OERs. I had learned that the African continent is far behind and lacking in the development of OERs, in comparison to the Western world of course. Question is, why not start somewhere and become part of the OER global community.

2.6 Conclusion

If I had to decide on a practice that I was to follow in my context of structure, culture and agency, I would definitely do things differently. Considering the fact that I had not been given a curriculum when I started teaching, I believe that I have not at all been conducting my teaching practice in ways expected of me as stipulated in the curriculum. I got hold of the curriculum so that I work on aligning my teaching practices and the assessment activities I give to the students (*tying lose ends*, the Golden Thread of this reflexive portfolio). I am optimistic about applying the teaching techniques shared during our learning and teaching block session. This will also mean that me profiling my students will lead me to consider the different learning styles adopted by students, and therefore decide on teaching techniques accordingly. My past culture of simply employing PowerPoint teaching in all classes will no longer be adapted for all lessons. I (as agent) am going to encourage students to collaborate with one another, as a means of agency, in order to stimulate one another's understanding and therefore learning. I am going to acquaint myself with the different policies (structure) at UNAM (e.g. Assessment Policy, e-Learning Policy) so that I am steered towards the vision and mission of the university. Everything I do needs to be in line with the university. I cannot work as though I am moving in a separate direction. I have and will continue to employ various ICT tools (structure and culture) to make my teaching more engaging, as well as to be up to date with changes happening in the field of Biology. I want for the students to think outside of the box, in terms of seeing the relevance of Biology in the Namibian context.

With the knowledge and understanding that I now possess, I am to implement this into my practice so that improvement is experienced (praxis). Firstly, my mind needs a paradigm shift in a major way. The students need to be the center of that which I do in my teaching practice – from planning, teaching, to assessments. I intent on tying my students, their needs and expectations, to my teaching practice as well. I am convinced that students can be owners of their own learning, when we apply the constructivist's approach to learning and teaching. I need to trust that my students can independently construct their own knowledge and find understanding in it. I am going to make use of the different teaching techniques shared with us and work on making lessons dynamic and interesting. I look forward to the challenge of transforming students from passive receivers to active participants in the process of learning and knowledge acquisition.

In line with the current pandemic of the Corona virus, technology integration has taken or is going to have to take center stage - at the moment, majority of classes have been offered online. Eventually things might return to normal, but not the normal we are used to. It will not be the kind of normal where lecturers are too scared or reluctant to use technology. We are now forced to use it and I do not see how we will let it go after the waters have cleared. This is definitely causing us to think and act out of the box, whether we want to or not.

CHAPTER 3: THE CURRICULUM AND ITS ROLE IN MY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

The second block session of the PDHE lessons dealt on the topic of curriculum development in higher education. One of the definitions of what curriculum is, is that it is a document that contains information about what teachers are to teach and what learners are to learn (Su, 2012). Another definition by Pratt (1994, cited in Su, 2012) viewed the curriculum as a blueprint plan of sustainable learning and teaching processes. Interestingly, Marsh (1997, cited in Su**,** 2012) viewed the curriculum as a relationship with an interplay of plans and experiences that can potentially engage students inside or outside of the classroom. There are a vast number of definitions for what a curriculum is, as seen from the viewpoint of various people. For me personally, a curriculum serves as a guide for that which teachers and learners can encounter during their time of schooling (be it formal or informal settings). The word guide being just that, a route that we can possibly take during our time with students. It is not cast in stone but should be flexible, taking into consideration that life in of itself is not rigid or predictable. It has been argued that higher education curricula have a greater focus on learning processes and not merely outcomes, and that there be an inclusion of innovation, creativity and that student relevance also be ensured (Bovill, 2017a, Bron, Bovil & Veugelers, 2016, & Knight (2001), cited in Bovill & Woolmer, 2018). There has been a call that students be included in the creation of the curriculum, because they are also 'co-creators' of knowledge (Bovill & Woolmer, 2018). In this section I will look at macro and micro alignment elements of the SFP curriculum, the changes I would like to see in the development of the curriculum and the role I play in relation to the curriculum design and development.

3.2 Macro-alignment elements of the SFP curriculum

I will start off by looking at some macro alignment elements pertaining the SFP curriculum. Macro-alignment elements of a curriculum include things such as **purpose of higher education**, **rationale, qualification outcomes** and the **university's vision and mission**, in relation to how the curriculum speaks into these elements.

3.2.1 Purpose of education

There is always the question of why we desire education (to be educated) or why it is we expect individuals to be educated citizens of a country? What is the purpose of education? According

to Rintaningrum (2008), HEIs have the ethical responsibility to increase the awareness, knowledge, skills and values that are vital for the creation of a just and sustainable future. One of the things Rintaningrum (2008) points out is that HEIs need to connect their curriculums with the needs of the local and regional communities, so as to make them healthier, more socially vibrant and stable, as well as to be economically secure and environmentally sustainable. HEI graduates are meant to make meaningful contributions towards solving problems or the development of the nation. Education is meant to bring forth cultural changes which will aid in the development of a country, because it enables for people to view current trends, in line with future possibilities, concerning social, scientific and economic development, freedom, dignity and democracy (Escotet, 2012). The development of the SFP curriculum takes a perspective from that of paving the way for prospective candidates, from previously academically disadvantaged backgrounds. It adapts the aim of providing suitable candidates the opportunity of entering into tertiary education where they would not have been able to do otherwise. The students who now continue to study further will be groomed into becoming citizens who will be able to make a difference in the spheres they find themselves.

3.2.2 Rationale of the programme

The rationale for this SFP is in line with the National Development Plan (NDP), which motivates the promotion of access of entry into higher education for an increased number of people (Namibia's 5th National Development Plan, 2017). The programme aims to widen access, equity and equality to higher education by bridging knowledge gaps, most especially in science related subjects. Students enrolled in the program are prepared to potentially undertake science-oriented studies, mainly at the University of Namibia. Students are however, allowed to further their studies in other fields of interest, such as education. The programme intends to help students by equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in further higher education programmes (for example Bachelor's programmes).

3.2.3 Vision and mission of the University of Namibia

The university stands on the mission that is "to contribute to the achievement of national and international development goals through the pursuit of translational research, quality training and innovation" (The University of Namibia (n.d.)). How wonderful it is to even assume that we are part of preparatory work for the development of men and women who might bring forth the realisation of this vision, in one way or the other. Who knows what can come from enabling

someone to have access to a whole new world through education. In view of the University of Namibia's vision which is: "to be a sustainable international hub of higher education training, research and innovation by 2030" (The University of Namibia (n.d.)), the SFP feeds into this vision by 'feeding' students into degree programmes, who will hopefully 'feed' and 'speak' into the materialisation of the university's vision. The programme serves to narrow the gap, in knowledge and skills, between secondary school and university. It is that stepping stone that allows for successful articulation into degree programmes. So in line with the university's vision and mission, I would say that the SFP trains the students in that it prepares them for challenges and opportunities that they might encounter when they eventually enroll for further HE studies.

Curriculum design cannot happen in isolation. The university's vision and mission should be considered. The SFP curriculum definitely speaks into the new vision employed by UNAM. Student who complete the programme, I believe, are better equipped for further studies at any institution of higher education. This is because the students are already introduced to the culture and expectations at a university level. I would hope that the students who complete our programme be better disciplined with future university endeavours. Also, if students from the programme wish to pursue further studies in education (Biology related to be specific), they will also be able to apply the basic skills they learned in their training to become future teachers. That which we do in the programme needs to speak into the various curriculums in the faculty of Science, as well as the faculty of education (specifically Science education).

Curriculum design has a set standard that should be followed. Qualitative assurance is very important for ensuring that the programmes offered have a standard that satisfies not only national standards but international standards as well. The University of Namibia has the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) which is a department whose agency aims at assuring that the quality of courses offered at the university speaks towards the university's vision, as well as the national goals. If they do not, the centre implements strategies that will work towards improving the quality of courses offered and ensuring that they are on par with university and national goals. Biggs (2014) says that most universities have a long way to go with regard to quality enhancement. I must however commend the University of Namibia for implementing programs such as the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education

that are supportive to the enhancement of educational quality at the university. Further details on contextual quality assurance and enhancement matters will be delved into in Chapter 4.

3.2.4 Qualification outcome

The SFP scales on level 4 of the National Qualification Framework (NQF), the same level as a certificate qualification. Students however, do not receive a certified qualification upon completion of the programme. Students have always been able to articulate into a degree or diploma programme at UNAM and other institutions both nationally and internationally. That however is not the case because HEIs, such as NUST, have introduced bridging programmes specifically designed to cater for their own needs. My personal opinion is that the students who complete the programme, are not left with too many options as to what they can study, especially with the consideration that NUST prefers to accommodate the students who complete their Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programme. It is also true that the UNAM cannot absorb every single student who completes the SFP.

Students receive results that serves as evidence of their efforts during the course of the year (continuous assessment marks) and an examination mark that together form the student's final marks. Their final mark determines whether the students will be accepted into a relevant diploma or degree programme. If students complete the programme, they should obtain an average mark of at least 60% in order to be admitted into an honours degree programme. Students who obtain an average mark of 55-59%, qualify for admission into diploma courses. Admission into a bachelor's degree or diploma programme is possible, provided that they pass all five subjects offered in the SFP.

3.3 Micro-alignment elements of the SFP curriculum

Next I will highlight some of the micro-alignment elements that have influenced the development of the SFP curriculum. Micro-alignment elements of a curriculum include learning outcome, purpose of the programme, structure of the programme, knowledge structures, epistemic diversity and learning and teaching. In this section I give a brief description of how some of these elements come into play with the SFP curriculum.

