

LEARNING TO SWIM IN ACADEMIA: A REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

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BY

JOSEFINA NUUMVO NELONGO

9964967

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DECLARATIONS

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ABSTRACT

LEARNING TO SWIM IN ACADEMIA: A REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

I viewed teaching and learning in academia like swimming in an ocean; as in consideration of the tactics required to survive in the ocean, these were absent in my role before enrolling in the diploma in higher education. This portfolio is a reflection of my journey in academia on executing my role as a lecturer until when I came upon reflective practice, a practice that could bring changes in teaching and learning environments. It broadens my understanding of most aspects that I came across as I learnt to critically analyse and reflect.

The journey that led to this portfolio started in 2016, I took studies in PGDHE because of the opportunity that was available. I took it with high expectations and eagerness because I have been swimming in the deep sea without the personal protective equipments. However, I came across theories and concepts that broadened my understanding and helped me improve in my role of teaching and learning. Having being to the Science discipline where I can prove facts through experiments, I found myself lost in the wild land on the first days of attending the PGDHE.

As the time pass by, the courses became interesting when topics came closer to what I do in my practice. I learnt that life in academia is about a change that could be realised through reflective practice.

In line with what I acquired from the programme, I have written five chapters in line with modules given during the course in which I have reflected on what I do with my students as well as with colleagues.

My chapters are structured as follows: Chapter 1 - Context of higher education and perspectives, Chapter 2 - Principles of adult learning, Chapter 3 - Curriculum design and development, Chapter 4 - Teaching and learning in higher education and Chapter 5 - Assessment and evaluation of student learning. I have realised that what takes place in higher education institutions is a process and when I was coming up with this portfolio, it is evident that it is impossible to talk about one topic without touching on the other topic.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BPharm	Bachelor of Pharmacy
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CEQUAM	Centre for Quality Assurance and Management
CONSAMS	Consortium of New Southern African Medical Schools
CPDTLI	Centre for Professional Development, Teaching and Learning Improvement
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CRA	Criteria reference assessment
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
HE	Higher Education
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IUM	International University of Management
MBChB	Bachelor of Medicine
MCQs	Multiple choice questions
NANSO	Namibia National Students Organisation
NBC	Namibia Broadcasting Corporation
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRA	Norm Reference Assessment
NSFAF	Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund
NSSC	Namibia Senior Secondary certificate
NQA	Namibia Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NUST	Namibia University of Science and Technology
OSCEs	Objective Structured Clinical Examination
PGDHE	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
PoN	Polytechnic of Namibia
RPO	Research and Publications Office
SoM	School of Medicine
SRC	Students Representative Council
UNAM	University of Namibia

ZPD

Zone of Proximal Development

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AN INTRODUCTION OF MYSELF

I am who I am now because of my past and current educational and foremost due to my academic background, this is about what I have experience. I may be fitting in many areas but I can be described best where I am currently. Completion of pure science degree with double majors in Chemistry and Molecular and Physiological Biology led me to a teaching position in high school for one year. A career in Biomedical Technology earned me a job in a Clinical Pathology laboratory for about four years. I realised that I needed to grow and I could grow well in academia. These thoughts led me to seek for a job in an institution of higher learning which I secured as a Laboratory Technologist. I later on developed to a lecturer position where I am today after attaining a Masters degree.

When I was growing up, I had a passion to teach, I have been teaching objects and siblings in my parents' house. I also had a chance to assist learners in our community especially with Mathematics while I was in high school. During the final year of my first undergraduate studies, I taught learners that were improving Grade 10 and 12. Thereafter, I went to teach at a high school for one year.

Although, when I specialised in Medical Technology I enjoyed analysing human specimens; the passion of teaching bounced back and started growing stronger. As I started teaching in the laboratory and in the classroom, I did it as my teachers use to do. I came across many bridges that I learnt to cross by creating short cuts. I have been falling and lifting myself up as I swam.

One day, there was an email asking staff members to express interest in taking up a course leading to Postgraduate Diploma in higher education (PGDHE). I made several meetings with myself, and on the first meeting I raised up my hand that I am in for it. In the second meeting, I put it down because I thought being a woman in reproductive age I will not cope. They say "where there is a will there is a way"; in my third meeting, I said to myself "as long as I am in academia, this is a need and I have to stand up for it"

I was eager to understand what teaching entails and how to make it interesting to the students through formal training. Navigating through the course, I came across bottlenecks, where I felt like a stranger in a wild land and I thought of why (do I have to go through this) and what (am I looking for)? This was due to a lot of jargons and philosophies, but I got encouraged by others as I read how they felt when they had to go through similar studies in higher education. As modules kept coming, everything started talking to one another and I weaved things together, and it became practical and

the whole course started talking to what I do at work. It became very interesting as I started reflecting every time and I felt the worthy of doing the PGDHE.

Today, I am versed with the context of higher education for a university in Africa among the post millennials. I appreciate being part of this programme and I thank the facilitators of the modules and my colleagues, the participants who made the learning interesting. In addition, I thank my mentor from Cardiff University who gave me constructive feedback in some of my tasks (see Appendix 4).

The world outside academia sounds as teaching and learning are the only things that takes place in institutions of higher learning, the reality is a sound curriculum is key and others such as assessment must be in alignment. In addition, an understanding of who are the students are in our institution and the factors impacting the context are needed by a reflective practitioners in higher education. I appreciated the module on Principles of Adult Education because it planted into me a sense of humour, that I will give to my students and consider them in a number of situations. I am specifically on this point because, having been an adult student myself in this programme, I did not find the going easy especially on meeting deadlines which was additional to family responsibilities.

Biggs & Tang (2011) looked at effective teaching as teaching where reflective practice is in control. I see myself an agent of change through reflective practice because I learnt that through deep examination of what I do, it could work best for students learning (Larrivee, 2000). My advice to those who see themselves as if they are drowning in academia: the key is reflective practice!

After engaging on literature about reflection by Dewey (1933), Moon (1999), Boud, Keogh & Walker (1985) and Schon (1983) and reflective practice by of Schon (1983, 1987), (Clegg, 2000). I can say reflection is applying your mind on any experience (knowledge, believe, object, concept) to gain more understanding of it. Reflective practice is about creating a habit, structure, or routine around examining experience. It is important in a professional practice based setting (Amulya, 2011). A person who uses reflection by revisiting learnt experience in order to improve it, is referred to as a reflective practitioner. Reflection is really a process that every educator must engage into for best practice.

CHAPTER 1: CONTEX OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PERSPECTIVES

1.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the impact of contextual factors in higher education and the implications they have on teaching and student learning. In addition, it discusses the interplay of structure, culture and agency on teaching and learning. Furthermore, it explains the role of a reflective practitioner in teaching and learning where concepts such as criticality, reflectivity and praxis which are crucial to educational codes that can help in gaining scholarly and analytical understanding of issues in teaching and learning are understood. The discussions center on the University of Namibia (UNAM) where I am an academic in the capacity of a lecturer in the discipline of health sciences at the School of Medicine (SoM).

1.2 Overview of contextual factors in African higher education

There are many factors in the context of higher education which are either constraining or enabling teaching and learning. At the beginning of the new millennium, African higher education faced numerous challenges. Africa had been known for low secondary education output (Bregman & Bryner, 2003). However, now that higher education is recognised as a key force for modernisation and development, there is higher demand of access to higher education (Oketch, 2016). Advancement of the continent is associated with the ability of academic institutions to provide education, research and innovation, but there are obstacles such as financial resources that are preventing them from meeting the desired standards. To achieve transformation of higher education the values and practices of university life must be shifting from internalisation to globalisation (Scott, 2000). In view of the above, the social, economic and political issues are key aspects that require attention for an African university to survive the challenges and realise its future.

Some countries have well established academic systems and own a number of universities and additional post secondary institutions. In contrast, some countries own no single university and not even a major post secondary institution. Academic development of higher institution in Africa is to be blamed on the political disturbances that existed in some countries because they destructed the higher education system (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Higher education in Africa is shaped by issues such as massive demand for access to higher education, inadequate financial resources, growing role of private higher education institutions, governance and autonomy, management challenges, gender, role of research and problems of scholarly communication, language issues and the brain drain. Other contextual realities are the

legacy of colonialism, longstanding economic and social crises, the challenges of HIV/AIDS in parts of the continent, and other significant issues (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

As African countries were colonized, they found it difficult to establish higher education institutions after their independence. Some individuals, especially the formerly disadvantaged black South Africans could not afford to pay university fees (Reddy, 2004). The processes in higher institutions are organised according to the European model of the former colonizer. These legacies have affected the contemporary African higher education to the extent that the impact of language of instruction and communication continued in the post-colonial era (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). It replaced local languages used with English dominating. Additionally, it was seen as a normal practice during colonial time to have no academic freedom and autonomy of academic institutions.

At the time of independence of many African countries, the curriculum of universities was restricted as colonisers supported and implemented only certain disciplines such as law and related fields that would assist colonial administrations (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). At the time of independence; there were only limited numbers of African nationals that were trained, higher education was limited to few individuals, enrolment was kept very low and some colonies sent small numbers of people to study in their colonial mothers countries. Therefore the size of the academic system was very small. The World Bank study in Teferra & Altbach, (2004) observed that less than one quarter of Africans held professional civil service posts at independence. Most trade and industry throughout the continent was foreign owned as only 3% high school age students received a secondary education. What is happening now is that there are many students that are demanding to be admitted into institutions designed for fewer students, at the end the limited resources of a university is constrained.

In most universities in Africa, the government is involved in the affairs of the university; the head of state holds the ultimate authority of being the Chancellor and or the President appoints the Vice-Chancellor and others (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Research has been the defining element for many academic institution and systems. Therefore, in the increasingly global world, a strong research infrastructure has become absolutely a necessity. In this view, the general state of research in Africa is extremely poor and its research infrastructure is inadequate. In most universities in Africa, there are no funds allocated to research in the budgets (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Teferra & Altbach, (2004) reported that academic institutions in developing countries are mainly consumers of scholarly materials produced by others. One constraining reason is that external agencies that fund research activities in Africa are from industrialised nations. Universities in industrialised nations are the major producers and distributors of scholarly knowledge. This is happening because finance to support research in Africa is scarce yet publishing is a measuring rod for academic promotion in higher education institutions.

African higher education systems faces a magnitude of fiscal problems. The causes include the pressures of expansion and massification, the economic problems facing African countries, a changed fiscal climate induced by multilateral lending agencies, inability of students to afford the institution rates necessary for fiscal stability, and in some cases, an inability to impose tuition fees due to political pressure, and misallocation and poor prioritisation of available financial resources.

Academic freedom in higher education institutions makes it possible for the world to critique, comment and challenge new ideas, research and opinions. It allows academics to teach freely, carry on research of their interest and findings, and ideas are communicated freely (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Students defends their interests and benefits in relation to social, economic, cultural and personal injustices through protesting. They are hardly concerned about issues of academic quality and curriculum. Their protests are perceived as a reflection of the grievances of the wider community.

Brain drain and internal mobility are serious challenges facing many African countries; high level experts move from developing countries to industrialised nations and flow of high level expertise from the universities to better paying agencies, private institutions and firms that may not utilise their expertise and talent effectively (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Namibia being in Africa and gained its independence 27 years ago has common challenges as most other African countries that I have mentioned in the above literature.

1.2.2 Context of the University of Namibia

Higher education (HE) is young and relatively new in Namibia. It consists of two public and one private university, namely: the University of Namibia (UNAM), Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), which was formerly known as the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN) and the International University of Management (IUM) respectively. According to the Higher Education Act No. 26 of 2003, being a post-secondary entity does not constitute automatic qualification as higher education, although it does mean qualification as tertiary education (Matengu, Likando & Kangumu, 2014). There were no higher institutions in the country before 1990 except the colleges which trained teachers. Following investigations in higher education by the presidential commission in 1991 and others, a decision was made to create the University of Namibia in 1992 and Polytechnic of Namibia (currently known as Namibia University of Science and Technology) in 1994 as state funded higher education institutions (Matengu, Likando & Kangumu, 2013).

The University of Namibia is a state university established by an act of parliament immediately after independence (Act No. 18 of 1992). It has been the only state university in the country until when it was joined by the University of Science and Technology (towards the end of 2015) which was previously the Polytechnic of Namibia (Nhongo, 2015). UNAM has eight faculties and five schools under which academic programmes are offered, most of the schools are under the Faculty of Health Sciences which houses the School of Medicine. UNAM has twelve campuses nationwide and seven regional centres.

Prior to Namibia's independence, the country's education system was designed to reinforce the apartheid system rather than provide the necessary human resource base to promote equitable social and economic development. It was fragmented along racial and ethnic lines, in what was termed the Bantu Education system, which was also being enforced in black communities in South Africa, with vast disparities in both the allocation of resources and the quality of education offered (Amukugo, 1993). This had a negative impact on the quality of education in the country because only few students accessed higher education.

Sources including NPC, (2007) and World Bank, (2011) cited in Matengu, Likando & Kangumu, (2014) argue that if Namibia is to progress to a knowledge-based economy, it must overcome some factors. These are HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases burden, poverty, inequitable distribution of income, relatively high unemployment rate, a fast approaching energy crisis, low levels of industrialisation, inadequate economic growth, inadequate capacity (especially specialist human

resources), gender inequality and women's empowerment, and high vulnerability to external economic and ecological shocks. All these factors could easily be addressed through teaching and learning in higher education.

Namibia is addressing most of the abovementioned factors in the 5th Namibia's Development plan. The plan expresses a concern on the underdeveloped post-graduate education and low contribution to research and innovation. In addition, it mentions considerable inequalities of access to university education in terms of social class, geographical location, marginalised groups and those with special needs and disabilities. Namibia is committed to widening access to higher education through equity and inclusion, improving quality of teaching and learning in university, strengthening research capacity at higher education institutions and to promoting private sector investment in higher education (NDP5, 2017).

UNAM has a mission and a vision, therefore teaching and learning is in response to meeting its mission and vision which at the end meets the national development goals. I teach in the school of medicine under the faculty of health sciences and our school produces medical graduates. The vision of UNAM is to become a beacon of excellence and innovation in teaching, research and extension services (www.unam.edu.na/about-unam/vision-mission). The mission is to provide quality higher education through teaching, research and advisory services to its customers with the view to produce productive and competitive human resources capable of driving public and private institutions towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and improved quality of life (www.unam.edu.na/about-unam/vision-mission). In addition, the university's values are professionalism, mutual respect, integrity, transparency, equity and accountability.

The independence of Namibia has brought high demand to higher education institutions which leads to the institution admitting students not proportional to resources both human capacity and infrastructures. Although it is the nation's goal to widen access to higher education, the available UNAM infrastructures cannot take more. I see, there is a need to expand the capacity to accommodate higher number of students.

Another concern is the legacy of colonialism which had left other countries to use foreign languages. Although English was not a colonial language for Namibia it was chosen at independence, while Germany and Afrikaans were part of Namibia's colonial and apartheid history. Although English is being used as a medium of instruction throughout the school phases, it is

observed that it poses a problem to students at higher institutions. While many students could do well in a certain subject matter their performance in English remains poor. In this view, the English spoken in Namibia is referred to as “Namlish”. Poor English is associated with unqualified teachers that are in the basic education system due to shortage of teachers as well as low English requirements to enter the former teachers college that trained teachers previously (Wolfaardt, 2005).

Currently UNAM has a number of programmes/courses on offer that can serve most if not all industrial sectors unlike during the colonial time. These includes engineering, medicine, veterinary and military science (www.unam.edu.na/apply-to-unam/faculty-prospectuses). UNAM is now taking the country to the next level in terms of teaching and learning and covering up the inadequate capacity mentioned by Matengu, Likando & Kangumu, (2014) and indeed fulfilling its own mission by driving public and private institutions towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and improved quality of life. For example, our medical students are beneficial to the health sector where they are addressing issues that have to do with diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The establishment of the SoM was a break through because the country will have adequate medical doctors that will manage health issues and match the patient to doctor ratio. In teaching and learning, the SoM aspires to produce a medical graduate with certain qualities and characteristics referred to as the seven (5 + 2) star doctor: care provider, decision-maker, communicator, community leader, manager, researcher and a lifelong learner (School of Medicine, 2017).