3.3.1 Constructive alignment

I would like to start off by saying that constructive alignment should consciously and deliberately be considered because it lays out what students should learn and how this learning

is to be expressed, long before teaching takes place (Biggs, 2014). A properly constructed curriculum ought to contain learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment tasks (Biggs, 2014). Most importantly, it is what the student does that is most crucial in curriculum development (Shuell, 1986) – it is not extensively about the teacher. During curriculum designing, the designers need to consider learning outcomes, and what students should be able to do with that which has been learned. One of the learning outcomes in the Biology course requires that students be able to perform experiments and analyse experimental data, and write laboratory reports. Students in the programme have the intention of furthering their studies at the university. And with the skills they acquire in the above mentioned learning outcome, they will be able to carry over to higher degree programmes. Their ability now will enable them to apply it to any other future practical session, in Biology, to be specific. Yes, with an articulation into degree programmes comes a complexity in knowledge and skills that the students are expected to have, but compared to most of the students who come straight from high school, I would say the SFP students have quite of a head start. Though constructive alignment has been reported to be effective (Biggs, 2014), there are some challenges to its implementation. One of the problems mentioned in Biggs (2014) is the infamous problem of finances, to which I can concur. Many of the experiments we conduct involve the use of microscopes. This is a structural obstacle the SFP students face, which could hinder quality learning and teaching. In reality, we have a limited number of microscopes and therefore students have to be divided into groups of up to four, for a practical that is about them learning how to operate a microscope. This is really counterproductive because many students 'ride' on others by not doing anything but copy from those who do the actual work - constraining culture at the most. I am determined to have my students learn the skills needed. The year 2020 has prevented me from implementing some of the teaching practice ideas I had set out to "test" on my 2020 cohort. This in light of practical lessons. I was however fortunate to have implemented some of these changes in 2021, when we had the brief opportunity of having face-to-face lessons. I made sure that each student was alone on a microscope for the practical session on microscopy. I lend microscopes from one of the other labs on the Khomasdal campus and that worked out beautifully. The students worked individually which hindered the dependency of some of the lazier students on those who are willing to work and put effort into their work. The changes I implement I will assess, and from the assessment outcomes I will make further changes, and so the cycle goes. But one thing that I am sure of, I will continue to cherish and appreciate the curriculum document.

3.3.2 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are specifications of knowledge and skills that students should learn and acquire when they complete a course or programme (Aithal & Kumar, 2016). It is through the assessment of students that an indication is given of the areas of learning and areas in which improvement is needed (Aithal & Kumar, 2016). Learning objectives help guide the teacher and enables them to communicate expectations with students (Jenkins & Unwin, 2001). The verbs used in learning outcomes should feature in the learning and teaching activities, as well as the assessment tasks that are to be engaged with during the course period. Students should be active participants in their learning, and therefore some thought should be put into the type of learning and teaching activities to be engaged with in the classroom. Looking at a stated learning outcome in the SFP curriculum, it reads, "On completing the module, students should be able to use the microscope, and sketch/draw in proportion specimens as seen under the microscope". This is an example of a general learning outcome, which is a short statement of observable results and that ideally would start with a verb generally related to Blooms Taxonomy (Jean-François, 2016). With regard to the mentioned learning outcome, the students are taught how to use a microscope, directing them on developing the skills needed to bring specimen into focus at different objectives on the microscope. Students would then be required to draw that which they see through the microscope, and then submit that for assessment. Students are taught in a laboratory setting where they are encouraged to participate in the practical sessions, as individuals and as a group. In some instances, they are instructed to write up a scientific report with the objective of handling the data and information in such a way that is scientifically acceptable. The laboratory report is the assessment task used to test the learning outcome.

3.3.3 Knowledge structures

Luckett (2009) points out that the analyses of curriculum knowledge take into account knowledge structures, knower structures and the social as well as cultural structures of decontextualised contexts. Bernstein (1999) distinguished between horizontal and vertical knowledge structures, with humanities linked to the horizontal knowledge structure, and hard sciences to the hierarchical knowledge structure (Maton, 2006). The horizontal knowledge structure assumes that new knowledge forms a new segment that is placed alongside of old knowledge (Luckett, 2009). New knowledge does not build onto old knowledge and incorporate it (Luckett, 2009). Vertical or hierarchical knowledge, on the other hand, is

regarded as being explicit, coherent and systematically principled. Vertical knowledge is the organisation of knowledge that develops through integrated knowledge at lower levels and across an expanding range of phenomena.

The SFP, with specific regard to Biology, being part of the discipline of natural or hard sciences, is predominantly vertically structured. Bernstein (1999) mentions that the vertical discourse takes on a "series of specialised languages with specialised modes of interrogation, specialised criteria for the productions and circulation of texts". The theory covered in our Biology lessons are less advanced than that in the first year Biology, in the Faculty of Science, and indeed serves as a base for the buildup of such knowledge. Third year Biology builds up on second year Biology, and fourth year builds up on third year content. This is how hierarchical knowledge is acquired (Bernstein, 1999; Luckett, 2002).

With that said, one sees that the curriculum does take into consideration the knowledge structure of the hard sciences. The programme has been initiated to target potential science students from academically disadvantaged schools, who could not meet the university's entry requirements. This is so that the students who complete the programme fall into the increased number of qualified science and technology graduates for the nation's growing economy. In science, new knowledge can be generated without segmentalisation as is the case for disciplines that have a more horizontal knowledge structures. The generation of new knowledge can be integrated and whole (Maton, 2006). So, in my context, higher level scientific knowledge will integrate the foundational knowledge that the students acquire in the programme.

3.3.4 Epistemic diversity

With regard to the epistemic diversity of the programme curriculum, only two modes of epistemology are obvious. This can be attributed to the nature and purpose of the programme. Following Luckett's (2001) model of epistemically diverse curriculum, the Biology course descriptor identifies students acquiring only the objective/reductionist type of knowledge. Mode 1 suggests that students be taught the disciplinary concepts, which is said to be the pillar of higher education curricula (Luckett, 2001). I agree with that because knowledge acquired (in a reductionist objective way) has the potential to tickle the mind and eventually lead to research that will produce Mode 4 type of knowledge. As agreed on by Lukett (2001), students

'will need to gain knowledge and theory from lectures and libraries and be assisted to build disciplinary conceptual framework.' Mode 1 is followed by Mode 2, which is the practical application of knowledge acquired in Mode 1. The Biology course dedicates 2 hours for one practical session, per week. During the practical sessions students are allowed the opportunity to see theory applied. This includes microscopy skills, osmosis, and the effects of enzymes. Most practicals are carried out in the laboratory. As alluded to earlier, students are in a bridging course which will allow for them to articulate into degree programmes at honours level. If the student chooses to pursue studies in hard sciences, they will encounter Mode 3 and 4 knowledge and knowledge acquisition.

The Namibian context is taken into account because the perspective of assisting is ensuring that access, equity and equality in education be achieved. The current curriculum was structured for a time and season when there were not enough or a big enough number of students enrolled into the Faculty of Science at the University of Namibia. The national need was to see an increase in the number of science graduates who will then proceed to contribute towards the realisation of Vision 2030. From my personal point of view, this is no longer the case. There has been an increase in the number of student admission into the Faculty of Science and therefore an increase in the number of Science graduates. What we now need is for these graduates to become innovative in solving the problems or challenges faced in Namibia. Though the students who complete the programme are still to articulate into higher degree programmes, I believe we contribute towards the work of building graduates who will might further the development of the country. We can therefore begin to sensitise and encourage our students to look towards making worthwhile scientific contributions. The general SFP curriculum does not really take into consideration the knower structure. This is because, in a sense, the programme is a means to an end.

3.3.5 Purpose of the programme

The programme was started with the purpose of increasing the pool of prospective students interested in pursuing tertiary studies leading to a Bachelor of Science (honours) degree. This purpose contributes towards what is known as massification. One of the contributing factors to massification is the fact that education opportunities are open for the masses (including the

poor and marginalised people) other than the elite populations, as was in past times (Selyutin et al., 2016). This is where the SFP comes in. The programme was initially aimed as "widening access, equity and equality to higher education, especially to disadvantaged and/or marginalised groups, …" (Science Foundation curriculum document, 2005). That which once was for the marginalised and previously disadvantaged students, has been made accessible to applicants from any background. In recent years, the programme has taken in applicants from all walks of life – marginalised and non-marginalised, previously disadvantages and those privileged. The programme does however still prioritise the marginalised and disadvantaged students, so that they too have the equal opportunity to better their lives, as well as the lives of those around them. But the experience where that is concerned is that the marginalised students tend to take for granted the opportunity they have received and so do not take advantage of it. Some of them tend to not study or attend classes regularly and therefore do not succeed in the programme.

3.3.6 Curriculum transfomration

Despite the SFP not being a programme that produces graduates, there is potential for transformation within the programme. Being aware of the knowledge structure also informs the route one can take for the sake of transformation within my teaching context.

The South Africans protested by destroying the Cecil John Rhodes statue as a demonstration for their demand for decolonisation and structural changes at universities in South Africa (Vandeya, 2019). This forcefully started the conversation of decolonising university curricula and had academics revise their course contents and material so as to meet the demands of the students (Vandeya, 2019). Perhaps it was long overdue, and universities just needed a bit of a push to set them on the course of transforming the curricula from eurocentrism to Afrocentrism, or at least a blend of the two. My stance on mixing the two is due to the fact that I believe, if students are to be prepared for the global market or economy, it will be good that they be educated on that which is globally relevant, as well as grounding them on that which is relevant in the African and Namibian context. "Teachers need to assume the role of transformative intellectuals, rather than be alienated by the current educational dispensation, if they want to cause meaningful educational change" (Vandeya, 2019). Those words are something to reflect on, because for long I have been alienated, tolerant and just not mindful of that which I taught. They are words that bear truth and much weight. The SFP is a means to an end, but it doesn't

mean that the means cannot be transformed, especially because this means is supposed to prepare students for their prospective futures.

What I have purposed to do is to incorporate examples that are relevant to the Namibian context when teaching. My students come from diverse cultural backgrounds and I try to bring things home to different cultural perspectives when possible. This makes subject matter relatable and gives them something to think about in terms of that which works for our immediate context as well. Within every culture there is knowledge which is deemed relevant and important for that cultural context. Namibia has a diversity of cultural contexts and we can all learn from one another. So we can also learn from the contexts of our African neighbours and thereby strengthen the African capacity for knowledge. This makes me realise my need for research and personal education with regard to knowledge or information that is contextually Namibian and useful for teaching my students my content.