UNAM has a Research and Publications Centre with structures, processes and procedures in place in order to realise new knowledge creation and dissemination and fostering socioeconomic development by addressing challenges faced by the society. In addition, it provides coordination and administrative services in support of research activities of the staff members in order for them to effectively conduct research and publish their work. It further contributes to academic staff capacity building through a series of targeted interventions in the form of training workshops and information sessions. The centre also links UNAM to other universities, research institutions and strategic collaborators all over the world. It facilitates in articulating the alignment between research focus areas, institutional priorities, and national, regional and international research imperatives.

Research funding at UNAM is done through Research and Publication Centre. In accordance with the provisions of the University Research Policy, the Research and Publications Office (RPO) manages a research budget to fund research projects. Funds are annually allocated competitively

and disbursed in accordance with programmes of activities of researchers. The university also encourages the sourcing of funds from external donors and the Research and Publications Office offers advisory services on this. Calls for funding opportunities are regularly distributed to UNAM academics by the RPO when they are published. Regular engagements with potential funders are held in order to optimise funding opportunities for our researchers. Despite the funding through the centre, it is never sufficient, so academics and students are still in need of funds to conduct research. UNAM allows academics to exercise their freedom through research which is a benefit to the institution because research output ranks the university, academics are allowed to research anything that interests them.

The UNAM library provides the university communities access to knowledge frontiers such as e-resources, therefore they can access them through the university's subscription.

Our institution has also adopted a policy of either you 'publish or perish', therefore publishing is set as a standard for promotion of academic staff, while teaching is neglected on the basis of promotion. Teaching and learning is core to UNAM activities; the workload for academics provides for 60% teaching, 30% research and 10% community engagement (CEQUAM, 2012). The question that I have is "Is higher education at UNAM defined in terms of research only?", but my immediate answer is no because research is only 30% while teaching and learning is 60%. I feel promotion criteria should be looked around the questions I am raising.

UNAM also suffers from brain drain and internal mobility. These are common at SoM, where certain scarce specialties are required so that teaching and learning can take place effectively. The specialists come and leave within a short time due to dissatisfactions such as cumbersome procedures to obtain work permits and inadequate remuneration.

On the issue of knowledge production and consumption, sometimes a study originates from Africa while analysis is done somewhere else. For example, I recall the studies on the devil's claw which is a native plant in southern Africa and it is of medicinal importance to inflammation (Ameye & Chee, 2006). All is from Africa but since the European agencies could fund the study and have equipments to process it to a final product of use, its knowledge will be coming from Europe and Namibians were consumers.

On the financial state of the university, UNAM passed on a circular 02/2016 calling for a total cut on university's funded travels, conferences and other recurrent expenses (internal e-mail correspondence; Tjihenuna, 2016). This is an indication that financial crisis is at our doors which has put UNAM in a difficult situation in terms of funding research and improving on aspects of teaching and learning.

Institutions of higher learning in Namibia allows students to exercise their democracy as granted by the constitution. The UNAM students in particular protested against increase of tuition fees and settling of fees before the exam, ("Unam student to register now, pay later," 2016 & Nakale, 2016). They requested the institution to register without registration fees and to write the examination without settling their accounts. This created situations for students to owe the institution and therefore, it cannot go on at the pace as planned with activities such as building infrastructure because the budget is cut and some students did not pay their fees.

1.2.3 Structure of UNAM

Since independence, the state President has always been the Chancellor of UNAM. This indicates that the Chancellor's position is a state appointment. Kogan (2000) brought out the issue of academics getting leading positions within a university by virtue of government appointment, and referred to them as academic elites proper. UNAM has governing structures consisting of the Council, Senate, Faculties and School boards. The Council has the statutory authority on all matters of institutional functioning. Furthermore, there are management structures; made up of executive management, Deans of faculties, Directors of centres and Head of administrative and academic units. They execute the vision and mission of the university. The executive management is composed of the Vice Chancellor, assisted by three Pro-Vice Chancellors. Additional executive members are the librarian, the bursar and registrar. The three Pro-Vice Chancellor, each one leads one of the following, namely: academic affairs, research, innovation & development and administration, finance & resource mobilization (www.unam.edu.na). The Pro-Vice Chancellor of academic affairs deals with businesses of teaching and learning. Each campus has an assistant Pro-Vice Chancellor.

1.3 Reflective teaching and learning and culture at UNAM

Biggs & Tang (2011) documented effective teaching as reflective practice which involves teachers reflecting on their current teaching in order to create an improved teaching environment that adapts to changing conditions. Devlin & Samarawickerema (2010), alluded to criteria of effective teaching

in a changing higher education context, based on the Australian context. Approaches to teaching that influence, motivated inspire students to learn, which articulates with learning and academic value, lecturer enthusiasm, group interaction and workload are around effective teaching. The societal, political, economic, technological and demographic changes are forces that impact on meeting the requirement of effective teaching in the context. They concluded that for effective teaching in a changing higher education context, the above mentioned criteria should be revised.

Social realist theory will be discussed in the next section (section 1.4). It examines cultural, structural and agency. Therefore, resistance of academics to professional development in teaching and learning can be linked to the social realist theory. Their ideas, values ideologies and theories to develop themselves academically contribute to the resistance. Quinn (2012), identified overarching set of discourses such as disciplinary, student deficit, skills and performativity. These factors could either contribute or discourage to resistance to change.

University teachers are knowledgeable in their discipline but lack formal preparation for the role as teachers, now, there has been increasing pressure internationally and in South Africa to provide structure to develop academics' professional competence (Quinn, 2012). The Centre for Professional Development, Teaching and Learning Improvement (CPDTLI) at UNAM exists for the purpose of improved quality of teaching and learning which can be attained through effective, sustained, site-based and responsive professional development.

Academic development is discouraged by the academic staff, they feel they have enough knowledge from their discipline and some believe that once one has attained a PhD then he/she can teach effectively. Biggs & Tang (2011) indicated that staff development and reflective practice are key to effective teaching. The PGDHE offered by UNAM is a step towards effective teaching and learning. However, there is resistance amongst individual participants if not everyone (felt by the views given during contact sessions). They feel the course is packed with jargons from the education discipline. For me, after reading the chapter by Stierer, as cited in Murray (2008), under the subheading "A stranger in the strange land" I got empowered to note that other academics from other disciplines of other universities than education felt the same way but the author is encouraging them to learn the experiences of higher education. At UNAM, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, teaching is not valued, but research is valued to the extent that promotion is based on research publication, this led to faculty academics to look down to staff development on teaching and learning.

From the school/student deficit discourses, it is felt that the academic development must ensure that students coming from high school have the expected level and not the responsibility of an individual teacher to bring the student to par (Smit, 2012). It is also believed that giving much attention to struggling students is more like shifting the responsibility from the students to the teachers. In my classroom, I have observed a diversity of students, many of them had good educational background with evidence that they portray basic knowledge of the subject matter and there are a few with less exposure. Regardless of different exposure, individual determination drives students to seek help as needed and utilise all the available opportunities of improving presented to them. I feel it is my responsibility as a lecturer to meet individual student's needs provided that the students are doing their part. It is a problem making sure that I attend to each student due to time and the class being large.

Academic staff needs professional development, some referred to training to acquire skills of a good teacher. I urge academics to critique and not to criticise academic development, and put what they have learnt in practice. I have my own saying "a skill learnt but not practiced becomes dormant and finally vanish".

Performativity discourses: The PGDHE programme has exposed me to necessities that would make my teaching and learning of student effective, however it requires a lot of understanding, debate and thinking. In addition, it is equipping individuals with knowledge and skills that would enable the academics to execute some community work within our institutions such as being part of the curriculum development committee. The resistance could be minimised by making academic development a requirement and offer a formal qualification which would be recognised for promotion.

Webster & Mosoetsa (2001) concluded that academics face a demand overload in the changing academic workplace. In this view, many have become deeply pessimistic about their future and few are innovators. They emphasised a need to take views of academics seriously and to be sensitive to specific features of their occupational culture. The points as expressed by Webster and Mosoetsa are common in our workplace, in most cases at our institution you will hear how an individual was not happy how his/her case was treated and therefore a person will lose interest and commitment to the university, and at the end will leave. I believe this could change when academics are engaged in

all implementation plans, for example if there are plans to develop academics to gain certain skills, meetings to sensitise lecturers are needed so that they have a chance to understand what it entails.

Namibia had little in place regarding higher education prior to independence, the changes that are visible today are appreciated. A lot have happened and is in progress; the focus must be directed to develop academics to effectively teach and help the students learn. This means that academics must not just have subject knowledge but must also have teaching techniques suitable for higher education. The government and UNAM in particular are doing their best in assisting and developing the academics as well as students to appreciate higher education. The government had and is still committed to sponsoring students' education in the form of loans and/ or grants. The university also fund research for academics and indeed develops the staff where their studies are funded and tuition waived through staff development budget. Most of what is happening at UNAM is in response to reaching UNAM's mission (www.unam.edu.na). Finally, there is a need to transform our institution in terms of academic development of the academics in order to realise UNAM's vision - "To be a beacon of excellence and innovation in teaching, research and extension services." UNAM's CPDTLI must develop a teaching policy that has stipulated criteria for effective teaching and learning, and such criteria should be revised rigorously.

1.4 The interplay of structure, culture and agency in teaching and learning

Social realist theory is about developing explanations of observed and experienced phenomena that point to causal relations at the level of that which cannot be observed. The sociological work to date focused on the workings of structure and the way in which structure is connected to the realm of human agency. Archer, a social realist distinctive contribution has been to show that culture which is the world of ideas can be analysed in an analogous manner and not to ignore the interrelations of culture with agency. Therefore, the morphogenetic theory/ her approach focuses on how structural conditioning affects social interaction. In her theory social structure is all about who has the material resources as well as positions within organisational structures. The term culture is about the world of ideas comprising everything that could be comprehended by a human mind. It consists of cultural system which is the world of propositions where the law of contradiction can be applied, and it where the culture-agency analysis is focused at the level of real. At the level of interaction there is socio-cultural interaction pertaining to who holds the ideas and the degree to which others can be persuaded to make these ideas (Case, 2013). A social realist core focus is on the interaction of structure, culture and agency focusing mainly on the situational logics at play in a particular social context in order to examine the possibilities for morphogenesis.

In critical realism reality exists in two realms: reality independent from human experience and knowledge created about the independent existing reality. The critical realism theory conceptualise the world as having objective observations which is the actual, the subjective experiences termed empirical and the actual observations and empirical experiences, the real. Critical realism offers significant ways of thinking about knowledge due to the limitations that were observed in social and natural science (Case, 2013). In education, “when the reality of social structures is combined with the concept of explanatory critique, critical realism is able to reveal problems involved in underlying structures and mechanisms of educational systems” (Shipway 2011: 161 as cited in Case, 2013).

Higher education can lead to economic prosperity (Symonds, Schwartz, & Ferguson, 2011) and it is mainly through higher education we could reduce and eradicate the problem of unemployment and poverty.

The contextual factors that relates to UNAM as discussed above are high access demand, English as a language of instruction, finance, research funding, promotion based on publishing, specialist of scarce discipline leaving and student protests are concerns to my practice. Some of these were mentioned by Teferra & Altbach (2004) being experienced by universities in other countries. Teaching and learning interactions in higher education is shaped by teaching-learning environments, students and academic identities, disciplinary knowledge practices and institutional cultures, and these accounts for the interplay between structure and agency.

Although there is high demand to access higher education at UNAM, some regions are not represented equally in courses such as geology, engineering and medicine. This is due to poor performances of some schools in those regions because the entry requirements are higher in comparison to other courses. In addition, some school leavers do not have financial means to access higher education and for some there is no proper guidance to get the financial means. Furthermore, students that could access higher education end up dropping out due to institutional intrinsic factors. Therefore, there is a need to consider both personal and socio-cultural factors in understanding learning. Ashwin (2008) as cited in Kahn, Qualter & Young (2012) argued that the explanatory power of mainstream research into teaching and learning in higher education is limited by a failure to consider both socio-cultural structure and individual agency. Marton, Hounsell and Entwistle (1997) as cited in Kahn, Qualter & Young (2012) pointed out that a student’s approach to study is

influenced by their perception of the context for learning, the tutors' conceptions of teaching and the culture of the discipline.

Social reality is constituted of a range of levels or strata, incorporating structures and mechanisms that bring about the events that shape our experience. These strata include the intra-personal, the person considered as an entity, inter-personal or social interactions and the macro level of social structure (Bhaskar, 2008, as cited in Kahn, Qualter & Young, 2012).

In Namibia, at the time of independence, there were few nationals that attained higher education due to the colonial powers. To date, the government has worked hard in promoting social equity through national goals. However there are still some regions that are not well represented in some programmes at UNAM especially at the School of Medicine where I teach. Few are trapped into their cultural beliefs, for example Kunene region, the Himba people strongly maintain their culture and traditional way of life, and therefore they move around to look after their animals. This has made it very difficult to complete school and make it to higher institution. At certain occasion we get students from such areas by widening access and measures are put in place to ensure that the specific students do not get discouraged by intrinsic factors after enrolment. Due to the location of some regions it has become difficult for graduates to go work in those regions because the regions lack certain amenities such network for communication and proper transportations that are necessary to social life. It has come to the extent that even those who originated from such regions would not want to go back after they have graduated and work there in order to influence and educate their own people.

To be specific, economic status (financial means), lifestyles, values of a society, psychological stress and language are the main sociocultural factors impacting on teaching and learning at our school. You can imagine a student from Opuwo in Kunene region, by chance the student happened to get guidance to apply for a course at UNAM and a study grant/ loan and one might not get a loan/grant. This student would come and live in town, a totally different lifestyle and far from his/her family and would start parenting him/herself. Everything to this student is new; this student is studying with other students from urban schools therefore his/her communication skills in English will not be at the same pace as the others and the lecturer expected all students to be almost at the same level. However, UNAM have in place a core English module into which students that have poor English symbol are enrolled.

The government gives funds to students through loan/ grant, therefore the tuition fees is paid and the remaining amount is paid out to students to cover up other expenses. There is always financial backing up such as buying of textbooks or specific learning material or certain payment for them to go out to social events. Although the government's effort to provide loans to the needy students, many of them find it difficult to repay it after completing studies because the basic needs costs a lot nowadays.

In some cases students' knowledge, attitudes and perception about higher institution is not clear, they are not aware of the difference between basic and higher education. At the university continuous assessment qualifies students to write an exam which was not the case in basic education. In basic education, all registered students enter to write the exams. Although at the beginning of our course I provide information regarding assessments and the weight of assessments; to a student everything only becomes really in the middle of the semester and this when students start to seek for help.

In addition, there are variation on social class and race; for some students don't see themselves at the level of others, as they look around and see that most of their classmates own expensive gadgets and are driving cars and could afford breakfast, lunch and a drink from the school cafeteria every day. So they turn to get discouraged by what they see around and do not have those themselves.

In few occasions, students do not speak out issues that relate to them, there are those that fail tests and it turn to affect them to the extent that they develop serious psychological problems. Students do end up being affected by factors that surround their daily life and they find themselves in anxiety and depression and therefore losses learning opportunity. There is a student support office that deals with issues of this nature, but in my context, I identify poor performers and give them feedback based on their performance. It is when I discuss with them that they bring out social issues that are affecting them academically.

There are student bodies such as the Student Representative Council (SRC), Namibia National Students Organisation (NANSO), which represent student views in learning. In most cases, students do approach teaching staff regarding grievances which is done through individual consultation or through student lecturer forum. This happens in a critique way in order to improve teaching and learning.

On the issue of teaching specialist not staying long enough at our school the faculty have developed a culture of collaborating with other universities and have memorandum of understanding, therefore depends on them to facilitate teaching and learning. Furthermore, the medical practitioners in the ministry of health are of assistance to teaching and learning of our students.

Much of the teaching in medicine cannot ignore local knowledge because this is the location/region in which most of them would operate after completion. Although local knowledge in the form of real cases of Namibia must be included, international knowledge cannot be ignored because as medical graduates they are expected to have certain standards at an international level, that is the aim of seven star doctor mentioned in section 1.2.2. At the discipline level, courses are either clinical or pre-clinical, the pre-clinical are the basis of science in which clinical courses are built from. Everyone that gets admission to the SoM has mainly done science in grade 12 through the Namibia Senior Secondary certificate (NSSC) or completed the entire Bachelor of Science (BSc) first year curriculum (www.unam.edu.na) and hence there are no obvious gaps. Students are given an opportunity to apply learnt theory in practice through simulation skills laboratories and powerlab.