3.4 My role as a curriculum developer for the SFP

I did not play a major role in the development of any curriculum and had no confidence in anything that had to do with the curriculum. I however started looking through the SFP curriculum, in 2020, so as to prepare myself to make meaningful suggestions for change, the next time the curriculum document is under review. The curriculum I think was relevant and appropriate for the University of Namibia when the programme was first implemented in 2005. As I was reading through the curriculum document, I noted some things that are in the document but are not implemented, and some things that could be in the curriculum that are not featured in it. Considering that there have been major changes in school curriculums, and also bearing in mind that the SFP is a bridging course, the curriculum will have to be revisited to determine who it now would serve in terms of school leavers and who will be accepted into the programme.

When the curriculum was up for review in 2021, I prepared myself to make an input because I am confident that I have learned some of what is important for curriculum development. With areas I was not certain about or lacked understanding in, I consulted the resources shared in the programme, and those I consulted whilst working on the module learning tasks and subsequent assignment. One other thing I put up for consideration was the entry requirements into the programme. The programme initially served applicants who had points as low as 17 in five school leaving subjects. The requirements have since been amended, with the hope that the

Namibian Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) once again consider SFP students for financial assistance. That fell through the water. Students who complete our programme do not get NSFAF loans and many are, so to say, “forced” to take on some Grade 12 subjects, through other institutions, in an attempt to obtain at least 25 points in five subjects – so that they be considered for a NSFAF loan. That is counterproductive, because why then enroll for the SFP? Why bother if it will not help you further your studies due to financial constraints? If students will not be considered for NSFAF financial assistance, then I would suggest that the entry requirements be lowered again. It is just a thought. This most definitely puts into question the aspect of accessibility to higher education. How accessible is articulation into higher education diploma or degree programmes for those students who complete the SFP? Financial constraints restrict accessibility to tertiary education as well.

3.5 Conclusion

Constructive alignment can really help ensure that we do that which is right. And that is to not focus on us as educators, but to put students and their learning at the center. To ensure that we do not merely tick the boxes of that which we have done, but to ensure that the students have indeed learned. And not only that students have learned, but to be confident that students will apply that which they have learned in their future contexts - be it in a work setting, or higher levels of education. We need to align our learning outcomes to our teaching activities, so that we have students with high standards and desired attributes. This should be a culture we adopt and implement throughout the course of our teaching practice. Though the SFP is a non-qualification programme, it is interesting to learn and see that the programme curriculum does follow a structure with identifiable macro and micro alignment identifiers. As I evaluate what these elements mean in my context, I am excited at the thought of what my turn towards constructively aligned practices can mean to my students, the university and the nation at large. I now have a better understanding of what a curriculum is, it’s importance, it’s structure and how to structure some of its content. May I be consistent in my enthusiasm to see change.

CHAPTER 4: TAKING THE END OF ASSESSMENT TO ALIGNING CONSTRUCTIVELY

4.1 Introduction

The first chapter had me delve into discussion on knowing the students I encounter in my typical SFP classroom**.** In chapter two I outlined the contextual factors that impact learning and teaching in higher education, what it means to become a reflective practitioner, principles of adult learning, as well learning theories and teaching methods that can be applied to the context of my teaching practice. Chapter three dealt with issues pertaining to curriculum development and the macro and micro alignment factors that influences the development of the curriculum for the SFP I am part of. In this chapter I will be looking into aspects of assessment for and of learning and how I am challenged by the concept of constructive alignment, which demands that the curriculum, teaching strategies and learning theories, as well as assessment need to all be aligned in order to steer my learning and teaching practices into the right direction. In an intent to be vulnerable, I will give a personal case study on an assessment malfunction that I have engaged in during my teaching practice, prior to having my eyes opened through the PDHE.

Assessment gathers information for the process of evaluating students (Muthaiyan & Ananthi, 2020). Teachers use the information they gather to determine what students know, what they understand, progress they have made, and how their scores match up to those of other student (Muthaiyan & Ananthi, 2020). Being haphazard in our practices compromises the quality of learning. For so long we do that which we think needs to be done, because we are expected to do something after all. But how much justice can we place in *just or simply* getting work done. I now have the belief that there is no point in teaching or assessment if there is no substantial learning taking place. To this I add: there can be no learning if there is no apposite measure thereof. But this measurement of learning (through assessment) needs to be in alignment with learning outcomes, as per the curriculum, and needs to be ensured through teaching strategies that are in line with the learning outcomes stipulated in the curriculum.

4.2 Assessment of student learning

Assessment is intended to reveal students' learning processes, learning objectives that students need to achieve and ways in which these objectives can be met (Leeuwenkamp, Brinke & Kester, 2017). Assessment should have, as it's focal point, the learning outcomes that students are expected to express (Stefani, 2004). Stefani (2004) shows (Figure 4.1) a simplified version of a Logical Model of Curriculum Development that was developed by Cowan & Harding (1986).

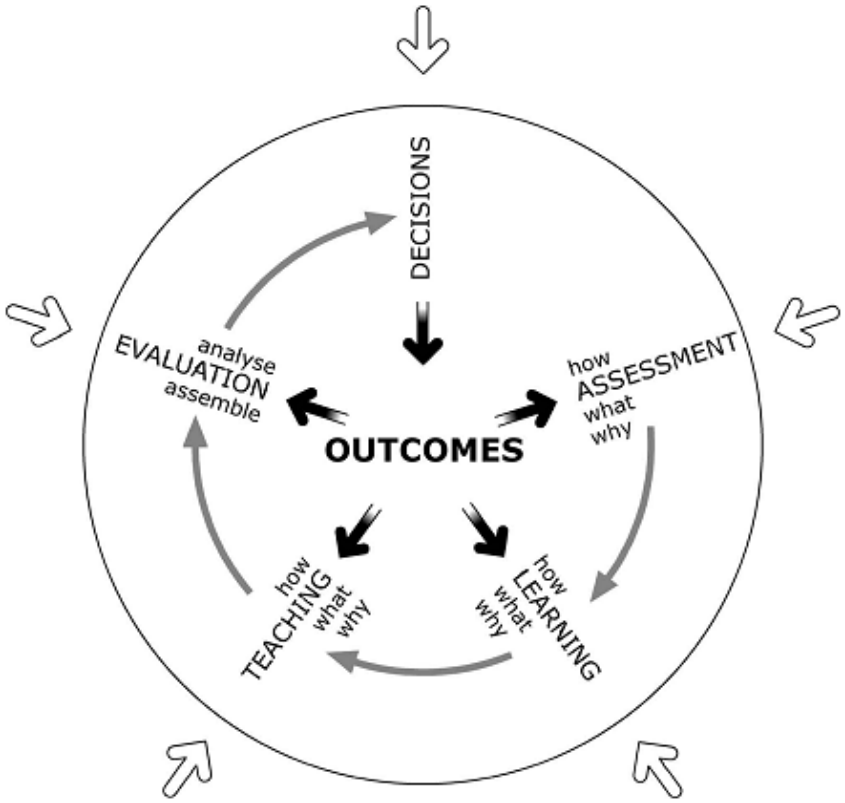

Figure 4.1: *A Logic Model of Curriculum Development developed by Cowan & Harding (1986).*

Figure 4.1 shows how learning outcomes are placed at the centre of teaching, learning and assessment practices. It includes, for instance, 'how the outcome is assessed'; 'what knowledge or skill will be assessed' and 'why this assessment is used' (Stefani, 2004). Leeuwenkamp, et al. (2017) point out that the quality of assessment is inclusive of all aspects of the assessment practice. Some of these aspects listed include tests, assignments, assessment processes, assessments programmes as stated in the curriculum, policies and procedures (Leeuwenkamp et al., 2017). If assessment practices are substandard it effects correctness, accuracy and

reliability regarding student performances, and results obtained from these assessments for the purposes of assessing learning (Leeuwenkamp et al., 2017). Relating learning objectives to assessment activities and teaching strategies is one of the ways we guarantee students quality teaching (Sewagegn, 2020). Assessment should include how information is process, stored, constructed and reconstructed, how learning processes are regulated by the students, the application of knowledge in new circumstances, as well as societal and cultural influences that shape learning (cognitivism and constructivism) (Dirscoll, 2005; Shepard, 2000, in Leeuwenkamp et al., 2017). Learning objectives cannot be disjointed from assessment, because the students need to know beforehand what it is they need to focus on attaining, and therefore be more successful when presented with an assessment activity (Sewagegn, 2020). Students have a very important consideration where assessment is concerned. In the attempt of staff members giving students assessment tasks, it is very clear, from their own perspectives, what they are looking for in these assessments, but do not clearly communicate this to the students (Stefani, 2004). I confess that I most certainly have been guilty of this. Academic staff ought to undertake the following processes in assessment of students: set up clear criteria of what exactly it is they would like to assess; share the criteria with the students; confirm that the students understand what is expected of them as per the criteria; choose the evidence that would rightfully judge student achievement against the set criteria; provide an understanding, to students, of the nature of the chosen evidence; judge the extent to which assessment criteria has been met; be transparent with students about the judgements made; communicate the outcomes of the assessment; and give students meaningful feedback on the outcomes (Stefani, 2004). The key to assessing students is after all a judgement of how well students perform in light of the intended learning outcomes (Stefani, 2004). From an assessment perspective, I have realised that I have not at all linked the assessments I had been giving my students to the learning outcomes, as per the curriculum, and therefore have not been thoroughly preparing my students for the assessments I have been giving them, through my teaching of the content. What I also realise is that, instead of presenting learning objectives at the beginning or introduction of a lesson, I present learning objectives as I go along teaching the content. I have the tendency of linking a section of the content to the objectives, and then I give an example of a possible assessment activity or question that students can expect or mentally prepare for. I think I would then need to train myself to share the learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson.

4.3 Formative versus summative assessment

Formative assessment takes place in the classroom during the course of the lesson (Hargreaves, 2008, cited in Gikandi, Morrow & Davis, 2011). It serves the purpose of supporting student learning (Oosterhof et al., 2008, cited in Gikandi et al., 2011) and is embedded within the time of instruction (learning and teaching activities) so that student learning is monitored and their level of understanding determined (Gikandi et al., 2011). Formative assessment allows for the teacher to change instructional approaches during the course of the lesson, as they give students continuous and well-timed feedback they ensure that students reach the desired learning outcome (Gikandi et al., 2011). Examples of formative assessments include asking questions during the lesson time period or taking student polls.