The UNAM academics are identified as researchers, knowledge consumers and producers and lifelong learners that model their conducts and behaviours based on the university's values which are professionalism, mutual respect, integrity, transparency, equity and accountability. These values must be demonstrated in our daily activities as we (both academics and students) discharge our duties. In the context of students, this refers to when they are within the campus and outside the campus in the community (hospitals). UNAM has a document on student code of conduct available on the university webpage. Taking an aspect of a researcher which is an identity of UNAM academics entails continuous researching, searching the literature, writing articles and publishing, attending conferences, hearing what others are saying about the area of your interest, and compliance with rules and regulations/ policies that are specific to the discipline regarding research. This involves ethical consideration when conducting research, for example when I did research that involved patients, I sought permission from the ministry of health and social services. Jenkins (1996) as cited in Henkel (2005) talked about constructing identity as a continuous and reflexive, a synthesis of self-definition (which is internal) and the (external) definitions of oneself offered by others or internal-external dialectic of identification. Jenkins focused on the importance of the boundaries between the internal and the external and the negotiations and transactions that take place across the boundary. With reference to what CPDTLI of UNAM is doing in implementing

effective teaching and learning, I can say the structure is in place. However, I have observed a challenge as to how it could be taken across the academics because individuals are of mixed ideas that is dominated by resistance.

1.5 Becoming a reflective practitioner in higher education

The discussions here are informed by Stierer cited in Murray (2008).

1.5.1 Criticality

From the perspective of higher education studies, criticality is described as a distinctive orientation to ideas and approaches. Criticality is all about describing something beyond or similar or different to existence. It is all about views or issues (ideas and approaches). By doing so, one would end up uncovering hidden assumptions that could become potential ideologies/concepts and or strengthen the existing concept. It is much more to critique - analysing a situation, more of thinking out of the box, and think and rethink. Looking at the most often used word 'critical' which is confused with criticising; I am convinced that critical does not mean criticising 'nailing down' but it is all about bringing new insights on the text.

1.5.2 Reflectivity

Reflectivity is a complex word which is a key piece of educational code and its meaning in teaching and learning touches on reflection and reflective practice. It is a process of professional learning through self-examination and experience, which focuses on being aware of oneself and understanding oneself as a professional in what that one does. Therefore, it is all about acting on a plan, then reflects on the experiences; then based on the outcome of reflection, you need to re-plan/plan again. This cyclic process in the teaching and learning environment can be achieved and be improved through student feedback, peer feedback, critical reflection and all these are informed by theories. I feel that reflective practice is a continuous process through which the final product is perfected.

1.5.3 Praxis

Praxis is much more of a blend of criticality and reflectivity; it is about linking theory and practice and writes it out. For example, if students are introduced to a philosophical concept like I have been introduced to many of them in this programme they would be expected to have an understanding of the concept, analyse it critically and reflect on it and then be able to apply and integrate it in their practice.

The above concepts have shaped my usual way of doing things and thinking about teaching and learning in my practice. The concepts have set me in a revolving mode of critiquing the way I teach and to have ears beyond the physical ears that could listen and work on the way forward for a change in my teaching. In reflection on my role as a lecturer at UNAM, I invited other colleagues to my lessons in order to get feedback from them (see Appendix 2). The students-lecturer evaluation reports do greatly speak into my reflection especially the comments that are given by the students. In addition, I have attended other colleagues teaching sessions in order to critique their teaching and learning to inform my own teaching, and I have used that to reflect on my teaching. Furthermore, I have started to impart the three (criticality, reflectivity and praxis) concepts to my students where I will expect them to be able to critically analyse cases in the subject matter and reflect in their own capacity as students. On using peer review, I have embraced the critiques from my colleagues and have reflected the way I teach.

The issues that I want to address in teaching and students' learning of the students are: how to translate the learnt research in practice and the use of e-learning effectively. It is actually easy to mention that I will apply what I have researched into practice but when it comes to the actual doing it is something else. Some researches are not easy to apply directly into practice, therefore need of a means to apply it practically.

The other issue is the use of e-learning in practice especially the really time one. This is an issue especially in Namibia where internet connection is not reliable. I can have an arranged session with my students at a specified time on a learning platform but the internet might not be functioning at that time. Further, the use of e-learning platform could be available but some students would not be able to access that because they are at remote area. This means that the use of technology relies on the use of internet or server which is not reliable. This is in agreement with Teferra & Altbach (2014) who mentioned information technology as one of the concerning contemporary elements of higher education.

This can be addressed by developing a common vocabulary and making it jargon-free by synthesising, summarising, simplifying and shortening the idea. In addition, bridging research and practice could be made part of the institution's culture whereby data could be collected and discussed and recognition for those involved. Furthermore, in order for not to miss out in case of internet outage, instead of depending only on real time learning on a platform, I suggest that

academics may have their lectures recorded and downloaded for sending to students at such time of need.

1.6 My philosophy of teaching and learning in UNAM context

Since I have learnt that teaching is not just delivering the content, rather it is facilitating the learning of the students. I have learnt that I play a major role in students learning, but there are contextual factors which are either social, political and economic that could influence teaching and learning of the students. The environment in which teaching and learning is taking place must be inviting and interesting to the student for effective results. It must be conducive for the student to validate his/her present knowledge and continue to build on that knowledge and creating more challenging activities based on the level.

My teaching and learning philosophy would be in response to the mission and vision of UNAM and I must have UNAM's and my discipline identities. The teaching and learning must be shaping the graduates to have attributes that can be associated with UNAM. I must be a reflective practitioner who employs reflectivity, criticality and praxis in executing my duty as an academic. The sociological theories of Archer and Bhaskar: Social realism and critical realism are to inform my teaching and learning both for myself as a lecturer and for students too, this is about the interaction between structure, culture and agency (King, 2010).

The first day of meeting my students in class will always be time to know each other. I will interact with them and I will give a brief introduction about myself and a bit of my background. I will give them an opportunity to introduce themselves too (which regions of Namibia are they from, any internationals). Additionally, I will ask them of what they think we will do and learn from my course as this will give me an idea of their basic knowledge on the course, and I will give them a map of the content and the objectives, assessment criteria including the test dates. I will always remind them of my role and their role to make a meaning for the purpose of higher education.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided me with the global and national context within which I will be implementing reflective practice. It has also provided insights regarding contextual factors that may constrain or enable my project of reflective practice and promotion of student learning. As a reflective practitioner, I will have to deal with contextual factors such as increased access to higher education, and low completion rate.

In the next chapter, I discuss principles of adult learning which are essential for reflective practice.

CHAPTER 2: PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the understanding of adult learning in higher education; it entails description of principles and models of adult learning that discusses who are the adult students, experiential learning theory, learning styles, barriers to adult learning and motivation factors for adult learning in higher education and reflective teaching and higher education.

Furthermore, it provides the profiling of the first year Medicine degree (MBChB) and Pharmacy degree (BPharm) students of 2016 that I encountered through teaching Systems Physiology. Therefore, I will refer to them in discussions.

2.2 My Physiology students of 2016

The first year MBChB and BPharm students of 2016 were 117 in total and their age ranged between 17 and 33. Eleven students were older than 24 years and I would consider those who are ≤ 24 as young adults and those ≥ 24 as true adult learners. They consisted of 88 females and 29 males. Fifty five percent of my students were Namibians and the remaining percent comprised of students from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Zambia, Malawi and Swaziland. On the basis of race; 81% of the students were black, 9% coloured, 3% caucasians, 4% whites, < 1% mixed and the rest did not indicate their race.

Most of them have completed grade 12 or equivalent and seven of them have acquired other qualifications such as diplomas and degrees before seeking admission to the SoM. About 4% of the students are married. Some students indicated they lived with parents and relatives, about 23% were staying in the campus hostel while 31% indicated they were renting. Eleven percent of the students walked to the Health Science campus every day while about 20% drives to campus and 45% use taxis. Forty six percent of the students indicated that their residential areas were conducive for study, while 41% of the students stated that their residential areas were not conducive for study, and the rest did not indicate their position in this regard.

Regarding payments of tuitions fees, about 55% of the students received assistance from the Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF), 31% had their own private funding, and 16% received bursaries from other organisations.

Profiling the students on health matters indicated that there are no students with disabilities, but about 32% indicated that they had vision problem which is not necessarily regarded as blindness. One student indicated having hearing problem and 5% with chronic health illnesses.

2.3 Theoretical approaches to adult learning

Andragogy and pedagogy are terms are used mostly in the adult learning courses. Andragogy refers to the art and science of helping adults learn (Houde, 2006). A distinction is made to differentiate adult learning from the art and science of teaching children which is referred to as pedagogy (Ross-Gordon, 2003). There are assumptions on adult learners that are primarily to the work of Knowles and Associates of 1984 who developed the principles of andragogy. Knowles is referred to as the father of adult learning in the education history.

2.3.1 Knowles principles of adult learning (Ross-Gordon, 2003; Houde, 2006)

- Adult learners are responsible in making personal decisions and are assumed preferring self direction in determining the goals and outcomes of their learning.
- Adult learner brings a package of experience to learning and value learning through direct experience.
- They are presumed to bring a task or problem centred orientation to learning (very practical).
- Adult learners are internally motivated to learn rather than external factors motivating them.
- They are ready to learn when they experience a need to know (relevancy oriented).
- Adult learners desire respect.

The above points are the characteristics of adult students that are sometimes found in higher education. I noticed, our students have respect for their lecturers and I have taken it to respect them too.

2.3.2 Experiential learning theory

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is facilitation of learning through using experiences of students (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kolb & Kolb, 2012). It is attributed to the works of William James, John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Carl Jung and others who are scholars in education that placed experience in their theories of human learning and development. ETL is based on six propositions:

- Learning is best conceived as a process not in terms of outcomes.

- All learning is relearning
- Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
- Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
- Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and environment
- Learning is a process of creating knowledge.

Expanding and analysing the above propositions by closely looking at learning, in relation to Kolb and others indicates that learning is like a process where students are engaged and effective feedback is provided on their learning efforts. Learning does not stop, it is ongoing, improving what you have learnt and is shaped by daily experiences. Disagreements, conflicts and differences drive the learning process, and in this process an individual will keep on reflecting and working on the learning. I gave a task to students and they came up with diverse ideas that showed me that students were not just recalling facts but they actually involved their minds to the task.

2.3.3 Learning styles assessment

In the process of learning, students learn differently; Kolb identified four learning styles which highlight the conditions under which students learn best (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

- Assimilators learn better when presented with sound logical theories and prefer reading lectures. They also have time to think through something and therefore are best at understanding a wide range of information.
- Accommodators learn from hands on experience. They enjoy carrying on plans and rely more on people for information and prefer to work with others to get the work done.
- Convergers are best at finding practical uses for ideas and theories, they have the ability to solve problems and decisions are based on solutions to problems. Further, they prefer to deal with technical tasks rather than with social and interpersonal issues.
- Divergers perform better in situations that require brainstorming of ideas and prefer to work in groups.

In my practice, I observed students of different learning styles. Therefore, I apply different methods when teaching. When students are working in groups, I have seen that they become aware of their differences. They turn to understand their individual behaviours and that of their peers. This in itself is reflection, a practice that both students and myself use to facilitate teaching and learning.

2.3.4 Barriers to adult learning in higher education

According to Falasca (2011), there are two main barriers to adult learning: external (situational) and internal (dispositional). External barriers can be explained as influences that are beyond the individual control, whereas internal barriers are associated with personal attitudes and thoughts. Merriam & Cafarella (1999) cited in Falasca (2011) maintains that external barriers include:

- Effects of ageing, which could affect the capacity for learning such as loss of vision and learning.
- Changes in health and certain life events that can indirectly influence adult's ability to learn such as chronic illness which would take up energy and motivation needed to engage in learning.
- Roles of responsibilities and their impact on adult learning such as changes in family roles, death of loved ones and changes in work roles.
- Motivation factors which mainly affects those that are working while studying such as when required by work to attend workshops.

Internal barriers to learning can include some of the following:

- Failing to explore several perspectives
- Depending on remembering facts and learnt skills
- Staying focused on one thing at a time
- Being anxious and concerned about not being able to succeed in a new learning situation or having negative perceptions of schooling and skepticism about the value of learning.

Most of my students are young adults; it is unlikely for them to show all barriers mentioned above. My students' barriers are more of social life than ageing. After higher school, the students experience a life without supervision and they find it difficult to multitasking. During basic education, they were mainly in supervision of their parents and hostel superintendents while being at higher education institution, one is alone in the hostel where they have to make sure that they have cooked for themselves, doing the assignments and reading. Everything is self driven, therefore students find it difficult to cope under pressure of being a medical student. They end up not doing well academically and they only get out of it in senior years that starts from the third year.

Our department requires students to produce legitimate documentation or reasons for not being able to write a test or attend laboratories. We receive a number of doctor's sick and death

certificates/letters from students. Some students tend to be always sick or hospitalized, while for some it is their loved ones or own children. Therefore I can say my students are challenged by illnesses which reduce their abilities to learn. My young students are often reluctant, some would miss tests or practicals and would not bother to give legitimate documentation or reasons of absence as required on time. It is only after the continuous assessments are published they would come to indicate a reason of absence.

Chao (2007) alluded to the challenges faced by adult learners; the teaching methods used in high institutions are geared for young adults; adult learners prefer active engagement which would tap from their work experience and other aspects of life. In my class, I have students who were nurses before enrolling for MBChB, therefore, I make use of them to explain some procedures to others. For example, on taking blood pressure, they would demonstrate to the class on how it is performed and they always have questions to understand the theory behind techniques. These are good examples of characteristics of adult learners. In the light of engaging students, I have noticed, students like case study questions because they stimulate them to think, so students learn better when given a scenario.

Most programmes in higher education institutions are offered on full time basis which suits young students that are not employed while it is difficult to be accessed by employed adults (Chao, 2007). In previous years I had a student who asked for permission to be absent because she was going to get married and another one missed a test because she was working. At that time, I had no orientation to principles of adult education and felt like marriage could have been arranged at a different time. I used to be very strict and complied with the university rules without reflecting. Now, I have an understanding that this student had responsibilities being a family lady, she has to make up a living therefore needed to be working and studying at the same time.

I have observed that students with other qualifications prior to MBChB enrollment have experiences of higher education. They make use of every opportunity available to them such as consulting their lecturers for mentoring and tutoring. This could be due to the feelings that they lack some basic skills or concepts that would affect their learning. It could also mean that they are more focused in comparison to young students.

I always recall myself as an adult student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) when I got exempted from all first year courses due to recognition of prior learning. I felt good not

to have a lot of courses at the time but it meant a lot of reading on my own because recognition was granted for courses done in my first year of my first undergraduate qualification. Then I had a fear that other students that did it last year with the current institution were in an advantage position in terms of remembering. Therefore, I optimised all available assistance opportunities of learning.

2.3.5 Motivation factors for adult learning in higher education

Adult students have challenges which are external to learning environment such as family responsibilities. Therefore they need to be motivated in order to keep them focused. The teacher or lecturer is supposed to be aware of his role because he/she is the catalyst of motivation for students (Abela, 2009). Figure 2.1 presents motivating factors for adult learning in higher education adapted from Sogunro (2015).

The quality of the curriculum in the MBChB programme is central to teaching and learning as discussed in chapter 3 and 5, curriculum sets the scene in higher education and it is very relevant to what they will learn in their senior years. In my practice, I make sure the study guide is provided at the beginning of the course and I always refer to it when facilitating any other section of physiology.



Figure 2.1 Motivating Factors for Adult Learners in Higher Education

I realised that students tend to sleep when the traditional method (lecturer-centred) is used. I started interacting a lot with them. But since they are never ready to discuss and respond to questions, some opted to stay out of class. Regarding feedback, students are always eager to know their performances on tests and quizzes, they always demand for feedback immediately. This pushes the department to provide feedback as needed. Although adult students are supposed to be self-directed, many of my students seems not. This is simply because the majority are young adults and lack prior knowledge and experience and therefore they still want to be dependent on the lecturer for word by word.