Summative assessment is a measure of what students have learned at the end of a course or programme (Formplus, 2021), and covers everything students were meant to learn (Davis, 2021). It is a means of certifying students' competence levels and determining whether they have indeed achieved the intended learning outcomes (Challis, 2005, cited in Gikandi et al., 2011), based on predetermined standards (Formplus, 2021). Examples of summative assessment include unit tests or end of semester/year exams, end of chapter tests, and standardized admission tests (Fromplus, 2021). They serve the purpose of assigning the student a grade or form of certification.

Both formative and summative assessments are important in their own right and work to serve one another. Summative assessment can be used, by both teachers and students, to guide them (formatively) in the teaching and learning practices they respectively engage in. Summative assessment certifies whilst formative assessment supports learning (Smith 2007, cited in Gikandi et al., 2011).

I have come across the terms formative and summative assessments during my studies for the Advanced Diploma in Secondary Education, but I have not understood what they meant and their importance for application in my context. Not until my engagement in this module and it felt like whole new concepts to me, perhaps because I now have an understanding of the significant roles they play in my assessment practices. Have I been haphazard in my assessment practice. I never really gave much thought about what I was doing and why. Never did I connect what I was hoping for students to learn (learning outcomes) with how and why I assessed. As mentioned in chapter 2, I questioned students during the course of the lesson but not

conscientious about whether they really understanding what I was trying to teach them. And even if I did realise that they did not really grasp what I was hoping they would, I confess that I did not respond to that. I did not try to change my instructional approach, probe the students to help them think deeper or give many hints to help them understand. Selfish I was I would say. I advised them to go read up further for more understanding. Not even keeping in mind the learning styles students might prefer. Thinking about it, it was also due to a lack of preparation on my part. Had I been more prepared I would have considered different ways in which I can bring the message across so as to ensure that learning truly takes place.

As for summative assessment practices, I gave the students tests and exams, graded them, recorded the scores, gave them feedback (though note always detailed) and that was it. I did encourage students to use their scores and consciously reflect on their study methods, and whether these methods were helping them achieve their desired scores. Surely the ball is in their courts after that. But not, I did not reflect much on the role I played in students' learning and therefore the grades they obtained. Now I know to analyse the results, ask myself questions concerning the particular assessment (e.g. which question did most do well in? Which not and why?) and change whatever I need to in order to sincerely help my student. I need to become s reflective practitioner even in assessment activities. An interesting question comes to mind as I write this: "if the students have basically gone through the content before, why are they still not performing as well as I would expect? The problem is me – there really is no alignment between the desired learning outcomes, my teaching practice and the assessment activities. Those loose ends most definitely need to be tied and aligned.

In the next section, I would like to present a case study of a shameful assessment practice I engaged in. Embarrassing, but I figure that truth must be told.

4.4 Case study: Assessment repetition

Giving students the same assessments year in and year out (example in Appendix 4). What interest or enthusiasm can students show if even I show no enthusiasm? Some students could have access to previous year's work, from former students, and therefore the assessments. In this, there will be no stimulation of their minds to learn as they process through the assignments. They will simply copy, tweak their answers here-and-there, and submit that. How then can they learn if not much thought is put into the assignment?

Carefully thought of assessments is not something I considered. There was a whole lot of repetition of assessments purely because I did not think to put in the time and effort in deciding what I want to assess and why. Let us call that laziness. This laziness cascaded onto my students and their lack of enthusiasm and interest they showed the assessments I tasked them to do. Oh how we love to blame the students for their lack of anything. As annotated earlier, just because I do, does not mean that which is done is effective.

The lack of creativity has an effect on my students' learning. Why should I continue being metastatic, if there is such a great opportunity for morphostasis. I have worked on including creativity in my teaching practice, with the hope that it takes away the dullness that can form the norm of my teaching approach. As alluded to in Chapter 2, we continue testing the waters as we see (learn) that which works and that which does not work. Why can creativity not be applied to my assessments? So many options – the class is my testing field.

4.5 Personal reflection on changing my assessment practices

During the week of our session on assessment of and for student learning, I had given the students a group experiment to carry out during my time of absence. I learned about criterion-referenced assessment on the Monday (9th September 2019). On Wednesday (11th September 2019) I set up a criterion for a laboratory report the students were supposed to submit for an experiment. This I made clear to them, that it serves as a guideline and that they could add to that given as a criteria or they can leave out some points stated in the criteria. I also learned about peer assessments, which can be made easier if a criterion or rubric is provided to the students. This was also used to construct the final mark for their report. The reports were collected, I graded them and assigned a mark, and exchanged the reports so that the one group assesses the other group's reports. I did this so that I could allow them to learn to make judgements, and grade other people's work. I collected the reports after the peer assessment was conducted and compared the grade I assigned with the grade that the peers assigned one another. To my surprise, the grades that the students awarded amongst themselves where not very different from that which I assigned them, for most of the reports. I loved the way this worked because it taught the students about the thinking that goes into assessment. It was also interesting to see how students assess one another. This actually worked out pretty well because then students get to understand the effort put into grading assessment tasks, but also they get an appreciation for awards given to students by the teacher.

Consideration for future, is to allow students to assign grades for individual efforts, where group work is concerned. I might take the approach of asking each group member to give the other individuals in their group a mark for intellection contribution. A rubric will also be constructed to help them make judgements thereof. The grade assigned for individual contribution will be considered for each student's final mark. I think this is important because it is not uncommon for some students to not contribute towards group work but then be assigned the same mark across the board. What is equally unfair is for the ones who did most of the work to not receive the acknowledgement and the recognition thereof reflecting in their grades.

I have made a decision to be more deliberate at engaging my students during the course of the lessons. I do not do that 100% of the time to be honest, but I am more deliberate as I mentioned. Because most of the students have already encountered most of the content I teach, I am more patient when asking students questions (formative assessment). I give the students the opportunity to think about the answer, and I probe and encourage them to think about the answers. In the past, I would move along if students took "too long" to answer. I have since given my students more rubrics for assessments and that has really served us well because students know beforehand that which is expected of them. The rubrics also help students understand why they have been awarded the grade they received. Also, rubrics help students organise themselves so that they put in the best amount of efforts to be awarded a good mark.

Another assessment activity I explored was to give the students a pre-topic assessment to determine what they remember or know from what they did in high school. This was so exciting because I could determine general areas students were comfortable with and some areas that students generally struggle with. It really was an eye opening experience because it enabled me to trust that students do know something, and that teaching approaches can be decided on once I determine where the group of students generally find themselves. Because students have already gone through the content in past, there is loads of opportunity to allow students to take charge of their own learning, but then also to make teaching fun, dynamic and creative.

With regard to assignments, I have since put in the effort to carefully, and thoughtfully set up new assignments. What encouraged me to do so even more is the fact that the majority of 2020 and 2021 required that we engage with students remotely. Remote teaching has encouraged me to put thought into what it is I want to assess, why and how to best do so. I have tried my best

to give meaningful assessments that would help students engage the content in such a way that they would learn whilst completing the assignments. At the end of 2019 I was so excited about changing my ways that I had started planning new assessment approaches and strategies. I carried this enthusiasm all through most of the time we taught online (remotely). I spent hours working on new assessment tasks for students, I negotiated with students and allowed for them to resubmit assignments if they faced challenges that prevented them from performing well. I must also say that I certainly did not do so well in terms of giving students timely feedback. Feedback that is timely and detailed plays the role of helping students be effective in their learning, because it helps them know where they find themselves and strategies they can implement to help them improve on their learning (Cohen and Singh, 2020). Naylor (2014 cited in Cohen and Singh, 2020), pointed out the alarming correlation between a lack of feedback provided to students and student failure. I believe that had we continued with contact sessions, instead of online as was the case due to COVD-19, I would have put into practice giving students feedback with due diligence. Having to develop online content, assessments and be creative while doing so felt like such a marathon. For that reason, I did not think much about feedback, or at least from an online teaching perspective. That is something I will have to revisit and improve on for the near future, even for online teaching practice. There were times, however, when I would as students to submit draft work of practical reports before the date of submission. Those who did do so got the opportunity of getting their work checked and commented on before the final submission. These students performed well because timely feedback was given to them and they made the necessary changes before submitting the final paper.

When it came to assessing students summatively (particularly through tests), I appreciated that which one could do via MOODLE. It is obvious that students can be very creative and intentional with regard to cheating, but I also think that we need to be equally intentional about finding ways to mitigate that. This because it compromises the quality of learning for the student. I took the time to do self-research on how to shuffle test questions and answers (especially for multiple choice, matching and true/false questions), as well as randomising questions. When I finally learned how to do this on MOODLE, I sat for hours setting up questions for the question bank so that a particular test had twice as many questions than I intended for students to answer. I had also decided to allow students only one attempt to take a test and the tests where time restricted (both in the length of time students were allowed to

take the test, and the time frame in which the test could be taken). That does not mean that I was not at all lenient with the students. When they encountered challenges of any sort, I opened the test specifically for the student in question. With many of the online tests, students took tests that where random, questions where shuffled and so also were the answers, they had only one attempt at the test, and the tests were not open for a whole day or two – just for a few hours.

From the short course that I did online, through OUP (detailed in Chapter 2), I learned about the importance of discussion forums and how they can be useful for engaging students online. They give the students and teacher a platform to share thoughts and ideas, as well as understanding and beliefs about certain topics. I took advantage of this learned knowledge by posting video clips or articles on particular topics, when the topic was what we were dealing with at the time, and I would post guided questions that I would have like to discuss. The students were required to watch the video or read the article before they could participate in the discussion, otherwise they would not know what to share. Students were also only allowed to view other participants' inputs after submitting their own responses. This was to prevent students from merely copying that which someone else had said. The interesting thing is that students actually partook in these discussions. They questioned one another's inputs and debated on certain things. It was satisfying to experience.

4.6 Conclusion

Assessment is not as straight forward as we think – there is a lot of thinking and planning that goes into it. Once again I am reminded of the importance of the curriculum document and using that as a base for my teaching practice. The learning outcomes are the goal and that which I do as a teacher needs to be guided by them. As a reflective practitioner I need to think about what I do, why I do it and how I do it. I also need to consider whether students are indeed learning that which I know or think they should achieve. The assessment activities I give students need to be carefully thought out and not simply given because I want students to keep busy. Due to the global pandemic, the years 2020 and 2021 did not allow me to put into practice the things I had enthusiastically thought to do with my students, but remote teaching gave me the opportunity to be creative and think out of the box when it comes to online assessment. I never was much of a fan of online learning and teaching, but having done it, I am optimistic about incorporating more online teaching and assessment activities in the future…even if things return to the norm or closer to that.

CHAPTER 5: QUALITY ASSURANCE AS A TEACHING PRACTITIONER

5.1 Introduction

What is quality education? Who determines quality education? How is this determination concluded? Harvey & Green (1993) define quality education in multi- layers and dimensions. They define quality as being: exceptional (accessible to the elitist members of society), void of defects, faults or error (set standards obtained at all times), fitness for purpose, value for money, and transformative. No one dimension is superior over the other, I would say a proper understanding of quality incorporates more than one aspect. Reliable quality assumes that there is a consistency in the enhancement of how we conduct academic and administrative affairs in higher education. Quality enhancement is defined as the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, based on data collection processes (UNSW, 2016). This chapter will be pointing to that which I purpose to do as an educator, to ensure that quality is assured and enhanced in my sphere of activities. I have chosen to focus on a more personal realm because I have been convicted, throughout this PDHE programme, of the fact that I have taken many things for granted, mainly due to ignorance, but for granted nonetheless. In being enlightened, I would now like to take this knowledge and practically improve my teaching, so that the students have an improved opportunity of learning in ways that really matter. I will also be reflecting on some of the weaknesses I identified whilst doing a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) analysis and plausible solutions I can strategically work on to improve on these weaknesses. Before I point to my perspective of quality as a teaching practitioner, I would like to begin by laying out the different perspectives quality is defined by, and then I will give a short reflection on Alton-Lee's (2003) paper on "quality teaching for diverse students".

5.2 Definitions of quality, according to Harvey & Green (1993).

The purpose of this section is to address two issues: the examination of the nature of the concept of quality in higher education; and the ways in which quality is thought about from philosophical and political perspectives. From my understanding, the authors are addressing two dilemmas as well. One being the definition of quality in higher education, the other being the complexities of these definitions and how more than one definition has to be considered in the higher education context.

The key concepts that the authors introduce are the definitions of quality, namely:

1. **Quality as being exceptional**. Meaning that quality is something that is traditionally only accessible to the elitist members of society; or with relation to excellence, something that is of a high standard with zero defects.
2. **Quality as perfection or consistency** as taken from the viewpoint that quality means the void of defects, faults or error. There exists a set standard, and that standard is met every single time.
3. **Quality as fitness for purpose** as being a functional definition where quality is a measure of how well something or someone fits the purpose for which it has been made or developed.
4. **Quality as value for money** is the quality output that is expected to equate the value of the financial input. Higher education institutions receive funding for things like needed resources and research. This demands accountability and therefore assessment of the quality of the outcomes. Things that funding institutions and customers look at would be things like examination results and performance indicators. None of which actually provide an accurate indication of quality.
5. **Quality as transformation** - in a sense that education is meant to enhance the participant by adding value that expands the participant's potential through enabling students to participate in, and contribute to learning, so much so that they take responsibility for creating, delivering and evaluating their learning. The other aspect of transformative quality is that of empowering the participants. It is not enough that the student's potential is stretched but also that students are enabled to go out and transform the spheres they find themselves in, both before and after graduation. Through taking ownership of learning, students can gain the confidence and independence needed to develop skills such as critical thinking and problem solving skills. For me, transformation has to be something adaptable for different life situations and therefore requires flexibility from the side of the person.

Come to think of it, transformation actually adds value to the student and therefore ties in with quality as value for money. The financial investment made on behalf of the student, be it through sponsorship or private payment of tuition and resources, should be evident in the quality of the student that graduates after completing the course. And you cannot dissociate transformation from fitness for purpose. In a sense that the world of study does not always

mimic the world of employment, but if a student is prepared for the real world by probing their thinking, by challenging them to think and adapt to different situations, they will definitely be fit for purpose. Besides, I also think that the real world situations are constantly changing and that flexibility enables for anyone to adapt and make necessary changes to handle the circumstances one is faced with.

I am of the opinion that higher education needs to take into account all the definitions of quality. I am however not of the opinion for quality as being exceptional and perfect. That one I am not in agreement with because if we are focused on taking in the best in order to always maintain a certain standard of quality, then how do we transformed any lives? How do we link that to the value for money if we know that what we take in (student admission) will give a good outcome? If one takes in the elite and focus on them then we cannot expect to produce anything but the best; considering that you would be dealing with students who are most probably already focused, headstrong and disciplined. Whereas, if we take in even those who are not up to 'scratch' (and I do not mean anything below that which is required for university entry), they will be transformed so that they are fit for the intended purpose (graduate quality depending on the course of study), and one will definitely see that the value of money invested has been put to good use. Not all graduates will be perfect and consistently produce the same results. Simply put, people are different and no two individuals are the same. But a university can strive towards consistency and excellence in the pursuit of preparing students to meet the criteria needed to excel in the respective job markets they will enter. We need to be consistent with the efforts we put in, and the improvements thereof, so that we bring out the best in students.

5.3 Reflection on "Quality teaching for diverse students" by Alton-Lee (2003)

Teaching cannot be one dimensional, is the thought that came to mind shortly after I started reading this summary. Teaching ought to take a holistic approach. It is interesting that all we ever focus on is the academic end of the spectrum. So I should also concern myself with the social wellbeing of my students. That is easily shoved over to the social workers. But sometimes I can help the students achieve even social excellence if I bother myself to care.

Having high expectations on students equals me having high expectations on the quality of my teaching. This tickles a nerve. Here I am reminded again, that much of the student's learning is also dependent on me setting high standards for myself. I am thinking about the simple act of caring. Caring for my students, caring for self and caring for the subject I teach. If I care

enough, it will be evident through what I do in and outside of the classroom. This *might* consequently be reciprocated by the students. Do not just look at the class as a whole, but look within the class to see the individual, and reach out to the individual as the need arises, in whatever possible capacity. I think that the focus on me and what I do is a downfall to the quality of education. Looking outward and drawing into the students will help with better understanding, and the willingness to bring out the best in students. With the students as my focus, I work with the students to reach the intended goal. This serves us in two-fold: 1) my quality of teaching is improved; and 2) the students' academic performances might improve - I do my part, you do yours, but together we can make it exceptional. Collaboration with colleagues also means the teacher gains wisdom, insight and counsel from those around. Incorporation of some of those will come in handy at times. The realisation of the diverse classroom enforces diversity in my teaching. Not forcefully, but from understanding the need to meet each student at their point of departure. Does not that require a lot of time from my side? Perhaps better strategy and smart or wise thinking as well, but all in all, students need to be probed to use their minds to solve problems and think critically. We do no justice by not giving students the opportunity to think deep, and think beyond that which they are presented with in class. We need to make learning and teaching relevant and we need to contextualise it so that students can relate and realise that what they do actually matters.

5.4 My understanding of quality as a teaching practitioner

The questions I have revolving in my mind are: "why do I do what I do? Why do I teach?" For the past three years I have been wondering. I know that I love what I do, but does that mean that I do it right? Am I being effective? It is easy to take pride in one's work and say yes to that, but let me be honest. I might be efficient, but I am not always effective. I find myself always being pointed back to my golden thread: "*tying lose ends*". It all boils down to taking the curriculum, aligning my teaching activities to the expected learning outcomes, and thoughtfully developing assessment strategies that will aid in the materialisation of said outcomes. More and more I have been reminded of the importance of this curriculum document. In this module I have learned about the processes that the curriculum document undergoes before it is approved. Courses offered in Namibian university programmes undergo scrutiny by these structures, the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) and the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE). Both agencies consider the curricula to ensure that quality education is offered. NQA, guided by the National Quality Framework (NQF), accredits

and evaluates programmes offered by institutions of higher learning. NCHE also plays a role in accrediting programmes offered at higher education institutions in order to ensure equitable access to quality higher education.

These are processes that are not done haphazardly and without careful consideration and expertise. Keeping this in mind, the role I play as an educator is magnified even more – nothing to be taken lightly. If that which I am teaching had to go through intense processes to register and accredit, then, it means that I am accountable for my every action and intention as an educator. It is practically my responsibility to ensure that the quality of education accredited for is the quality of education produced. There is no two ways around it. Both NQA and the NCHE have integrity and accountability as core values that guide their actions. This is significant to me because then it means that I am also required to carry out my actions with integrity, and assume that I will be held accountable for them one way or the other (probably through the results produced by my students, in part). I am now even more convinced that I have a part to play in the development of the curriculum, which is informed by the knowledge and experiences I have gained over the years. I am responsible for ensuring that where changes are necessary in terms of the curriculum, I air my views and give my two cents worth. Stakeholders are consulted by all these agencies and these stakeholders have expectations. Of course not all of their expectations can be met one hundred percent, but I need to align my teaching and assessment activities to the curriculum, so that the expected learning outcomes are achieved.

A university's internal quality assurance system is partly influenced by the university's willingness to gather feedback from various affiliate stakeholders (Loukkala, 2021). Aithal, Rao & Kumar (2015) outline various efforts made by Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), in India, to enhance their curricula and therefore student experiences. These include, case study development, simulation, laboratory based learning, exposure based learning, research based learning, and team work activities, just to mention a few (Aithal et al., 2015). The quality of learning and teaching can also be enhanced through student feedback or evaluation as it increases student engagement and motivation, especially if they know that the evaluation counts for something (i.e. implementation for the purpose of change) (Hartnell-Young, 2021; Loukkola, 2021). Hartnell-Young (2021), further motivates the importance of gathering student feedback, by mentioning that it supports the wellbeing of students which

consequently lift student performances. HEIs gather information from alumni students to determine curricula relevance to requirements sought after in the job market (Aithal, et al., 2015). Stakeholders such as staff, employers, the community and parents indicate their preferences for high profile curriculum, for instance, and the university tries to live up to these stakeholders' expectations (Aitha et al., 2015; Loukkola, 2021). One of the engagements that I particularly found fascinating is the involvement with employers, in that the employers send representative staff to the college as guest lecturers (Aithal et al., 2015). These employers represent the job-marketing I would think, and their input is vital because they are the ones who might absorb some of the graduates from the institution. That which they consider vital qualities in the employees they seek after needs to be considered with the highest regard. After the visit, the employer representatives are allowed to comment on the standards of the institute's curricula. This shows the institution's interest in external guidance and willingness to be purposeful about incorporating this feedback into the development of curricular, teaching and student development.