Our infrastructures are the state of the art, not only outside, but also inside the classroom where air conditioning is fitted in for ventilation and adjusting heat or cold temperatures, which is conducive enough for teaching and learning. Whenever a powerpoint presentation is prepared or a video the projector, microphone or speakers are always available. Since it is a large class, students with poor vision (especially 32% of my students) if seated at the back would have difficulties in viewing what is projected, which is a barrier of students to learning.

As featured in the context chapter, the number of students admitted in relation to infrastructure is a concern. The campus hostel accommodation can only take few students as seen in profiling of our students. This has forced them to find accommodation elsewhere, which might not be conducive for learning. Additionally, students living in the campus hostel are provided with WIFI that works best. The university has made provision for 3 G devices so that students can access internet anywhere but the devices do not always work as expected.

2.4 Reflective teaching in higher education

2.4.1 Reflection

Reflection is used widely in daily life, to the extend we reflect without knowing whether we are doing it, but philosophers have names for everything, that is why the term reflection. Reflection in learning started as early as 1933 and continued gaining more meaning because it has been about reflecting on it, therefore many definition of reflection are found today. I have looked closely to definitions of reflection from Dewey (1933), Moon (1999), Boud, Keogh & Walker (1985) and Schon (1983) in order to achieve a deeper meaning of it.

Dewey, 1933 defined reflection as “an active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to

which it tends”. Moon (1999) described it “as a form of mental processing with a purpose and/or anticipated outcome. This applied to relatively complex or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution”. Meanwhile Boud, Keogh & Walker (1985) described reflection as “a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to a new understanding and appreciation”. With the understanding from the three definitions of reflection, I can say, reflection is applying the mind on any experience (knowledge, believe, object, concept) to gain more understanding of it.

2.4.2 Reflective practice

Another term which is built from reflection is reflective practice meaning to simply create a habit, structure, or routine around examining experience, it is important in practice based professional learning settings (Amulya, 2011). This concept was scrutinised since the work of Schon (1983, 1987), (Clegg, 2000). Schon (1983) introduced the concept reflective practitioner as “one who uses reflection as a tool to revisiting experience both to learn from it and for the framing of murky, complex problems of professional practice”. Reflection in higher education is a practice for deep learning and enhancing learning (Harvey, 2016). Brookfield (1998) is a scholar on reflection in adult education and defined critically reflective practice as “a process of inquiry involving practitioners in trying to discover, and research the assumptions that frame how they work”. Therefore, I can say reflective practice is the review and evaluation of the learning that took place in order to bring up improvement and enhancement.

Larrivee (2000) stated that reflective practice in education requires teachers to deeply examine the way they teach and determine what works best for student’s learning. That is the reason we supposed to reflect in order to improve.

Since the students in higher education are adults having the characteristics as described in Knowles principles of adult learners, reflective practice can benefit them when practiced by the lecturer and themselves. This is because they can easily learn best what is relevant to them as set in the curriculum. In my practice, I started evaluating my methods of teaching, which is also shaped by the evaluation reports I receive from CPDTLI after I have been evaluated by students (see Appendix 1). Although, the reports are mainly used when someone applies for promotion position, I like them because, I view them as a mirror. I also see myself through performance of students; which can either be the facilitation of learning or the structuring of questions that need attention. So, reflection is really a process which every educator must engage into for best practice.

2.5 Conclusion

The principles of adult education presented in the foregoing discussion will be central to my project of becoming a reflective practitioner who seeks to promote student learning. The issue of profiling or getting to know my students better so that I can help them learn will be critical. I have changed very much in considering students; as much as I have to make sure that I comply with the rules of the university in executing my duties, I also make sure that I respect students as adults and listen to their concerns in order to minimise barriers to their learning. As a reflective practitioner, I will also have to draw on the principles for effective adult learning in my teaching.

In the next chapter, I discuss curriculum design and development.

CHAPTER 3: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed principles of adult learning, and how these relate to reflective practice. In the present chapter, I discuss curriculum development and design and the implications for reflective practice.

3.2 Curriculum and curriculum development

Curriculum is defined differently by scholars in higher education and therefore a single definition cannot suit it. Due to changing student profiles, the widespread use of technologies and the pressure to produce graduates that are ready for the market with more than discipline knowledge give rise to new curriculum models in the 21-century (Gosper & Ifenthaler, 2014). A curriculum that is suitable for the Namibian society should be responsive, based on paradigms, serving the purposes of higher education and that of the mission and vision of the university and meets the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) requirements.

Curriculum refers to the total learning experiences of individuals in a structure which can be in a university, school or society (Bilbao et al., 2008). Fraser & Bosanquet (2006) as cited in O'Neill, 2010 categorised curriculum based on the understanding of academic staff as the structure and content of a unit (subject); the structure and content of a programme of study; the students' experience of learning and a dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning. In the view of defining curriculum, Neary (2003) as cited in O'Neill, (2010) highlighted two curriculum models, namely: the product and process model. The product model emphasises on plans and intentions while the process model emphasises on the activities and effects. Gosper and Ifenthaler, (2014) highlighted the difference in understanding of the concept of curriculum by theorists and practitioners in higher education.

Theorist (Grundy 1987) framed curriculum as a way of organising educational practices based on rationales product, practice and praxis. The product model focuses on reproducing knowledge for a defined outcome, practice emphasised on the development of understanding in order to make judgements and apply knowledge and praxis focuses on critical reflection with outcomes determined by the community of learners. Print (1993) as cited in Gosper & Ifenthaler (2014) defined curriculum form an instrumental approach offering three perspectives: curriculum as an experience, intentions and process. Curriculum as an experience is defined by a set of planned learning experiences encountered by students, as an intention characterised by predetermined aims,

goals and objectives describing what students should learn and as a process emphasising on personal growth and self actualisation through experiential learning.

From a practitioners' perspective curriculum can be conceived as a blue print of actions including the purpose (goals, aims), content, learner needs, learning activities, instrumental process and resources, assessment and evaluation methods (Gosper & Ifenthaler, 2014). In view of the above descriptions, I can say curriculum includes all that contributes to learning process of the students.

3.3 Curriculum alignment: macro and micro

Curriculum alignment ensures coherence and helps avoiding fragmented and burdened curriculum with too many isolated bits of information. Two levels of curriculum alignment exist: macro and micro. Curriculum alignment at macro level is large scale and focuses on ensuring that curriculum instructional practices and assessment are aligned. Curriculum documents at macro level usually focus on aims/objectives, content and also sometimes a rationale, on occasion accompanied by an allocation of time (Kuiper, Folmer & Ottevanger (2013). The macro level engages more in policy issues while the micro levels concentrates on the facilitation of learning of specific identified leaning outcomes (Ragan, Smith & Curda, 2008).

Biggs' constructive alignment is an approach to curriculum design that has to do with what the student is to learn given the specific learning outcomes, it is much more of curriculum alignment at micro level. The student has a responsibility to construct meaning through relevant learning activities which must be properly aligned by the teacher. It is the teachers' responsibility to set up a learning environment that supports the learning activities appropriate to achieve the desired learning outcomes (Biggs, 2004). The curriculum and its intended outcomes, the teaching strategies used, the assessment tasks must be aligned to each other for effective learning (Biggs, 1999; Biggs, 2004 & Biggs, 2011). As a reflective practitioner, I see such an alignment making it possible for students to be responsible and committed to learning. Biggs' model is student-centered and outcome focused, and has been very influential in the area of staff development relating to learning and teaching (Walsh, 2007). This clearly indicates that constructive alignment is underpinned by a product curriculum.

Curriculum should be a process of constant evolution in response to an ever changing world (Watermeyer, 2011). Therefore it needs to be revised after a certain period of time to ensure quality and responsiveness to the market needs. Curriculum development is a process which goes through

different stages and is undertaken after every specified period defined by an educational institution concerned (Khan & Law, 2015).

Some of the changes that affects higher education institutions are as a result of contextual factors, as mentioned in chapter 1 amongst them are massification, inadequate financial resources and the use of technologies. (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

3.3.1 UNAM MBChB programme at macro level

The school of medicine is relatively new. The MBChB programme started in 2010 and the first intake graduated in April 2016. New programmes are always faced with challenges and subjected to critiques. Therefore the curriculum must be reviewed and revised to make sure that it meets ends. The standing MBChB programme for the school of medicine at UNAM was reviewed in 2015 to make sure it meets stakeholders' requirements.

3.3.1.1 Purposes of higher education and the mission and vision of UNAM

Higher education is undergoing major changes which brings challenging relationships at the society level with the state and students as consumers while the world of work is surrounded by competition and markertisation (Barnett, 2004). The MBChB programme was designed to be offered for five years at the beginning. During the time of offer there were revisions of the curriculum and a change was made for it to run for six years.

The vision and mission of UNAM appearing on the university's webpage (www.unam.edu.na) were stated in section 1.2.2. Analysing the vision and mission of the university, I can confidently say that the curriculum is committed to the purposes of higher education. Their purpose are to shape students to become productive and competitive human resources that are able to build the economy of the nation. During teaching and learning, students are exposed to the communities where patients with health medical conditions are from and they analyse them critically. In this way, the quality of life through health concerns will be improved.

Our university has a mentorship policy that makes use of the university's wealth of internal capability. It is a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another person (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth. Mentorship is for both the students and staff members. Students that are new to the university life could be faced with challenges that could

affect their academic, social, spiritual, mental and physical wellbeing. At high school, they were used to being under tight supervision and structured programs, but when they enter varsity which is more independent and very demanding life, the transition makes it difficult to figure out by some students. Therefore, they are advised, guided and supported outside the lecture room in the form of mentorship groups and sessions.

Mentorship support system at UNAM is established for lecturer to student, student to student and staff to staff. Staff to staff mentoring requires expatriates to transfer skills to the locals. Expatriate skills and mentorship and understudy appointment are needed to realise the national goals (Lindji, 2016). However, Ravu & Parker (2015) indicated type of knowledge, willingness to learn and share on the part of both expatriates and locals and national culture as factors impacting the success of knowledge transfer from expatriates to locals. Africa is known for shortage of skills and it is very true for Namibia that has been depended on foreign doctors and it is obvious that local medical teachers are not available. There is a need for strict control of skills transfer otherwise the country will forever be depended on knowledge from the west instead of Africanising.

3.3.1.2 Curriculum responsiveness

Knowledge and information are a means of promoting economic and productive capacities at the society level and described by today's world as the knowledge society, the information society or the learning society (Moll, 2004). This is actually true because without knowledge and information not much can be achieved. The establishment of the MBChB programme in Namibia has been a government's dream since independence (Isaacs, 2008). This came about when the government complained that the public health system depends on foreign doctors. Programmes at UNAM are designed to meet human national resource requirement through quality teaching, research consultancy and community service. The current socio-economic-political context of Namibia is in support of the MBChB qualification because if Namibia happens to have enough doctors specifically trained in the country, they will not have to spent a lot of resources in either flying doctors from other countries as well as flying out patients with difficult cases for treatment. The life expectancy for the citizens might improve.

The purpose of the UNAM MBChB degree program is to produce health professionals whose knowledge, professional skills, and practice in medicine are in tune with the needs of society (practice patterns, and scientific advancements). The training accommodates the learning environment conducive to the pursuit of professional competence by health workers, while

providing quality services to the community and undertaking relevant translational research for enhancement of health. The school will continually strive for the establishment of training programs in a wide spectrum of health disciplines and lending support to the human resource development initiatives of the country, including post-graduate education of physicians and scientists. The programme is responsive to the purposes of higher education, the needs of the students and the needs of the society, labour market, broader economic, socio-cultural and nation at large.

The graduates are expected to satisfy exit outcomes before entering medical internship that composed of several competences designed to produce a medical graduate who is not only a physician, but is also a scientist and scholar exhibiting the qualities of the seven star doctor listed in section 1.2.2.

The admission of students to the programme is highly controlled because there are a lot of students that seek access for the MBChB qualification. This is made to make sure that the school only admits the number of students that is manageable due the available health facilities. Although there is a dire need of doctors in the country the establishment of the school to train them faces many challenges such as approved training health facilities and trainers to students ratio, which should first be addressed before admitting the number that would respond to the need.

3.3.1.3 Curriculum paradigms

There are views and interests that lie behind a curriculum. There are three paradigms in curriculum theory. According to Luckett (1995), the three curriculum paradigms are traditionalist, hermeneutic and critical paradigm. With the understanding I gathered from the three paradigms, I can say the MBChB programme is designed having a traditionalist paradigm (product) in mind whereby outcomes/objectives are set to reach certain outputs. However, it does not only end by stating the outcomes/objectives, it further emphasise the learning processes that are involved to achieve them. Generally, the medical curriculum is shifting to a hermeneutic paradigm (process) which has a leg on the critical paradigm (praxis). In the process of executing the curriculum it is shaped by contextual factors where the teachers and students are the role players. The programme is underpinned by praxis because there is a critical reflection of cases and issues concerning health that are determined by the communities where the learning is taking place.

The work of Tyler (1949) and Schwab (1969) are into play in bringing up the curriculum. The curriculum allows the wider knowledge but does not ignore local knowledge where it is socially

constructed by the students and promotes creativity and the development of personalised knowledge that fit to serve Namibian cases. This is done to make sure that students understand their own (African) context.

3.3.1.4 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) requirements

There are agencies/bodies/processes within and outside the university that ensure that quality and standards of the offered programmes are met. Internal structures are the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) and Centre for Professional Development, Teaching and Learning Improvement (CPDTLI). According to its webpage, the aim of CEQUAM is to develop the university's capabilities in the area of Quality Assurance in order to improve and update academic and managerial activities. It is also responsible for administering and facilitating the operationalisation of UNAM's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy and Procedures. Quality Assurance activities at UNAM are regulated by its own Quality Assurance Policy as well as the National Quality Assurance System for Higher Education under the auspices of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and some provisions of the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) statute. CPDTLI exists for the purpose of improved quality of teaching and learning which can be attained through effective, sustained, site-based and responsive professional development.

Outside the university, there are national agencies such as Namibia Qualification Authority (NQA) which manages the NQF and National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) which accredits programmes and audits higher education institutions.

The MBChB programme at UNAM is pitched at NQF level 8, with 1036 credits. It runs for six solid years at a minimum. Additionally, it is an outcome-based programme. Furthermore, has exit programme outcomes in the form of competences which the graduates must satisfy in order to enter a medical internship immediately after completion.

All medical doctors that graduated from UNAM for the first time in 2016 were registered as medical interns with the Medical and Dental Council of Namibia (Nakale, 2016). This indicates that the MBChB qualification has met the prescribed requirements for registration as set by the stakeholders.

3.3.2 MBChB programme at micro level using Biggs' constructive alignment

The UNAM school of medicine has been in the news reported to produce half-baked graduates because of the flaws in the curriculum where the number of modules offered per subject is less than those studied internationally thus endangering the country's medical health future (Nghidengwa, 2014). The standing MBChB programme for the school of medicine at UNAM was reviewed in 2015 to meet stakeholders' requirements.

3.3.2.1 Purpose of the programme

The purpose of the MBChB programme is clear, realistic and as it intends to produce health professionals whose knowledge, professional skills, and practice in medicine are in tune with the needs of society. It is motivating because it accommodates the learning environment conducive to the pursuit of professional competence by health workers, while providing quality services to the community and undertaking relevant translational research for enhancement of health. The school will continually strive for the establishment of training programs in a wide spectrum of health disciplines and lending support to the human resource development initiatives of the country, including post-graduate education of physicians and scientists. The school is mandated to prepare graduates for the medical degree of the University of Namibia. The curriculum is underpinned by a product paradigm which informs teachers and learners as to how to reach to effective teaching and learning.

3.3.2.2 Learning outcomes

The MBChB programme outcomes are aligned with NQF requirements, the level and the credits are mentioned in section 3.3.1.4. The curriculum and the graduates are expected to satisfy requirements set by the Medical and Dental Council of Namibia in order for the graduates to be registered and enter into medical internship after graduation, and upon completion of internship they could be registered as medical practitioner.