In my honest confession, I will admit that I did not at all know the purpose that student evaluations and feedback serve. Upon reading an article by Buchanan (2011), I was enlightened. Buchanan talks about the university's pursuits to enhance the quality of education through student surveys, but considers their validity and reliability questionable. Mainly because it does not at all give a true reflection on staff efforts and motivates competition, instead of collaborative efforts amongst staff member (Buchanan, 2011). I suppose that is from an individual perspective, and that one decides the course of influence that the student surveys brings out in you. Student surveys do serve a purpose in pointing out areas in which staff could consider for improvement in their teaching, but should work in conjunction with other sources of data (Buchanan, 2011). I have not been of the opinion of requesting for the feedback from the student evaluations conducted over the years, due to the fact that I did not see their relevance. But I am now illuminated to the injustice that I might have caused myself and students. Knowing areas that I performed well in, and those that were not so well, could have set me up on the path of self-discovery and self-improvement, for the sake of future cohorts. I am going to use the agency of the Centre for Professional Development, Teaching and Learning Improvement (CPDTLI) to request for the feedback students give, and further use my agency, as well as that of my colleagues, to determine ways in which I can improve. Enrolling in this programme (PDHE) already sets me on that tangent, I do not take this opportunity for granted.

There is one thing that a colleague pointed out about student-evaluation forms though: She mentioned that the results are biased towards the students and that lecturers do not have the opportunity of evaluating their students. The results from the evaluation forms are used for purposes of promotion, probation reports, to mention but two. I am in agreement with my colleague because students can become personal and thereby use the forms to get back at lecturers, especially because they are completed anonymously. On the other hand, I think lecturers can be open-minded about the feedback they receive because there might be certain issues (positive and negative) that could recur and those can be used for guidance. Even if that is not the case, no feedback can be taken for granted. One other thing worth noting is considering that student evaluations also be conducted mid-course so that activities and conducts be adjusted whilst the course is still ongoing (Loukkola, 2021). If courses are only evaluated at the end of the semester or year, then students from the current cohort do not benefit from these evaluations and might not experience the change that is necessary for their improvement as well (Loukkola, 2021). This is something I am reflecting on for serious consideration, even if I conduct the evaluations on a personal capacity. I believe it will help me greatly in my teaching practice.

Another way I intend on enhancing the quality of teaching is by developing a culture of what I will call "student consideration" which I take from Alton-Lee (2003). Teaching is holistic and should take the students into consideration; not merely what we do as educators. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one of the lessons highlighted from Alton-Lee (2003) is having high expectations on students equals me having high expectations on the quality of my teaching. This needs to be a deliberate decision I make on a regular basis. It starts with the student profiling results as the basis for my future actions. Due to COVID-19, I was unable to conduct a student profile survey with the 2020 and 2021 cohorts. I tried as best I could to engage my students beyond a professional level but that seemed to have fallen though the water. This I would think is because we were all trying to find our footing with regard to remote learning and teaching. Many of the students were new to online and distance learning and that takes time to get used to. If things return to "normal", in that we go to face-to-face, I will profile my students early on in the year and consider students' responses in my practices. If not, then innovation is needed and that would require planning.

How all this ties in with my institution, is that early on, I can work towards instilling some of that which is outlined in the graduate attributes into my students. Since it is a bridging course, I only see the students for one year before they launch into degree programmes at the university of Namibia or elsewhere. Spending such a short amount of time with the students does not mean I cannot start sensitising them for that which is expected of them. This could work towards the enhancement in the quality of both teaching and student learning. When the students enter into their future degree programmes, they might be more prepared to do that which they are expected to, for instance, independent learning. I need to continually be guided by the structures of the institution's policies to develop practices (culture) for my teaching, and allow myself to develop and grow. In so doing, I can then use my agency, as well as that of colleagues around me, to improve the quality of education. This is what alignment is all about through working from a set point towards envisaged goals and desires. Enhancement of quality, in education, begins with me getting that right.

5.5 Quality assurance as a research student supervisor

The module on student supervision in research seemed to be more significant for the purpose of supervision of postgraduate students, those pursing Masters and Doctoral studies. I have not supervised postgraduate students as yet. I have, thus far, only supervised undergraduate students studying Bachelor of Education (Pre- and Lower primary education). During the week we had classes for the module 'Student Supervision in Research', I learned that I know close to nothing where supervision is concerned. This document serves to reflect on the weaknesses I have identified with regard to the SWOT analysis, and how I think I could counter the weaknesses by strategically finding methods to improving on these weaknesses.

To begin with, I did not know or think that it was important that I familiarise myself with the concepts of research supervision. But after the first class I realised that I *need* to know and understand the concepts – I cannot merely rely on always going back to read up on that which is expected for the various concepts. So I purpose to know and understanding the concepts, so as to improve on the help I offer students. Some other areas I lack knowledge in are data collection methods and analysis tools. This is particularly because I do not have much experience in research generally, but also in the field I supervise students in. I supervise education students but I myself am from a hard sciences background. Most of the students choose qualitative studies, which I myself feel more at ease with because qualitative data

analysis is not a strong suite of mine either. What I would like to do is read up more on qualitative research methods and analysis of these methods. This is important for me to expand my scope of knowledge and expertise.

In order for me to do this, I need to pursue further research so that I grow in the areas I would like to pursue. One of my major draw-backs is not knowing what exactly I would like to consider as an area that can form part of my research identity. I have a few ideas but do not know where or how to begin. I have tried approaching people for help but they all seem to have other things going on and so finding a footing has been tough. That being said, I have decided to start reading on some of the ideas I have for research and then dive into working on that research. Research really is very scary if one does not know how to go about it, and can be daunting. I want and need to push myself beyond my comfort. Not only because I am required to do so as an academic, but because I will need to be able to help students from a place of experience and empirical evidence.

Another weakness I identified is that of not following up on students' progress. It is true that students can sometimes choose to delay on progressing with their research, but it would not hurt to follow-up and then encourage or motivate them along the way. I used to be one of those supervisors who simply sit back and wait on them. I would communicate only when I see due dates approaching. But I have learned that I will have to sometimes check in with them as a reminder for them to keep the ball rolling, and then also to show that I care. This I have started applying and it has proven to encourage students to push. What it has also done is that my 2020 research students, because of regular follow-up and motivation, would initiate communication about being delayed in their work and why. A student-teacher relationship was established I believe. I am sympathetic and empathetic and therefore push deadlines and allow for supervisees to get away with late submissions, but it does help to check in with students to teach them on the importance on sticking to deadlines.

Thinking about the models of supervision – that amazed me, I did not know there were so many facets to supervision, and that one can step into different roles depending on the circumstances or situation. I am going to get a summary of the different roles of a supervisor, familiarise myself with those and change my role as a supervisor accordingly. I now know that there is a goal that every supervisor should aim for – becoming a high support and high structural

supervisor. That requires a lot of balance, and so I will need to keep track of how I am doing in my supervision.

As I think about the weaknesses I have and ways I think I could improve on them, I realise that my lack of experience in research really is a drawback to my ability and efficiency in supervision. It should push me to pursue research to improve myself personally and professionally. This is a journey that is to begin and lead to where only God knows.

5.6 Conclusion

We are so used to doing what we think and believe we should be doing, without consideration of how that effects the quality of what we are actually supposed to be doing. We are part of the university, but do not necessarily acquaint ourselves with university structures, so that we run alongside that which the university body envisages. That in of itself is wrong and should be rectified. If we consider ourselves to be part of the body, we need to function as a body: each member doing what they should be doing to make the body a functional whole. If the body is a functional whole, then we know that it is healthy and able to achieve even more. This is my personal take home message. I need to do what I do effectively, and with excellence. The quality I put in, reflects on the university as a whole, this is a serious truth that I am thankful to come to learn even after a few years of being locked up in my own sphere of operations.

5.7 Reflective portfolio conclusion

The PDHE journey has been challenging for me, but worthwhile. Challenging because, through the classes and various engagements, I have come to realise that I had been shooting arrows in the dark, hoping that I hit the target. To learn that I had been conducting my teaching practice haphazardly was a cruel and fearful awakening, but a welcomed one nonetheless. It is better to have one's eyes opened to the realisation that one has been walking down a destructive path, than to be left to continually walk down the path and be brought to a halt by destruction itself. I am grateful for the opportunity granted to have my eyes opened in a meaningful way, and be given knowledge that will enhance my teaching practice, as I put to practice that which I have come to know. Once you know, you know and that, you are accountable for.

My learning and teaching practices, going forward, is guided mainly by the philosophy that says I should place the students at the centre of my practice and allow for them to learn and build on knowledge they had prior to our encounter. And as I engage the students in learning and teaching activities, I should continually conduct assessment for and of learning so that I make changes to my practice as we go along in the course. Allowing for my students to be co-facilitators and learning from, as well as with them. I am also going to be more intentional in incorporating various teaching approaches so that lessons are not uniform and boring. Not forgetting to incorporated different assessment strategies as well. As one schooled in curriculum development, I am going to align my practice to that which is stated in the course curriculum document, so as to assure that the quality I am expected to deliver is what I deliver.

The loose ends have been tied, and need to be strengthened through continual reflection. My teaching and assessment practice will be aligned to the curriculum. I am a reflective practitioner, and I will be deliberate at ensuring that I do just that.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

SFP Student Profiling Questionnaire (Female)

Name: ……..

1. Gender

   Male ☐

   Female ☐

2. What are your reason(s) for enrolling into the programme?

……

……

……

Part 1: Learning styles

To complete Section 1-3, read each sentence carefully and consider if it applies to you. On the line in front of each statement, indicate how often the sentence applies to you, according to the chart below. Please respond to all questions.

1	2	3
Never applies to me.	Sometimes applies to me.	Often applies to me.

SECTION ONE:

1. _____I enjoy doodling and even my notes have lots of pictures and arrows in them.
2. _____I remember something better if I write it down.
3. _____I get lost or am late if someone tells me how to get to a new place, and I do not write down the directions.
4. _____When trying to remember someone's telephone number, or something new like that, it helps me to get a picture of it in my mind.

5. _____If I am taking a test, I can "see" the textbook page and where the answer is located.
6. _____It helps me to look at the person while listening; it keeps me focused.
7. _____Using flashcards helps me to retain material for tests.
8. _____It's hard for me to understand what a person is saying when there are people talking or music playing.
9. _____It's hard for me to understand a joke when someone tells me.
10. _____It is better for me to get work done in a quiet place.

***Total*_____**

SECTION TWO:

1. _____ My written work does not look neat to me. My papers have crossed-out words and erasures.
2. _____ It helps to use my finger as a pointer when reading to keep my place.
3. _____ Papers with very small print, blotchy dittos or poor copies are tough on me.
4. _____ I understand how to do something if someone tells me, rather than having to read the same thing to myself.
5. _____ I remember things that I hear, rather than things that I see or read.
6. _____ Writing is tiring. I press down too hard with my pen or pencil.
7. _____ My eyes get tired fast, even though the eye doctor says that my eyes are ok.
8. _____ When I read, I mix up words that look alike, such as "them" and "then," "bad" and "dad."
9. _____ It's hard for me to read other people's handwriting.
10. _____ If I had the choice to learn new information through a lecture or textbook, I would choose to hear it rather than read it.

***Total*_____**

SECTION THREE:

1. _____ I do not like to read directions; I'd rather just start doing.
2. _____ I learn best when I am shown how to do something, and I have the opportunity to do it.
3. _____ Studying at a desk is not for me.
4. _____ I tend to solve problems through a more trial-and-error approach, rather than from a step-by-step method.
5. _____ Before I follow directions, it helps me to see someone else do it first.
6. _____ I find myself needing frequent breaks while studying.
7. _____ I am not skilled in giving verbal explanations or directions.
8. _____ I do not become easily lost, even in strange surroundings.
9. _____ I think better when I have the freedom to move around.
10. _____ When I cannot think of a specific word, I'll use my hands a lot and call something a "what-cha-ma-call-it" or a "thing-a-ma-jig."

***Total*_____**

SCORING:

Now, add up the scores for each of the three sections and record below. The maximum score in any section is 30 and the minimum score is 10. Note the preference next to each section.

Section One score: _____(Visual)

Section Two score: _____(Auditory)

Section Three score: _____(Kinesthetic)

Part 2: Student Environment

3. a) Place of residence:

……..……

b) Do you feel safe in the area you live in?

Yes ☐

No ☐

4. Mode of transport you take to campus?

……..

5. Do you experience any challenges getting to campus?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, what are these challenges?

……

……

……

6. Do you eat at least three meals per day?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If no, why (is it preferential or circumstantial), and which meals do you eat (breakfast, lunch and dinner)?

……

…….....

7. Do you have one of the following?

Physical disability ☐

Vision problem ☐

Hearing problem ☐

Chronic health problem ☐

Part 3: Subject information

8. What about Biology, as a subject, is challenging for you?

……

…….....

……

9. What about Biology, as a subject, is challenging for you?

……

…….....

……

10. What is your general impression of Biology as a subject?

……

……....

.....……

……

11. Do you have easy access to sanitary pads during your menstrual cycle?

Yes ☐

No ☐

12. Might you be interested in being part of a group that gathers to discuss current matters affecting females?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Appendix 2

SFP Student Profiling Questionnaire (Male)

Name: ……..

13. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

14. What are your reason(s) for enrolling into the programme?

……

……

……

Part 1: Learning styles

To complete Section 1-3, read each sentence carefully and consider if it applies to you. On the line in front of each statement, indicate how often the sentence applies to you, according to the chart below. Please respond to all questions.

1	2	3
Never applies to me.	Sometimes applies to me.	Often applies to me.

SECTION ONE:

11. _____I enjoy doodling and even my notes have lots of pictures and arrows in them.
12. _____I remember something better if I write it down.
13. _____I get lost or am late if someone tells me how to get to a new place, and I do not write down the directions.
14. _____When trying to remember someone's telephone number, or something new like that, it helps me to get a picture of it in my mind.
15. _____If I am taking a test, I can "see" the textbook page and where the answer is located.
16. _____It helps me to look at the person while listening; it keeps me focused.
17. _____Using flashcards helps me to retain material for tests.
18. _____It's hard for me to understand what a person is saying when there are people talking or music playing.

19. _____It's hard for me to understand a joke when someone tells me.
20. _____It is better for me to get work done in a quiet place.

Total_____

SECTION TWO:

11. _____ My written work does not look neat to me. My papers have crossed-out words and erasures.
12. _____ It helps to use my finger as a pointer when reading to keep my place.
13. _____ Papers with very small print, blotchy dittos or poor copies are tough on me.
14. _____ I understand how to do something if someone tells me, rather than having to read the same thing to myself.
15. _____ I remember things that I hear, rather than things that I see or read.
16. _____ Writing is tiring. I press down too hard with my pen or pencil.
17. _____ My eyes get tired fast, even though the eye doctor says that my eyes are ok.
18. _____ When I read, I mix up words that look alike, such as "them" and "then," "bad" and "dad."
19. _____ It's hard for me to read other people's handwriting.
20. _____ If I had the choice to learn new information through a lecture or textbook, I would choose to hear it rather than read it.

Total_____

SECTION THREE:

11. _____ I do not like to read directions; I'd rather just start doing.
12. _____ I learn best when I am shown how to do something, and I have the opportunity to do it.
13. _____ Studying at a desk is not for me.
14. _____ I tend to solve problems through a more trial-and-error approach, rather than from a step-by-step method.
15. _____ Before I follow directions, it helps me to see someone else do it first.
16. _____ I find myself needing frequent breaks while studying.
17. _____ I am not skilled in giving verbal explanations or directions.
18. _____ I do not become easily lost, even in strange surroundings.
19. _____ I think better when I have the freedom to move around.
20. _____ When I cannot think of a specific word, I'll use my hands a lot and call something a "what-cha-ma-call-it" or a "thing-a-ma-jig."

Total_____

SCORING:

Now, add up the scores for each of the three sections and record below. The maximum score in any section is 30 and the minimum score is 10. Note the preference next to each section.

Section One score: _____(Visual)

Section Two score: _____(Auditory)

Section Three score: _____(Kinesthetic)

Part 2: Student Environment

15. a) Place of residence:

……..……

b) Do you feel safe in the area you live in?

Yes ☐

No ☐

16. Mode of transport you take to campus?

……..

17. Do you experience any challenges getting to campus?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, what are these challenges?

……

……

……

18. Do you eat at least three meals per day?

☐

Yes

No ☐

If no, why (is it preferential or circumstantial), and which meals do you eat (breakfast, lunch and dinner)?

……

…….....

19. Do you have one of the following?

Physical disability ☐

Vision problem ☐

Hearing problem ☐

Chronic health problem ☐

Part 3: Subject information

20. What about Biology, as a subject, is challenging for you?

……

…….....

……

21. What about Biology, as a subject, is challenging for you?

……

…….....

……

22. What is your general impression of Biology as a subject?

……

…….....

……

…….....

Appendix 3

2020 Student technology Profile Survey

The University of Namibia is implementing blended learning that requires the use of both face-to-face and online teaching. This survey is an attempt to develop an understanding of students regarding their access to and use of technology in order to inform planning. Please answer all questions truthfully. Please tick to indicate your answers.

1. **Age**
   Under 20 years of age
   20 – 25 years of age
   26 – 30 years of age
   31 – 35 years of age

2. **Gender**
   Male
   Female

3. **First/home language**

   _____

4. **Home region (if Namibian) or Home Country (if not Namibian)**

   _____

5. **Do you own any of the following? (Check all that apply)**
   Cell phone
   Smart phone
   Desktop computer
   Laptop computer
   iPad or tablet

e-reader (for example a Kindle)

6. **If you use a digital device with any of your courses, what type of device do you prefer?**

   Stationary (desktop) computer

   Portable, laptop computer

   Mobile, tablet computer

   Mobile, smart phone

   e-reader

   I do not use a digital device for my courses

   Other: _____

7. **Indicate how often you do each of the following:**

	Daily	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**Less than monthly**	**Never**	**Not applicable**
Make a cell phone call						
Send a text message						
Bank or pay bills online						
Send an email message						
Use a GPS for directions						
Update your online calendar						
Download information						
Upload information						
Use Facebook						
Use Twitter						
Blog						
Use other social media						
Share pictures online						
Stream music						
Play games on an iPad, phone						

or equivalent device						
Read e-books						
Download and use Apps on phone						
Chat or use instant Messenger						

8. **Please indicate how often you do each of the following when WORKING on your assignments.**

	Almost always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**	**Not applicable**
Use websites that help me learn more about my courses						
Use word processing for writing assignments						
Download learning materials						
Submit assignments using a computer or other electronic device						
Communicate with your lecturer using email or text messages with a phone						

9. **Please indicate how often you do each of the following when CONTACTING your lecturers.**

	Almost always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**	**Not applicable**
Send emails						
Meet in online chat rooms						

Use instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp)						
Make phone calls						
Send/receive text messages (SMS)						
Meet in person						
Other						

10. Please indicate how often you do each of the following when CONTACTING your classmates.

	Almost always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**	**Not applicable**
Send emails						
Meet in online chat rooms						
Use instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp)						
Make phone calls						
Send/receive text messages (SMS)						
Meet in person						
Other						

11. Please indicate how you would prefer to take your courses

Face-to-face in traditional classrooms

Online

Combination of face-to-face and online

12. How would you prefer to take tests?

Paper and pen

Online tests

No preference

13. How would you prefer to submit your assignments?

Written by hand

Typed and paper printed

Typed and submitted electronically online

14. **Do you have any suggestions for the kinds of technology you would like to see being used in your class?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

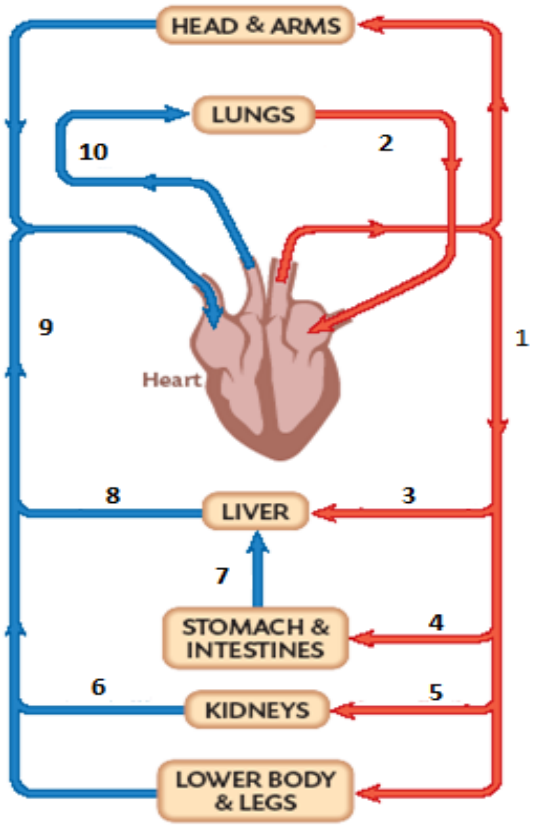
Appendix 4

BIOLOGY ASSIGNMENT 4

Total marks: 52

The following questions are based on the figure below which shows part of the human circulatory system:

Fill in the names of the blood vessels represented 1-10. **(10)**



1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

6.....