The registered medical practitioners will be expected to be able to provide evidence based general medical care at a district hospital or similar setting and also manage the district health system. Additionally, graduates will be competent and be able to manage a private practice. Furthermore, they should be able to seek further training in research or specialisation. In their practice, they will be expected to remain competent throughout their professional life and be able to initiate and participate in change. Registration of the UNAM medical graduates by the Medical and Dental Council of Namibia is an indication that the MBChB qualification has met the prescribed requirements.

The curriculum intends to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in their field of work, have the necessary skills that could lead them to solve critical problems and demonstrate certain competencies. Amongst the core competencies are patients care competences, competences in emergency care, competences for communication, inter-professional activities, research and evidence based public health practice, leadership and health systems management, and competences of self-directed learning activities and professionalism. The medical graduate is also expected to be a scientist and a scholar with the qualities of the seven star doctor.

3.3.2.3 Structure and knowledge of the programme

The curriculum of the programme is structured in a way that pre-clinical modules are given to students in their first year before getting into clinical modules in the later years. So, there is alignment between individual modules that are offered within the MBChB curriculum.

Many established medical schools in Africa have derived their curricula and pedagogies from European colonial era models which were imposed on the African schools without taking into account the local population's needs and environmental contexts (Eichbaum, et al., 2015). Similarly, Bleakley et al (2011) in Eichbaum, et al., (2015) cautioned that, "medical educational

strategies cannot be cooked up in western universities and then be exported.” They must be context specific and fit the purpose, formulated in the heat of practice.”

Although the modules within the MBChB curriculum use international recommended books and journals, the local/ regional knowledge is not ignored. So the curriculum is done in consultation with other medical institutions of the region. Medical schools in southern Africa have created a group called Consortium of New Southern African Medical Schools (CONSAMS) where they could effectively achieve health care, strengthening and capacitation (Eichbaum, et al., 2015). The group consists of five new medical schools in southern Africa (Namibia, Zambia, Botswana, Lesotho and Mozambique) and two facilitating northern partners (Vanderbilt University in the United States and Oulu University in Finland). They aim to support each other through south-to-south and north-to-south collaborations, and the sharing of faculty, resources, and innovations. The students of our school in their third year do translocate for some months to the rural impoverished areas in the north of the country where they live among the indigenous families and learn about their lifestyles, diets, and medical issues. Working in this “heat of practice,” they come with an enhanced understanding of the country’s health care challenges, and the kinds of competencies required for working in rural contexts (Eichbaum, et al., 2015).

Assessment tasks of the modules within the MBChB programme are done based on the intended learning outcomes. According to Hussey & Smith, (2008), learning outcomes have been used by education managers to measure performance of both teachers and students. The teachers can draw up assessment criteria which can be distributed to assessors and assessed alike (Hussey & Smith, 2002). Learning outcomes must be specified with precision, must differ according to the level of teaching and learning concerned. When used to specify quality of work at any of the levels, there is a need to be able to distinguish between the different grades. There is need for consistency and uniformity and a vocabulary of precise descriptors to enable specifying the outcome exactly and to distinguish clearly between the levels.

James and Brown (2005) as cited in Hussey & Smith (2008) distinguished seven categories of learning outcomes: (1) Attainments: generally involving a mastery of specific rules or mental procedures associated with particular tasks, and frequently open to straightforward traditional means of assessment. (2) Understanding: of ideas, concepts and processes. (3) Cognitive and creative: which is imaginative construction of meaning, arts or performance. (4) Using: how to

practice, manipulate, behave and engage in processes or systems. (5) Higher-order learning: is about advanced thinking, reasoning and metacognition. (6) Dispositions: is about attitudes, perceptions and motivations. (7) Membership, inclusion, self-worth: these reflect the learners' affinity towards, readiness to participate in and sense of worthwhile contribution to the group where the learning takes place.

Learning outcomes can be valuable when used properly but are also misused (Hussey & Smith, 2008 and Hussey & Smith, 2002). Its use is criticised, therefore many design their modules with the content of the syllabus, contact time allotted, level or year, appropriate texts and the best mode assessment rather than with the learning outcomes (Hussey & Smith, 2002). When learning outcomes are used in individual teaching events, they are the most useful kind if employed flexibly, but that they cannot be specified exactly or used for auditing performance and their relationship with assessment is complex (Hussey & Smith, 2008). Each department and individual lecturers at our school have the autonomy on deciding how they want their students to get to know what is expected of them such as content and concepts.

Some learning outcomes cannot be measured directly by an assessment exercise. Learning outcomes specified for modules or short courses state little more than a list of contents; they cannot be stated precisely and have limitations in guiding assessment. Within the modules covered in the MBChB programme, the topics for each level are specified. Learning outcomes that are specified for whole degree programmes is a misuse of the term learning outcome (Hussey & Smith, 2008). As to the usefulness of degree programme learning outcomes in guiding assessment, this would depend on the structure of the degree. Often marks obtained from individual modules form up the attainment of the degree programme. There are stipulations about weighting differences between modules of different levels within our curriculum.

3.4 Relationship between knowledge and disciplinary/ field structures and curriculum development

A curriculum puts into account knowledge structures which is a statement of about what is 'to count' as learning in a given domain of enquiry and about how learning should progress during a nominated period of apprenticeship (Macken-Horarik, 2011).

Knowledge structures builds on the work of Bernstein's analysis of intellectual fields which started in the mid-1980s with the analysis of curricular and pedagogic practices in educational fields. Bernstein's pedagogical device has been used in many fields as a means of facilitating a deeper, more explicit understanding of the nature of the disciplines and the values underpinning them, the kind of curriculum emerging from it and the student identities (Clarence-Fincham & Naidoo, 2013).

Bernstein (1999) divides knowledge structures into two forms: horizontal and hierarchical. A horizontal knowledge structure, which is representative of the humanities and social sciences, defined as a series of specialised languages with specialised codes of interrogation and criteria for the construction and circulation of texts (Bernstein, 1999). On the other hand, hierarchical knowledge structures, is representative of the natural sciences, and is defined as a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure which is hierarchically organised.

Most of the students that enter to study medicine at UNAM SoM are fresh from high schools that do not have a background or knowledge of medicine. Although they have done basic life science subjects up to grade 12, some do not have an idea of the modules they would encounter in a journey towards their prospective profession. Therefore, if curriculum is not given the necessary attention in consideration of knowledge structures, it may lead to knowledge blindness which Maton (2014) mentioned.

Occasionally, you may find students that are not interested in learning modules that are the basis of medicine 'pre-clinical modules' such as biochemistry, physiology, anatomy and ethics because they imagine themselves as medical practitioners and don't see a necessity of covering such content. They turn only to realise later in the middle of studying when they are referred to recall certain concepts covered in early modules. Maton (2004) mentioned that these kinds of students enter higher education with their own problems that later face institutions with dramatic changes. Some students register for the course simply because their parents want them to do it. In the process of teaching and learning you will find yourself 'leading a deer to drink while it does not want to drink at all'.

Our MBChB students are trained professionally based on what is expected of them when they complete. The training focuses on the evidence based scenarios where they learn to analyse and solve situations. They are trained to the extent of being more than a student because they are imagined behind the counter as medical practitioners.

Pressure of time and administrative roles were identified being greatest challenges to an epistemologically diverse curriculum by the academic staff in higher education context in South Africa and Internationally (Clarence- Fincham & Naidoo, 2013). This seems a worldwide problem that academics feel like have little time to do what they can do best for education. It was also emphasised that academics need to have access to the discourse of education studies where they can get new insights as disciplinary specialists that lead to the reconceptualisation of both the curriculum and associated pedagogic practice. Therefore, reconceptualisation of the curriculum goes beyond classroom demands to broader knowledge domains and curriculum created issues that inform pedagogic practice.

The structure of knowledge in a given discipline has an impact on how teachers teach and how students learn within the discipline (Myers, 2016). Having an understanding of the structure of knowledge, particularly in a discipline with a hierarchical knowledge structure, is a valuable guide to knowing why teaching and learning activities should be planned in a certain sequence.

Luckett (2001) proposed an epistemically diverse curriculum in which four ways of knowing and learning in forms of quadrants were developed for all higher education curricular. The four quadrants are propositional knowledge, (foundational competence), practical knowledge (practical competence), experiential knowledge (personal competence) and epistemic knowledge (reflexive competence).

Emphasis of an epistemically diverse curriculum by Luckett (2001) concluded with ten key implication considerations.

1. A uniform curriculum structure would enable different types of learning in different context treated comparably in the system.
2. Extensive staff development and building of professional capacity of academics as educators for the design, teaching and assessment of learning in quadrants. Sharing of the vision of the curriculum at institutions/ departments would make academics commit and feel ownership of the process. There is a need for rewards and promotions to change in recognition of good teaching and innovative curriculum development.

It is a practice in most universities that promotion is only based on publication; the promotion at our institution is also based mainly on publication otherwise ‘you perish’. Even if academics are made

to understand curriculum design and whatever it entails for it to be diverse, when there is no reward or any sort of recognition, they will devote much of their attention to something that will bring a flourishing change in their lifetime, therefore a need to re-look at criteria for reward and promotion at higher education institution and at UNAM in particular.

3. Ensure any learning pathway through the higher education system exposes the learner in differing degrees of all types of learning quadrants.

Our graduates by the time they exit from the MBChB programme are thoroughly developed in all four ways of knowing and learning namely: cognitive learning of propositional knowledge, learning by doing for the application of disciplinary knowledge, learning experientially and developing epistemic cognition as mentioned by Luckett (2001).

4. There is a need to form partnerships with other institutions and sites (be it public, private, civic and informal) of learning, because it is not feasible for institutions to own all the human resources they need. Higher education institutions will have to explore the training, recognition and rewarding of mentors from the partnership sites. Collaborating may change the higher institutions research and teaching agendas.

The establishment of CONSAMS as mentioned in section 3.3.2.3 is for the purpose of strengthening and capacitation. The aim is to support each other through south-to-south and north-to-south collaborations, and sharing of faculty, resources, and innovations (Eichbaum et al., 2015). Our school has benefitted very much from the partnership whereby facilitating partner university staff have been involved in the teaching and learning and also involved very much in shaping the MBChB curriculum at the time of revising it.

5. For feasible learnerships, there is a need to explore links with the ministry of labour in promotion of learnerships in the training sector and also with youth commission's idea of national service at policy level. Student learnerships have genuine benefit to hosting organisation/ community and there would be no need for further funding such a curriculum.

The MBChB programme is designed in a way for the students to have hands on patients. Therefore, there is an agreement with the Ministry of Health and Social services for the students go around the selected state and private hospitals in order for comply with and complete the curriculum. When students are attached to the hospitals, as they rotate in the wards, the community benefits from their service because cases are treated with urgency. Students become experienced and competent in their work.

6. Teaching and learning in higher education institutions must change to knowledge workers focusing on configuring knowledge to a wide range of applications.

7. With the improved information technology systems; teaching and learning could be achieved via information and communication technologies in quadrant 1; this mean academics will have to let go of some pet areas of propositional knowledge. However, it has to be ensured that students have the skills to access the required information as it will be no longer in the curriculum.

The use of information technologies promotes opportunities of knowledge sharing throughout the world to the teachers and students in a more productive fashion (Hussian & Safdar, 2008). Today's students are in this era of technologies where the information is available everywhere and not just owned by a teacher. The uses of platforms such as Whatsapp, Facebook and Moodle have made teaching and learning easier in this era. Our MBChB students use these information technologies to convey educational and instructional information to each other and search the web to keep them informed.

However, older staff academics view information technologies differently because they find it hard to keep up with new technologies (Tacken, Macellini, Mollenkopf, Ruoppila & Szeman, 2005). The MBChB curriculum is taught by a combination of age groups. Some did not use any of the technology in use during their time and therefore feel uneasy with its use.

8. Establishment of local partnerships is an essential strategy for distance learning in higher education institutions in which learning is considered in quadrant 3 and 4. Human interaction is required and it is enriched by learnership peer groups, email chat rooms and one-on-one with a lecturer, tutor or mentor.

Some of the qualities that our SoM wants graduates to exhibit are researcher and lifelong learning. The medical profession requires someone to continually develop him/herself and therefore having gone through the whole programme which exposes them to the four quadrants of knowing and learning would make it possible to manage distance learning.

9. Higher education institutions would move away from testing of retention and reproduction of propositional knowledge to assessing a range of competencies via a range of appropriately selected assessment methods. Assessment need to shift from norm-referencing to criterion-referencing and from generalisable results to a reliance on comparable and validated professional judgement. These helps in developing high levels of local assessment expertise both within and

without the higher education institutions. In addition, the use of peer and self-assessment could develop reflexive, evaluative and epistemic competence in quadrant 3 and 4.

Our teaching staffs are allowed to practice a variety of innovative methods of assessing the students, especially senior students are assessed extensively on competencies that will help them in their profession. Since each student is different, we grade our students on the basis of their own work against set criteria, so we use criterion-referencing in assessment in our departments at SoM as discussed in chapter 5.

10. Students must consider themselves as actors and co-creators of the curriculum and take responsibility of own learning and to be prepared for the effort involved in personal transformation.

The curriculum takes into account the context in which the teaching and learning is taking place, this is to help the students to have a good understanding of the community in which many would practice. The students are exposed to study the kinds of disease or cases that are encountered in Namibia. It is on this background that although there are international recommended books and journals prescribed for main reading, regional knowledge is considered most important in medicine. So emphasis is given to what is prevalent in the region of study or country where teaching and learning is taking place. In addition, according to Knowles principles of adult learning, as discussed in chapter 2, adult students are goal oriented and are responsible in making personal decisions. They are assumed to prefer self-direction in determining the goals and outcomes of their learning.

I mentioned earlier that most students entering our MBChB programme are fresh from high schools, I agree with Wolff & Hoffman (2014) who stated “who you are appears to matter as much, if not more, than what you know”. This statement, brought me to a thought of ‘what if someone who does not have any background of basic life science but has a dream of becoming a medical doctor is brought in the programme’, just to see how the person will do academically. Surely, a determined adult student would make it and might outperform the others if the knowledge structures of the curriculum and an epistemically diverse curriculum are well developed.

3.5 The role of an academic in curriculum development

I have not been actively involved in curriculum development because of lack of understanding. I remember there was a team building where the SoM had a week out of campus and the theme was curriculum development. I attended, but my thinking was the management members and few other colleagues are probably trained or majored in curriculum design and development. However, in the

absence of little understanding I realised that I have been involved in curriculum development where I have been giving inputs based on my experiences on teaching on the existing curriculum.

Now that I got exposed to curriculum through the PGDHE, I am a reflective practitioner who understands the role I have to play as far as curriculum development in my institution is concerned. For a curriculum to sound, its content must have a purpose in which the objectives are well defined, the methods of delivery are clearly stated and the measurements of the curriculum outcomes must be in place. The curriculum process and documentations must be critiqued to the extent of making it epistemically diverse. The curriculum paradigms (product, process or praxis) must be considered. There must be quality assurance and control measures which are looking at the standards of the curriculum. The curriculum must not ignore the needs of the stakeholders. Furthermore the curriculum must be properly aligned, it must be coherent and putting in consideration the articulation gaps. Factors such as relevance of readiness of students, depth of the curriculum and bench marking with other universities inform the development of curriculum to the large extend.

Additionally, to enable a principled curriculum development and transformation practices at the SoM. I have to consider the knowledge types that are in the curriculum whether it is responding to national economic and social needs and bringing up human emancipation and therefore decolonisation. The curriculum must be considering equal access for all people whereby previously disadvantaged communities are considered and at the same time promoting efficiency of higher education and integrating up to date teaching technologies. A continuous critical evaluation of the curriculum is required in order to implement and make it diverse.

3.6 Quality assurance principles and processes at UNAM

The structures such as CEQUAM, CPDTLI, NQA and NCHE as discussed in section 3.3.1.4 ensure of the quality and standards of the programmes offered at UNAM.

3.7 Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion, various curriculum theories, paradigms and approaches were discussed. These theories and paradigms provide the context within which I implement reflective teaching approaches at the classroom level. As a reflective practitioner, I need to know the paradigm that underpins the curriculum that I offer as well as its assumptions and beliefs about student learning. This will help me to reflect and improve my teaching and student learning.

The next chapter will present teaching and learning in higher school which is informed by curriculum.

CHAPTER 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

4.1 Introduction

The first three chapters dealt with broader issues of context in high education, principles of adult learning, curriculum design and development. I see the present chapter on teaching and learning in higher education as an opportunity to develop further and to concretise my reflective practitioner approach.

This chapter aims to design an appropriate and theoretically informed teaching and learning strategy of the course I teach. It reviews the available teaching and learning practices in my school (SoM) or department using the concepts of structure, culture and agency. It further analyzes the philosophies and strategies using theories of teaching and learning in higher education. The analysis puts into consideration the roles of a contemporary university teacher.

4.2 Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is very different in the twenty first century as compared to earlier times. Broadfoot (2002) defined education as all what happens in schools and universities in which teachers provide and the students absorb. However, research into teaching and learning offers insights into experiences of academics and students in higher education where teaching and learning has shifted from transmission of knowledge to student centred (Northedge, 2003a). In the process of teaching and learning students acquire knowledge, skills, values and beliefs of good education (Maphosa & Mudzielwana, 2014). To make it clear, good education is a teaching that helps students to take control of their learning where they use metacognitive in order to achieve intended outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Characteristics of students acquired from the education processes are observed when graduates could think effectively and critically. For example, this is when students are able to relate, apply and theorise what they have learnt (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Effective teaching and learning in higher education depends on the social settings namely: structure, culture and agency that co-exist, therefore it will be discussed in the next sections.

4.2.3 Teaching and learning agenda or strategy

Teaching and learning agenda or strategy informs the teaching and learning processes and procedures in the institution of higher learning. It gives a university an identity that differentiates it from others and sets a tone for the way teaching and learning is done (Maphosa & Mudzielwana, 2014). Furthermore, it articulates a university's specific commitments relating to learning and teaching (Maphosa & Mudzielwana, 2014). They further indicated that a successful teaching and

learning strategy can be designed and implemented by stakeholders, staff, students and managers across and within the institution. It has become a practice at our school for students to be represented in some committee where decisions concerning them are made.

A teaching and learning strategy outlines the mission and vision, objectives, teaching philosophies and roles and responsibilities of a university, and informs how teaching and learning should be carried out. It also ensures that the success of the agenda can be measured against the set objectives (Maphosa & Mudzielwana, 2014). Additionally, the context in which teaching and learning is conducted is spelled out in the teaching and learning agenda. Archer (1996) as cited in Maphosa & Mudzielwana, (2014) indicated that context has a bearing on enabling and constraining cultural, structural and agential conditions for the effective implementation of the agenda.

A teaching and learning agenda designed without considering the contemporary contextual factors may face challenges and would not be implemented effectively. A situation of budget cuts is at hand now at our university in which we are being reminded everyday by the institution management. If a teaching and learning agenda is to be designed currently without considering this situational context, it will definitely not work. UNAM has been receiving an adequate budget of N\$ 1.1 billion when it had only 21 000 students in the past three years, and it is now reduced with 40% for 24 000 students (Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), 2017); this is a big impact. In this case, when our department intends to buy additional equipments and sometimes consumables needed for teaching in the laboratory, the requisition is sometimes rejected by finance department due to budget constraints. So, we end up with students crowded at one station and waiting for others to finish because they have to share.

Currently there is no document in the name of teaching and learning strategy/agenda in my school and/ or department at UNAM. However, there are some documents such as teaching and learning policy, mentorship policy, assessment policy, curriculum for programmes and study guides for individual modules that are in support of teaching and learning at our school. So, in its absence, I will discuss the teaching and learning strategy/agenda in general and this can inform a strategy that need to be designed for our school/department. I will generally critique teaching and learning based on reflection of my own teaching and observations of my colleagues' teachings.

The social realist theory of Margreth Archer uses a lens which looks at the social world and analyses structure, culture and agency. According to Case (2015); structure is a domain of social

positions and roles, culture is the world of ideas, myths and beliefs and includes the world of propositional knowledge and agency is the domain of human action and interaction. Agency plays a central role because it involves personal and psychological make up of individuals, their social roles and the capacity people have to act in voluntary ways. The action of people can make changes to the structures as they have the powers to re-shape or retain the structural or existing ideas/beliefs of the agenda. The theory advocates for morphogenesis in agency or culture or structure.

4.3 The interplay of structure, culture and agency at UNAM

In the education system in higher education; people being either academics, management or students have influences on the ideas, beliefs, values because they decide on the ideologies, theories and concepts that underpins teaching and learning. On the other hand, academics or students occupy positions and have roles in certain units, committees that involves decision making which later becomes policies that governs the teaching and learning. Therefore, from the education point of view where teaching and learning is a process in a university, one of the aim of contemporary teachers is to produce graduates who will leave the university with a changed mind set, will have different knowledge and could do effective changes in the society than before. So, the student has a major role of an agency because of the observable changes of action after learning and they would have the potential of life long learners.

In discussing structure and agency, Broadfoot (2002) wrote “it is the right and duty of the government to conceive policies about what should be taught, to whom and how, and that having been conceived, such policies will be realised in institutions and classrooms through the directive power of governments”. I see this relates to social realist theory in the interaction of structure and agency.

The CPDTLI centre at an institutional level is responsible for teaching and learning. I feel it is supposed to make sure a teaching and learning agenda is available. A detailed purpose of CPDTLI was discussed in section 3.3.1.4. At faculty, school and department level, I think, the Deans of the school and the head of departments must ensure that the teaching and learning agenda is implemented.

I also feel that the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) should inform the teaching and learning agenda. CEQUAM’s aim was discussed in section 3.3.1.4.

In the absence of the teaching and learning agenda at the school and at the university at large, each lecturer approaches teaching of students from their own perspective in order to achieve the objectives of the modules and or to cover the contents. This means, the teaching and learning at our institution is influenced by varieties of teaching cultures that depends mainly on where an individual is coming from. Culture is very dominant in a social setting as it occupies human mind and human who are the agency will turn to be influenced by the communities/societies they are. It has also been taken for granted at higher institutions that teaching is common sense and most of us imitate our teachers. Oleson & Hora (2014) indicated that faculty teaches the way they were taught, often model their teachers and draw upon a varied repertoire of knowledge and prior experiences. I tend to agree because there are some good jokes that were made in class by some of my own teachers when I was a student and I find myself making them with my students today.

According to Biggs & Tang (2011), what the lecturer does when interacting with students could lead to quality teaching. We need to move away from the traditional approach of teaching and learning while we encourage methods of metacognition and self management. I sometimes start my lessons with case studies followed by questions where I expect students to answer, and I derive the learning outcome from the case studies. I have also made use of giving topics to students to teach their peers, a method they do not appreciate because it feels as they are doing my job.

In the absence of a teaching and learning agenda, it placed some academics in the inherited/traditional culture as they were taught by their teachers. Each one does it the way that suits them without considering whether students achieved the outcomes or not and this indicates that teaching is not linked to assessment. The other reason why most of us still teach in the traditional approach is because we are not informed by the discourses around teaching and learning in higher education and we do not have proper training in teaching and often felt that education is not our discipline.

I always recall a scenario that happened at our school during the student lecturer forum when students demanded to be provided with the power point presentation slides. The associate Dean at that time responded that the school agreed not to provide students with power points. The lecturers gave their views in response to that and reasoned that they have never seen any document addressing teaching and learning at the school where it has mentioned students not to be provided with notes or power point slides. Both the students and the lectures are under a culture, the students

are very much used to be provided with the notes and therefore do not want to make their own notes (resistance to adopt/ let go off a culture).

Teaching at our university requires an individual to have a Master's degree or higher in the discipline and it does not pay attention to a teaching qualification. Additionally, research is considered a factor for promotion and therefore a culture of either you publish or perish has been adopted by many institutions of higher learning in the world (Rawat & Meena, 2014) and by UNAM as well. I am not saying discipline specific postgraduate qualifications such as Masters and PhD are not important in teaching and learning of students, but the concern is academics might just be experts in research and not necessarily good teachers in higher education. It is true that publication brings more funding in institutions and it is vital to growth and career progression for individuals. Rawat & Meena (2014) cautioned it not to be done at the expense of medical education of the students. Similarly, Zuzovsky (2005) cautioned policymakers who tend to conclude that formal education, certification of teachers and procurement of a major in the subject of teaching are not indicators of quality and pointed out other indicators that should be added to the models that try to associate teachers' required qualifications with students' achievement outcomes. These are indicators of quality teaching, which might not be easy to measure, and are attributes such as enthusiasm, motivation, charisma, ability to convey ideas clearly and verbal ability.

The overall mission and vision of the institution should align with the teaching and learning agenda (Maphosa & Mudzielwana, 2014). The UNAM's vision and mission was provided in section 1.2.2. The mission has put teaching, research and advisory services as core to providing our customers with productive and competitive human resources. Smith, (2005) cited in Maphosa & Mudzielwana, (2014) indicated that a mission describes the purpose, values and character of an institution. It is however amazing that both teaching and research are emphasised in the vision and mission of our institution, but research is mainly linked to promotion. Having the mission and vision will make it easy to come up with the teaching and learning agenda.

In the view of the mission, the SoM's teaching and learning agenda must be designed to produce graduates with identities that will satisfy the stakeholders. Our exiting medical graduates are expected to be equipped with a number of competences, not only being a physician, but also a scientist and scholar exhibiting the qualities of the seven star doctor mentioned in section 1.2.2. Therefore, the teaching and learning agenda would give directions in the process of teaching and

learning which would result into our graduates to have attributes that are associated with UNAM in communities.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) are national quality assurance agencies that regulate quality at UNAM at a national level. NCHE (2015) & NCHE (2016) has provided the Namibia Higher Education statistics, in which the enrolment rate for UNAM was 40.3%, 39.5%, and 40.9% for year 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively. Nevertheless the mission of the university, the student success rate is not so obvious because sometimes students struggles to pass. The examination results pass rate was 44.0%, 45.0 and 53.1% which showed an increasing trend, while the failure rate was 34.0%, 33.0% and 27.8% but the graduation rate was steady at 12.7%, 13.7% and 12.7% in 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively. Analysing the pass and failure rate, it can be deduced that of about 21% of UNAM students dropped out of their studies.

4.4 Teaching and learning practices in relation to theories

Luckett & Luckett (2009) proposed the learning theory that involved deep transformation of cognitive structure, identity and social structure. This equally relates to deep learning which Biggs & Tang (2011) refers to where students could relate, apply and theorise as compared to surface learning where learning is passive and students depends on making notes and memorising.

In the process of teaching and learning especially at an undergraduate level, it was observed that students are in the process of developing their personal and social identities (Luckett & Luckett, 2009). This is true for our students, when they are in first years they hardly express and speak out their dissatisfactions, but they start speaking out as they progress in years of study. It was recommended that students be given personal mentors who are hoped to provide them safe, unconstrained spaces where they can negotiate and try out emerging identities. Our school assigned each student a mentor who is either an academic or a student in senior years in order to help them realise their studies and assist them socially as well. The entire university has a mentorship policy that I mentioned earlier in section 3.3.1.1 for the purposes of helping students to develop their personal and social identities.

4.4.1 Socio cultural theories and mediation of student learning

Social-cultural theory is about how humans think through the creation and use of mediating tools (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman (2015). Vygotsky (1896-1934) who is the father of social-cultural

theory believed that the source of learning and development is found in social interaction rather than solely in the mind of individual. Construction of learning and development is achieved better with the assistance of an expert and appropriate mediating artefacts. This view led to Vygotsky's concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which made distinction on what an individual could achieve on her own and what she might achieve when assisted. Another concept of learning which is close to ZPD is scaffolding which enables an individual to achieve a goal which would be impossible if assistance was not provided.

In our institution, especially the SoM in executing teaching and learning, the focus is on student centred approach as per the curriculum. Students are responsible for their learning and the lecturer is mainly the facilitator. Nevertheless, some of us have been focused on the traditional approach, teaching as we were taught by our teachers, therefore teaching and learning agenda will set the record straight. This is directed towards the reflective practitioner.

4.4.2 Teaching and learning in relation to diversity and epistemological access

As the world is changing, institutions of higher learning are required to be competitive with other institutions regionally and globally, and therefore a need for UNAM with specific reference to SoM to design/ develop a teaching and learning agenda to ensure effective teaching and learning. If higher education institutions are to offer genuine opportunities to diverse student audiences, they cannot continue being knowledge transmitters, but required to focus on student centred which leave students with clear understanding (Northedge, 2003a). I came to an understanding that teaching and learning in the context of diversity is about having access to knowledge. It can be gained through participating in knowledge communities which presents intellectual and social challenges to newcomers. Additionally, teachers must be able to provide students with supported participation in the relevant knowledge community (Northedge, 2003a). Students need to participate initially as listeners and readers and later as speakers and writers in order to develop identities as members of the knowledge community and move from peripheral forums to more active, competent engagement with the community's central debates.

The shift from didactic method to student centred has been perceived with mixed feelings by students. Northedge, (2003b) indicated that his students felt that they have paid their good money to be taught as opposed to facilitation which he was doing for tutorials and summer school. Similarly, a colleague of mine who gave different topics to students for them to read and prepare presentations

to others; students were not happy and complained that they have paid money to be taught and not to teach themselves.

In addition, Northedge, (2003b) narrated three roles of a teacher as to lend students the capacity to participate in meaning, designing well planned excursion into unfamiliar discursive terrain and coaching the students in speaking the academic discourse. However, the understanding of some students is not yet at the level they are expected to be in higher education. Because, it is only through active participation which is additional to the facilitation by teacher that they could be responsible for their learning. Nevertheless, our medical students are introduced to the pre-clinical subjects in the early years of entering medical programme which they will be required to apply in later years of studies. Through the process of learning, they are placed in a journey where they are supposed to blend pre-clinical to clinical. In this process, they have access to skills laboratories with training manikins and accessories to prepare them for the real world. The mentality of students require a shift to position them at the level where the university wants to take them to. Without a teaching agenda and its implementation, individual trials would not be fruitful.

4.4.2.1 Academic literacy in teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is in the power of academic literacy which focuses on development of reading and writing competencies in a disciplinary field. Student generate knowledge in a progressive way where they go through levels, from a reproductive to a more elaborated and epistemic one, and will have the ability to act on the knowledge and transform it (Marinkovich, Velasquez, Cordova & Cid 2016). Our students in the medical degree throughout the process of learning are able to acquire the knowledge, as they start with individual pre-clinical modules and integrate them to make a meaning towards their qualification. They are required to transform the knowledge into practice as needed in clinical practice to build their skills every day. McWilliams & Allan (2014) concluded that a literacy component can be beneficial to students if embedded within their discipline specific course at foundation level. Our medical programme does not offer a specific academic literacy course where students can learn disciplinary knowledge but they collect pieces of their discipline from here and there. I see it would be a good practice if there could be such a course which the teaching and learning strategy must emphasise.

4.4.2.2 Threshold concepts in teaching and learning

In every programme there are knowledge and disciplinary structures as illustrated by Bernstein (1999). So, in the process of learning subject matters; one would come across core concepts of the

learning outcomes that are threshold concepts. They are concepts that are important or central to the mastery of the subject but problematic in designing effective learning environments within disciplines. They indicate the linkages to ways of thinking and practicing within these disciplines (Meyer & Land, 2003; Cousin, 2006). Students are often frustrated by threshold concepts because they are difficult and limit them from grasping and understanding the knowledge, therefore represent or lead to troublesome knowledge as described by Perkins (1999), cited in Meyer & Land (2003). Threshold concepts are seen as transformative, irreversible, integrative, bounded and troublesome knowledge (Meyer & Land, 2003, 2005; Cousin, 2006). These characteristics are true for the teaching and learning of our medical students which take place in the hospitals environment, it is good for them as they easily get used to repetitive terminologies that are common in their profession. Therefore, one can find that there is often a significant shift in the way they perceive the subject (transformative). They are unlikely to forget once they have learnt or seen certain clinical cases (irreversible) and they are able to relate or connect one clinical case to others (integrative).

4.5 Reflection on the teaching and learning strategy for UNAM

The teaching and learning strategy at UNAM will help the institution in terms of easy and effective execution of teaching and learning. It can also help in strategising the contemporary contextual factors. Existing documents such as mentorship policy, teaching and learning policy, curriculum for programmes and individual modules guide must be implemented and fully monitored. These documents must consider the social realist theory of Margreth Archer which analyses structure, culture and agency.