7.....

8.....

9.....

10.....

1. Name one substance found in a higher concentration in structure 5 but not present in 6. **(2)**
2. Name one substance found in a higher concentration in structure 6 but not present in 5. **(2)**
   Name one substance found in a higher concentration in structure 8 but in a low concentration in 7. **(2)**
3. Name one substance found in a higher concentration in structure 8 but not present in 7.**(2)**
4. Which organ has two blood supplies? **(2)**
5. What is unusual about blood vessels number **2** and **10**? **(4)**

6. Complete the following table by putting a tick (√) for each substance present and a cross (**X**) for each substance not present in a normal healthy person. (draw the table in your answer sheets) **(18)**

	Glucose	**Urea**	**Amino acids**	**Oxygen**	**Carbon dioxide**
Blood in renal artery					
Blood in renal vein					
Blood in hepatic artery					
Blood in hepatic vein					
Blood in hepatic portal vein					
Blood in vena cava					
Blood in aorta					

7. Write the name of the blood vessel/s that has the highest concentration of each of the following. Give a brief explanation for your answer. **(10)**
   a) Urea
   b) Aminoa acids
   c) Carbon dioxide
   d) Oxygen
   e) Glucose

Appendix 5

LECTURER OBSERVATION FORM

Surname: Musuuo Initials: J.M.P. Staff No.: 100014

Study Course: PDHE Year 3 Module ___

Date: 27-28/07/21 Time: _____ Assessor's Name & Signature: P. Denk

GRADING:

FINAL GRADE %	A (80-100)	B (70-79)	C (60-69)	D (50-59)	E (Below 50)
89%					

RATING:

A	Demonstrated excellent competence of the criterion
B	Demonstrated advanced competence of the criterion
C	Demonstrated above average competence of the criterion
D	Demonstrated average/satisfactory competence of the criterion
E	Demonstrated insufficient competence of the criterion

For each criterion, tick the box (A-E) that best describes the lecturer's competence in that criterion. Evaluate the lecturers' overall competence in each section (1-9). Making use of the ticks as a guideline, use the rating scale for each section to guide you in allocating a grade for that section. Add all the grades to determine the final grade.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING SCALE					GRADE	COMMENTS
	A	B	C	D	E		
1. LESSON PLAN & PREPARATION:	12-15	10-11	9	8	0-7	15	
a) Appropriate objectives developed i.t.o [1] of topic			✓			9	
b) Attainable competencies indicated			✓			9	
c) Content described in detail	✓					13	
d) Appropriate teaching strategies indicated		✓				11	
e) Appropriate learning strategies indicated		✓				11	
f) Resources identified and available for use			✓			9	
g) Appropriate assessment strategies indicated i.t.o attainment of competencies			✓			9	
2. LESSON INTRODUCTION (5)	5	4	3	2	0-1	5	
a) Gained immediate interest		✓				4	
b) Linked up with students' prior knowledge			✓			3	

c) Clarified objectives for lesson							
d) Creative introduction							
3. LESSON PRESENTATION (20)	19-20	17-18	14-16	11-13	0-10	**20**	
a) Presented content in a logical sequence	✓					20	
b) Made insightful use of subject knowledge	✓					20	
c) Used a variety of relevant learning and assessment tasks to develop students thinking skills	✓					19	
d) Communicated with all students			✓			16	
e) Patient with, interested in, listening to students		✓				18	
f) Demonstrated good questioning skills		✓				18	
g) Included open/higher level questions			✓			16	
h) Praised and corrected answers to questions/learning efforts		✓				18	
i) Sensitive to gender, ability, special needs and individual differences of students		✓				18	
j) Students engaged in active learning			✓			16	
k) Student-centered activities used		✓				18	
l) Positive methods of reinforcement		✓				18	
m) Summary of main ideas and conclusion given		✓				18	Very good lesson presentation
4. SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE (15)	12-15	10-11	9	8	0-7	**15**	
a) Demonstrated an understanding of subject knowledge	✓					15	Has good subject knowledge
b) Related knowledge to life situations and other subjects	✓					15	Showed good knowledge about other life situations
c) Developed the thinking and values of students	✓					14	
d) Used own subject knowledge	✓					15	
5. COMMUNICATION SKILLS (12)	10-12	8-9	7	6	0-5	**12**	
a) English usage was proficient	✓					12	
b) Spoke clearly with a varied tone		✓				9	
c) Appropriate non-verbal communications skills used effectively		✓				9	
d) Communicated with all sectors of the class	✓					12	
6. TEACHING AND LEARNING MEDIA (8)	7-8	6	5	4	0-3	**8**	
a) Varied use of creative and appropriate media	✓					8	
b) Effective and skillful use of teaching/ learning media	✓					8	
7. LECTURE ROOM MANAGEMENT (10)	8-10	7	6	5	0-4	**10**	
a) Implemented orderly procedures for students entrance, leaving, participation		✓				7	

b) Maintained discipline assertively	✓					10	
c) Organized physical conditions well	✓					10	
d) Created a democratic atmosphere	✓					10	
e) Managed time effectively	✓					10	
8. ASSESSMENT (10)	8-10	7	6	5	0-4	**10**	
a) Assessed students' understanding continuously	✓					9	
b) Used constructive probing of students' knowledge and understanding	✓					10	
c) Appropriate feedback provided	✓					10	
d) Provided exercises for practice/homework given	✓					10	
9. GENERAL IMPRESSION OF LECTURER (5)	5	4	3	2	0-1	**5**	
a) Demonstrated confidence and enthusiasm for teaching	✓					5	Very confident
b) Appeared friendly and caring towards students	✓					5	
c) Demonstrated emotional maturity and responsibility	✓					5	
d) Appropriately dressed and groomed	✓					5	

1. i.r.t. = in regard to

b) Maintained discipline assertively	✓					10	
c) Organized physical conditions well	✓					10	
d) Created a democratic atmosphere	✓					10	
e) Managed time effectively	✓					10	
8. ASSESSMENT (10)	8-10	7	6	5	0-4	**10**	
a) Assessed students' understanding continuously	✓					9	
b) Used constructive probing of students' knowledge and understanding	✓					10	
c) Appropriate feedback provided	✓					10	
d) Provided exercises for practice/homework given	✓					10	
9. GENERAL IMPRESSION OF LECTURER (5)	5	4	3	2	0-1	**5**	
a) Demonstrated confidence and enthusiasm for teaching	✓					5	Very confident
b) Appeared friendly and caring towards students	✓					5	
c) Demonstrated emotional maturity and responsibility	✓					5	
d) Appropriately dressed and groomed	✓					5	

1. i.r.t. = in regard to

Appendix 6

Document Information

Analyzed document	PDHE (Musuuo Julia) Portfolio Draft 2.pdf (D116504931)
Submitted	2021-10-27 09:17:00
Submitted by	Julia Musuuo
Submitter email	jhoveka@unam.na
Similarity	3%
Analysis address	ljosua.unam@analysis.urkund.com

Sources included in the report

SA	**University of Namibia / RUTH NANGOBE_ 9312005 PDHE PORTFOLIO _ FINAL VERSION October 2021.pdf** Document RUTH NANGOBE_ 9312005 PDHE PORTFOLIO _ FINAL VERSION October 2021.pdf (D116461177) Submitted by: 9312005@students.unam.edu.na Receiver: moodle.uram@analysis.urkund.com	9
SA	**University of Namibia / Exploring participatory teaching as a tool to enhance student learning.pdf** Document Exploring participatory teaching as a tool to enhance student learning.pdf (D33040531) Submitted by: cizaaks@unam.na Receiver: moodle.uram@analysis.urkund.com	5
SA	**University of Namibia / 200527444_TLP4890.pdf** Document 200527444_TLP4890.pdf (D114949442) Submitted by: 200527444@students.unam.edu.na Receiver: moodle.uram@analysis.urkund.com	7
SA	**University of Namibia / Second submitted Draft_PDHE Portfolio_Joel Muzanima 2021.docx** Document Second submitted Draft_PDHE Portfolio_Joel Muzanima 2021.docx (D110741947) Submitted by: mujoeland@gmail.com Receiver: ctogarepi.uram@analysis.urkund.com	2
SA	**University of Namibia / PDHE Portfolio 2018.docx** Document PDHE Portfolio 2018.docx (D35250202) Submitted by: jmisihairabgwi@unam.na Receiver: dkibuule.unam@analysis.urkund.com	2
SA	**University of Namibia / Integrated Professional Portfolio (TLP4800) 9840419.docx** Document Integrated Professional Portfolio (TLP4800) 9840419.docx (D109964867) Submitted by: 9840419@students.unam.edu.na Receiver: moodle.uram@analysis.urkund.com	2
W	URL: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1099088.pdf Fetched: 2021-10-27 09:21:00	2
W	URL: https://eua.eu/resources/expert-voices/213:why-%E2%80%9Cclosing-the-feedback-loop%E2%80%9D-matters-now-even-more-than-ever.html Fetched: 2021-10-27 09:21:00	1

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