Units and centres within the university and external bodies that lead teaching and learning should get involved to the full capacity. Stakeholders who are the agency must be engaged so that whatever ideologies and cultures that are available can be diversified. Sensitive issues that are core to the university such as teaching and learning and research need to be re-looked.

The teaching and learning strategy would really shape our university to realise its mission and vision. The CPDTLI centre should lodge meetings with individual faculties in order to transform academics concerning teaching and learning in higher education institutions in today's world. When the academics themselves are transformed they can easily facilitate student mediation where they can effectively overcome bottlenecks and there can be transformation, irreversible and integration of the threshold concepts. They can also lead students to relevant knowledge communities where they can participate and develop relevant identities.

In addition, much of the focus should be directed to shifting to student centred and the learning theories that involve deep transformation of cognitive structure, identity and social culture. Vygotsky's concept: Zone of Proximal Development and also scaffolding need to be emphasised amongst academics to use it on students.

4.5.1 Constraints and enablements in the higher education context and that of UNAM

The context of higher education has changed, and therefore transformation needs to be observed amongst academics in institutions. When academics do not have teaching profession competencies, even if there is a well developed or designed curriculum in line with what stakeholders want to see in graduates the institution realisation is incomplete. Most academics only have knowledge in their subject matter, yet they are resisting taking development training due to reasons known to themselves. I went through an academic training where reflective practice become my daily role. It may feel as a waste of time because it is not bringing additional remuneration. For some, it is better for them to acquire higher qualifications such PhDs and do research that could lead them to publish papers in their discipline for promotion. Our institution has a publish or perish policy while there is no reward on teaching professional competencies is emphasised. Quinn, (2012) identified some cultural mechanisms and powers which had a conditioning influence on staff development structures and the responses of agents to staff development activities. Amongst the many responses, the staff felt that they are in support of subject specific training relevant to the lecturer, some felt staff development will interfere with autonomy/ academic freedom, it is better for whatever training to be done in the form of staff development and not student development, and being taught by educationalist would make the course packed up at the expense of good practice. However, other lecturers saw staff development and other educational development initiatives as a resource to help them cope with both the new cultural milieu and the new structural requirements. The responses collected by Quinn are similar to ideas that are expressed amongst my colleagues which show the same culture of resistance towards academic staff development in the field of higher education.

I see the Postgraduate Diploma in higher education in which I have gone through as an eye opener to the world of teaching and learning. Although the course started at a high note for me and there were times when I felt it was a lot of reading and understanding of concepts that are not in my discipline. I started reflecting and concentrated on concepts, theories and philosophies that are necessary to my practice and I have found meaning to teaching and learning in higher education. Through the course, I have found new ways of thinking academically and enabled me to meet some

challenges that would make students gain epistemological access. This is only possible if one decides to become an agent of change.

4.5.2 Roles of academics in teaching and learning strategy

Ramsden (2003) made it clear that the aim of teaching and learning is to make student learning possible. It involves attempts to alter the understanding of students so that they begin to conceptualise phenomena and ideas in the way that experts think. The three roles of a teacher were already mentioned in section 4.4.2 as narrated by Northedge (2003b). Analysing the roles of a teacher, I concluded that teachers are central to teaching and learning. Therefore, they should have knowledge and skills that are necessary to drive the teaching and learning strategy.

4.5.3 Knowledge and skills academics needs to drive teaching and learning strategy

My enrolment in the diploma in higher education really exposed me to a lot of understanding of higher education. Amongst them are the understandings surrounding higher education context and perspectives, understanding of adult learning, gained skills in curriculum design and development in higher education. Additionally, I got equipped with knowledge of modern teaching and learning in which teaching technologies plays a role as compared to modern teaching and learning. Furthermore, I grasped a deeper understanding of assessment of and for student learning which is pivotal to both students and teachers. In this enrolment, I got an opportunity to observe other colleagues teaching which empowered me. As I sat in each of the contact sessions offered by our facilitators, I have always reflected on how I have presented my lessons to the students and it gave me more room of improvement which was reflected on my next presentations. Many impossibilities were made possible. For example, I have always thought it was not possible to use buzz groups method of teaching with the large class, which I tried afterwards and it worked well indeed. My other challenge has been to facilitate learning within a short scheduled period which I also overcame through flipped classroom and other different approaches to teaching.

Biggs (1996) mentioned that the roles of academics in teaching and learning should be towards the student success. Therefore, in designing a teaching and learning agenda the assessment practices should be clearly articulated. The point here is to encourage constructive alignment for a link between teaching and learning agenda, learning outcomes, teaching approaches and assessment policies which I got exposed to through enrolment on the diploma in higher education. Likewise, Henard and Roseveare (2012) alluded to effective curriculum design and course content, a variety

of learning contexts, soliciting and using feedback, and effective assessment of learning outcomes as elements of quality teaching.

4.6 My role as a modern university teacher in teaching and learning strategy

I noticed I have a role to play as a modern university teacher in the proposed teaching and learning strategy. I should be pro-active as far as teaching and learning in higher education is concerned. I have to participate in knowledge communities so that I could lead students to take part in them and be able to develop their identities. Participating in knowledge communities will lead to transformation, irreversibility and integration of threshold concepts. Furthermore, I should familiarise and utilise all documentations and policies available at the institution with specific focus to structure, culture and agency. Moreover, I would integrate technologies in teaching and learning of students.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided me with theories and approaches to effective teaching and learning that I can use in advancing my project of reflective practice. More important are the socio-cultural theories of learning that are not only student centred but also highlight the key role of the teacher as a reflective practitioner in teaching and learning. I find Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding and zone of proximal development which I outlined in the discussion above central to reflective practice and promoting student learning.

The next chapter brings out the understanding of assessment of learning in higher education.

CHAPTER 5: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an understanding of assessment of learning in higher education. It gives the background of assessment practices that improve teaching and learning. It also covers the institutional context in relation to national and institutional policies and requirements as far as assessment in higher education is concerned. Additionally, it articulates on key theories, concepts and principles of assessment that are examined in the higher education literature. It further interprets principles and processes for the enhancement and assurance of quality in relation to assessment for the SoM. Finally, it articulates the way forward in my practice after sensitisation of assessment of student learning course.

During the assessment and evaluation in higher education module, we were tasked to interview four lecturers who teach at different academic levels in different departments of our faculties to ascertain the challenges they encounter when assessing student learning. The findings of the interview (see Appendix 3) will play a role in discussions of this chapter.

5.2 Background of assessment practices that improve teaching and learning

Higher education in the world is responding to contextual issues such as globalisation, massification and fiscal (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000) as mentioned in chapter 1. UNAM has responded very well to align itself with vision 2030 by making higher education accessible to all, including the previously disadvantaged communities. Our institution gets a large number of students seeking for admission on the MBChB program but we do not have the capacity to take all those who meets the requirements. Yet, we find ourselves with a higher number of students, more than capacities can provide. Therefore, when a large number of students is admitted, not only teaching and learning is affected but assessment of student learning is compromised because it becomes difficult to provide feedback.

5.3 Assessment in the context of higher education

Assessment has been looked as a way of bringing students to judgement (Sadler, 2005), which stresses students very much and has a major impact on their future because it can prevent a student to progress to the next level or to graduate. Brown, Bull and Pendlebury as cited in Luckett & Sutherland (2000) defined assessment as “Assessment consists, essentially of taking a sample of what students do, making inferences and estimating the worth of their actions”. Luckett & Sutherland (2000), made it clear that assessment is for both students and teachers as it reports on

students' achievements and about teaching them better through presenting the goals of the curriculum clearly. James & Fleming (2004), pointed out key features of assessment as evaluation of progress, providing feedback to learners, tutors and external agencies, motivation, demonstration of the acquisition of skills and/or competencies and measuring achievement. With the definition given by Luckett & Sutherland and the key features of assessment by James & Fleming (2004), I feel the assessment is best to be referred to as assessment of and for student learning.

5.4 UNAM SoM in relation to policies and requirements to assessment

By looking at the quality assurance system of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in Namibia as mentioned in chapter 3, its purpose is to accredit programmes and audit institutions (NCHE, 2009). The Namibia Qualification Authority (NQA) Act makes provision for any person, institution, or organisation providing instruction or training to apply to NQA for accreditation to ensure they have the capacity to assess the performance of persons partaking in any such course (Quality Assurance system for Higher Education in Namibia, 2009). It is further clearly indicated that assessment indicates achievement of a programme's intended learning outcomes and provides valuable information about effectiveness of teaching and learning, and learner support. This is evident that these quality assurance systems have guided higher education institutions to the outcome based education. In chapter 3, it come out that the MBChB programme at UNAM is more of a product paradigm where outcomes are set to reach certain outputs. In addition, teachers, students and context play major roles in a curriculum that is why our curriculum is seen shifting to a process paradigm. Since curriculum transformation is playing a major role in many institutions of higher learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011), in this view, in the process of executing our curriculum there is critical reflection of cases related to health as determined by communities of learning. Therefore, I can say that the programme's curriculum is in equilibrium which is almost praxis at the moment due to reflection on it. Now that the paradigm that underpins MBChB is identified, how best are the assessments fit for the purpose of the curriculum? This is discussed in section 5.5.1 below.

The CPDTLI centre has provided the university with the assessment policy document which is available in a hard copy and it is also available in an electronic version. Although the mentioned structure has a role in assessment, they do not have powers to influence actual assessment practices at faculties, schools or departments level.

Assessment is believed to check achievement of students on the intended learning outcomes and to provide valuable information about effective teaching and learning support (NQA). In addition,

assessment offers lecturers an opportunity to understand their students better because it can give directions on changes that could improve teaching and learning such as method of teaching (Garfield, 1994). At our practice, at the end of teaching and learning of a module, students evaluate lecturers (see Appendix 1). I personally use my report to improve on how I facilitate their learning. The CPDTLI has put it well in the introduction of the assessment policy where it has mentioned about providing guidance to staff in all assessment and evaluation processes that are core to the vision and mission of the university. In defining assessment, CPDTLI also based assessment on outcome based assessment just like NQA.

I suspect there are few academic staff that are familiar with the academic literacy regarding assessment of student learning and that informs teaching in higher education in our institution. This is because most of us were employed on the basis of disciplinary knowledge and had no idea as to what assessment is all about due to lack of formal training. All what takes place is the usual business of teaching while testing and grading of students is done without guidance. UNAM has an assessment policy provided by the CPDTLI. However, only few academics are aware of it. This is what colleagues indicated when I asked around campus. I came across the policy during the PGDHE course.

5.5 Theories, concepts and principles of assessment in higher education

It is always important to have the purpose of assessment when designing an assessment (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000). Assessment is important in the process of medical education and in the lives of medical students, and in the society because at the end of the program competent physicians who can take care of the public are certified (Shumway & Harden, 2003). Shumway & Harden (2003); Fuentealba (2011) narrated that teachers need to understand the assessment process, to appreciate the learning outcomes to be assessed and recognise the appropriate tools to assess each outcome and make sure that assessment tools selected are relevant, feasible, valid and reliable in order to have an impact on student learning.

5.5.1 Assessments fit for purpose

The discussions earlier gave the impression that assessment must be central to curriculum. This indicates that if the course is well structured with objectives and outcomes properly aligned, it is easier to derive the assessment from the course content. Quality curriculum and progressive assessment and timely feedback are some of the factors that could motivate adult learning in higher education (Sogunro, 2015) as mentioned in chapter 2. This is not limited to outcome-based

education alone, but it also important to the curriculum as a process or praxis because they are an extension of the outcome-based curriculum paradigm.

Biggs and Tang (2011) indicated that students learn better if they know how they will be assessed. Biggs and Tang encouraged assessment tasks to be given to students together with grading criteria. Similarly, Jones (2005), emphasised that publishing and explaining assessment criteria to the learners demonstrates that there is no hidden agenda. In agreement with the above Patil, Gosavi, Bannur & Ratnakar (2015) found blueprinting integral to assessment because students got better marks when they were provided with blueprinting and it helped faculty members to distribute appropriate weightings and questions across topics.

5.5.2 Formative and summative assessment

Assessment is grouped under four purposes in an educational context namely: diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, summative assessment, and quality assurance (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000). Diagnostic assessment is used to diagnose the students' weakness and strengths and to determine student readiness; this serves the needs for students and lecturers. Formative assessment is for the purpose of providing feedback to students about their progress in order to motivate, help with improvement, consolidate work done, and provide a profile of what is learnt during learning process, this serves both students and teachers. Summative assessment is to establish the level of achievement when teaching has been completed; this serves stakeholders outside the classroom. Quality assurance judges the education system for the purpose of providing feedback to staff on teaching effectively (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000; Biggs & Tang, (2011).

Our school uses both formative and summative assessment. More time is spent on formative assessment, which is given in the form of tests, quizzes, laboratory reports, projects and assignments. Through these assessments, feedback is given to students. Summative assessments are done through written exams on preclinical modules and on clinical modules. Both written and objective structured clinical examination (OSCEs) are done at the end of semesters and determines whether they have met the requirements for them to go to the next level.

My colleagues encountered a number of challenges when assessing student learning. Some lecturers indicated during the interview that they lack training as far as teaching and learning is concerned,

and on how to construct questions. They found it difficult to come up with valid and measurable objectives and learning outcomes. They further indicated that some objectives are not measurable and therefore difficult to say a student has or has not learnt apart from passing or failing (“yes, student will fail/pass after being asked questions on the materials she has been exposed to, but were the objectives, learning outcomes and assessment methods measurable and valid”). The challenge expressed here is what Shumway & Harden (2003) and Fuentealba (2011) stated as key to assessment. Assessment tools that are selected must be valid, reliable and practical and must have an impact on student’s learning.

The point raised by my colleagues is a challenge of magnitude to many and myself because most modules at our school do not have predetermined objectives and outcomes rather they have a course content. The course outlines and study guides have given emphasis on the weightings to continuous assessment. Therefore, an individual lecturer has to come up with objectives and learning outcomes, which most do not have training on. Another challenge which can be linked to the previous one is that students are not trained on how to answer questions. On this point, I feel that once the lecturers are given proper training they would be providing students with assessment criteria to eliminate misunderstanding of questions by students. Another challenge raised, is an observation where some students would fail a written paper but when you discuss with them you will be surprised that all concepts are understood. I feel that we need to balance the forms of assessment so that we cover the types of students in terms of learning styles.

Additionally, the interview further revealed that students assessed on practical/ skills components lack theoretical knowledge behind the required skills. Students cannot link theory to practice because they are introduced to them separately and often not by the same person. This was observed in laboratory reports. Similarly, students are noticed not critically analysing questions. Many times when practical questions are set, students expect the exact thing as mentioned in class to be tested. For example, if a brown wallet was used in class as an example to contain money and when a green wallet is used in a written test, students cannot link a wallet to contain money but they would think it is only when it is brown.

Furthermore, in students’ writings (assignments, reports): where they are required to express their views to show how much they have learnt, creativity lacks within students themselves. It is an

indication that they are not interested in grasping deeper knowledge of the subject matter, the observation is that they are only interested in questions like which one and not in why.

The interview further revealed challenges like “there are no uniformity or set standards/ documentation governing assessment methods at the school” This is an institutional challenge because faculty members will end up assessing in their own suitable way. There are departments that give one method of assessment for example multiple choice questions (MCQs) only. It is difficult to assess students of different learning styles with one agreed assessment method such as MCQs. With additional methods of assessments such as structured questions you are almost entering the student’s mind and able to tell where he/she stands. Furthermore, it is difficult to differentiate/ get the students who got superficial understanding and who got deeper understanding with some methods of assessment. However, the colleagues admit that the number of students versus lecturer dictates for MCQs than structured questions. In the pre-clinical modules, students are many because the medical and pharmacy groups are taught together. I feel that lecturers must be given freedom not based on set rules to exercise variety of methods to test their students as needed. The methods of assessment will be discussed in the next section.

Assessments identify what learners need to do in order to improve their work (Knight, 2001). This definition points mainly to formative assessment where students have the opportunities to receive feedback that will help them improve in the next assessment. However, I hardly find lecturers giving an assessment that is not contributing marks or weight to continuous assessment. It is done in this way because once students learn that an assessment is not contributing to continuous assessment they do not put in efforts in learning the material. A colleague raised a point on students being much more interested in passing than understanding. They can pass the test very well because they just finished with that content but if you link the current to the previous assessment they do not perform. So, in the whole course, they study each module in silo and do not weave modules together.

Formative assessment has an influence on summative assessment, however lecturers seems to be giving memorandums to students and not much of constructive feedback. Alves de Lima (2008) gave out constructive feedback as the act of giving information to students through the description of their performance. Besides it came out as a challenge that, it is difficult to give individual

feedback that would make an impact to students because of time. Sometimes when a summarised feedback is given to the whole group, some students do not realise that the feedback is speaking to them.

After any form of assessment, students are evaluated of their achievement, this is referred to as grading which is based on standards and criteria. Sadler (2005) made distinction between criteria 'attributes or rules that are useful as levers for making judgements' and standards 'fixed reference levels of attainment'.

5.5.3 Criteria reference assessment (CRA) and norm reference assessment (NRA)

CRA is grading of students on the basis of the quality of their work alone, not referenced to how others performed in the same or equivalent tasks and without referring to each student's level of performance. In contrast, NRA is grading of an individual based on quality of works of others, referenced to other's performance and to that of individual performance in the previous work (Sadler, 2005; Burton, 2007 and Biggs & Tang, 2011). The two referencing systems were distinguished further by Knight (2001): criteria referencing is a system that awards marks meanwhile norm referencing compares student Z to student K or compares student Z to an average. Burton (2007) added light to the distinction between NRA and CRA. The latter being more valid, reliable and transparent compared to the former. Validity refers to whether the assessment measures the desired outcome, reliability measures consistency in the same student when marked more than once or marked by more than one person. In addition, transparency measures whether the student understands what they are required to do.

At UNAM, it is clear that CRA is in use because each student is graded on their own work referenced to the criteria while previous tasks do not influence current performance. I am aware that there are few cases when a student misses a test and there is no time to make up, some lecturers give an individual student the class average, so in this case this may sound as NRA. CRA is an authentic assessment in which students and lectures have clear understanding where reference to pre-stated criteria is made. This is very significant for our medical students, therefore when they are at clinical rotations in hospitals they are given log books with set criteria.

Brown & Race (2012) concluded that assessment is like an engine. It drives student learning and university teachers have to ensure that its processes and instruments encourage students to make ownership of objectives and understand the standards of the required evidence of achievement.

5.5.4 Approaches to assessment

Ramsden (1999) argued that the choice of assessment methods should be conditioned by goals for student learning and one method could not satisfy all educational objectives for any course. In the interview with colleagues, especially those in departments that agreed to use MCQs only, the point came out that having students with different learning styles, means that one method of assessment would not cater for the needs of all students. Ramsden further made a point that whatever method chosen to assess students must be relevant to the aims and objectives of learning.

Students do approach lecturers to ask for study tips that may help them succeed in tests and exams. This gave me an impression that students value assessments mainly for passing and less for learning. Departments that assess through MCQs provide students with a number of questions for them to do self-assessment and peer assessment. I have suggested to students to look for physiology questions on quizlet and flashcards through internet. This would expose them to different questions that would help them learn.

With the many concerns of students regarding assessment; Luckett & Sutherland (2000), in his paper discussed approaches to assessment of which some are used at the UNAM, School of Medicine. A common one is traditional approach whereby students are assessed strictly in a controlled environment and use methods such as examinations, essays, class tests and laboratory practical reports, this approach is generally used in our school. In addition, are other innovative approaches such as computer-based assessment, however the use of this approach is limited to the availability of internet at times of needs and also limited to MCQs or exact wording. This approach can really solve the problem of large class and minimise students cheating from others.

Workplace and community based/ learnership assessment applies to our medical students because the programme requires them to be attached to communities and hospitals in order to develop specific professional skills and competencies. Recognition of prior learning is another approach, which takes into consideration the learning that took place outside the current program. At UNAM, students from other institutions may seek for recognition of their leaning where it involves the analysis of the learnt curriculum and compare it to the module/course in which the exemption is sought for. Other approaches to assessment mentioned by Luckett & Sutherland (2000) are integrated assessment, continuous assessment, group based assessment, peer assessment and self assessment and learning contracts.

5.6 Quality assurance and enhancement in relation to assessment

Quality assurance started in the business sector and was imported into education sector (Elassy, 2015), it plays a major role in policies in higher education. I have realised that quality is difficult to define in few words but it is easily recognised, that is why it is easy to say there is no quality education at Z university compared to B university. In defining quality; Green (1994) pointed out to approaches to quality namely: quality as the conformance to standards, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as effectiveness in achieving institutional goals, quality as meeting customer's stated needs and the traditional concept of quality. According to Quality Assurance and Management Policy of UNAM, quality and quality assurance are defined (www.unam.edu.na). Quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept defined on interests of stakeholders as excellence, fitness for purpose, fitness of purpose, continuous improvement, transformation and value for money. Meanwhile, quality assurance refers to 'an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institutions, and/or programs'.

A number of scholars (Cheng, 2003; Biggs, 2001; Green, 1994 & Harvey, 2011) discussed quality assurance concepts of which their definitions are similar. Cheng's discussion is on three paradigms of quality assurance in education: "internal" - about improving internal quality assurance environment and process, to ensure effectiveness of learning and teaching is achieved as planned, "interface" - ensuring the education services satisfy the needs of stakeholders and is accountable to the public. This is similar to Harvey who defined quality assurance as a process of establishing the confidence of stakeholders in fulfilling their expectations. Finally, "future"- ensuring the relevance of aims, content, practice and outcomes of education to the future new generations. Bigg's concepts are "retrospective" on accountability, which is measured easily by using external standards and "prospective" enhancement/ improvement, which is concerned with what teaching and learning is doing now, in the future and will continue and whether it fits the purpose of an institution. These concepts are almost similar to Green's definition of quality. In analysing the concepts of quality assurance in higher education as defined by the scholars, it is evident that most processes are done through assessing or evaluating students and the institution based on their graduates.

Gibbs (2011) cited in Elassy (2015), gave a distinction between quality assurance and quality enhancement. Quality assurance is looked at as a diagnostic process and quality enhancement as a treatment process that focuses on developing the limitations encountered on quality assurance.

In our institution, quality assurance is in place, however, there might be little improvement in relation to assessment. The examination question papers are written by the lecturer who taught and are moderated internally by a colleague and it is then moderated by the externally. The lecturers are evaluated by the students on the teaching and their feedback is used to improve teaching and learning which is reflected in both formative and summative assessment.

5.6.1 Threats to quality assessment at UNAM

Assessments are done out of strict supervision in order to avoid plagiarism amongst students. UNAM has a software that can detect plagiarism, therefore students are encouraged to submit electronic work and they are made aware of the danger of plagiarism. Another threat to quality, is a danger of exam leaks or someone who could sell exams for money or pleasure, therefore it requires integrity. UNAM exams are set in advance and stored by the examination officer. Although it is done this way, it would be difficult deal with exam leaks due to that it has gone into many people's hands.

5.7 Conclusion

The foregoing discussion on assessment has provided me with concepts and assessment approaches that I can use to inform my reflective practice. In particular, I find the concept or principle "fitness for purpose" useful as it will enable me to ensure that the decision on which form of assessment to use will be determined by the purpose I want to achieve. As a reflective practitioner, I will also need to vary my assessment methods in order to cater for students with different needs.

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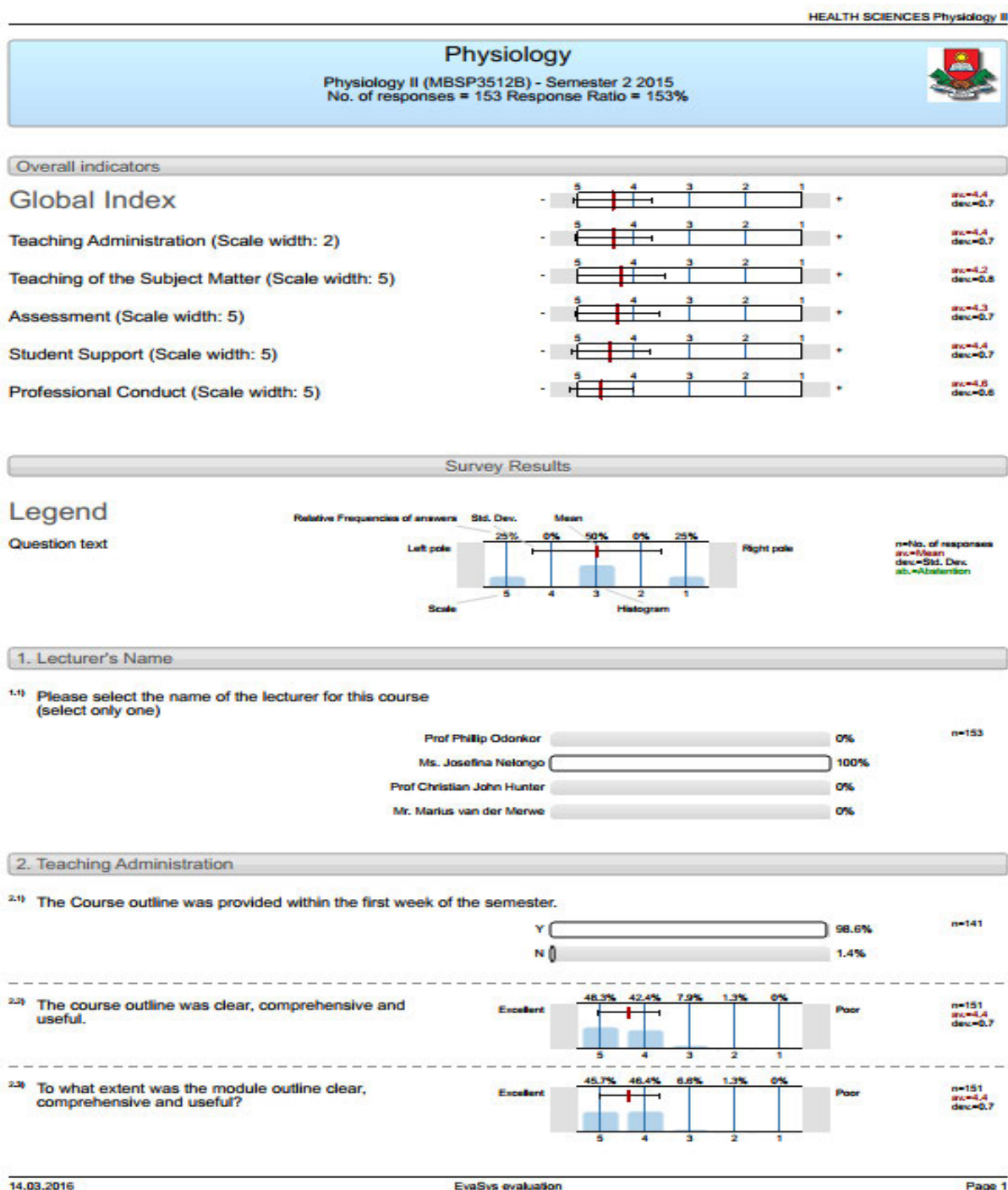
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Student Lecturer Evaluation report



Appendix 2: Peer observation



FACULTY OF EDUCATION 2017 - LECTURE EVALUATION

Surname: Nelongo **Initials:** JN **Student No:** 9964967
Study Course: MBChB **School/Department:** School of Medicine **Year Level:** year 1
Module: System Physiology **Topic:** Human Reproduction
Date: 24/08/2017 **Time:** 9h30-10h30 **Assessor's Name & Signature:** Tuna Nashihanga

GRADING:

Lesson Plan- Form 3 [20 marks]: 17 **Presentation – Form 7 [80]:** 67

FINAL GRADE	A	B	C	D	E
<u>84</u> %	(80-100)	(70-79)	(60-69)	(50-59)	(Below 50)

RATING:

A (80-100)	Demonstrated excellent competence of the criterion
B (70-79)	Demonstrated advanced competence of the criterion
C (60-69)	Demonstrated above average competence of the criterion
D (50-59)	Demonstrated average/satisfactory competence of the criterion
E (below 50 – fail)	Demonstrated insufficient competence of the criterion

EVALUATION CRITERIA		COMMENTS
1. LESSON INTRODUCTION	[5]	She engaged the students as soon as the lecture began and outlined everything that would be covered in the lecture that day. Also outlined the content that would not be covered in class for further study and understanding
(a) Gained immediate interest	4	
(b) Linked up with learners' prior knowledge		
(c) Clarified objectives of the lesson		
(d) Motivated learners for objectives		
2. BROAD LESSON PRESENTATION	[20]	Lecturer presented content in a logical and sequential manner; a variety of tools was used to convey the subject matter to the students to enhance their understanding. Lecturer was also polite and sensitive with the students, answered their questions effectively and gave short activities to ensure that the students grasped the important concepts.
(a) Repeated the main questions to be addressed	18	
(b) Presented content in a logical sequence		
(c) Used a variety of relevant learning activities to develop learners' understanding and thinking skills		
(d) Created a supportive and friendly atmosphere		
(e) Continuously monitored learners' attention		
(f) Demonstrated good questioning skills		
(g) Included open/higher level type of questions		
(h) Praised and corrected answers to questions/ learning efforts		
(i) Was sensitive to gender, special needs and other		

2017_Observation by PDHE_Lecturer

Challenges encountered by academics of the school of medicine when assessing student learning:
(Findings of the interview with four colleagues)

Respondent 1

1. **Students do not critically analyse questions:** Noticed that it is not so obvious that a question set by one person is clear to others. Many times when practical questions are set, many students expect the exact thing to be tested. For example, if a brown wallet was used in class as an example to contain money and when a green wallet is used for in an assessment, students cannot link a wallet to contain money but only when it is brown.
2. In students writings (assignments, reports: where they are required to express their views to show that they understood, **creativity lacks within themselves**. It is an indication that they are not interested in grasping deeper knowledge of the subject matter (only interested in which one and not in why).

Respondent 2

1. **No training** was given on how to construct questions
2. **Students are not trained on how to answer questions**, therefore if given training on how to answer (assessment criteria) it would eliminate misunderstanding of questions.
3. **One agreed assessment method**. Having students with different kinds of learning styles: it is difficult to assess all students using MCQs as agreed/ dictated by the department (...HoD). With structured questions; you are almost **entering the student's mind** and able to tell where he/she stands.
4. There is **no uniformity or set standard (documentation) governing assessment methods at the school**. Faculty members do it the way that suits them. (institutional challenge)
5. The number of students vs lecturer dictates for MCQs than structured questions.
6. For clinical modules; **OSCE papers are not moderated but weights more than the theoretical papers**, they are assessed by people (practitioners) who do not discuss on how to deal with some stations for consistency and therefore feels like **OSCE is too subjective to weigh more**. (institutional challenge)

Respondent 3

1. Difficult to differentiate/ get the students **who got superficial understanding and who got deeper understanding** with some methods of assessment.
2. Students assessed on practical/ so skills components **lacks theoretical knowledge** behind the required skills. Students cannot link theory to practice because they are introduced to them separately and often not by the same person.
3. Has **a challenge to give individual feedback** that would make an impact to students because of **time**. When a summarised feedback is given to the whole group, some students do not notice that the feedback is speaking to them.
Time is not enough to assess the competencies of students, they get little time to be exposed/ to explore the skills lab where they can learn skills before practising in real life. In the skills lab, one can get a chance to repeat something but in real life no playing around.

Respondent 4

Appendix 4: Feedback from my mentor

Thank you very much for sending me your draft. It looks like you have worked hard on your assignments, which I appreciate is difficult when you also have teaching and marking commitments yourself. I have added some feedback comments for you to consider. I would recommend that you offer more critical reflection about your teaching as I believe that reflection on practice is something that the criteria asks for, is that correct?

I am wondering whether it would also be appropriate to refer to your University guidelines/ policies in order to support your reflections within this assignment. I would also suggest using a broader range of references to support your reflections, I have added some within the feedback that you could consider?

Some books that I found helpful and you could consider is Biggs, J. (2007). Teaching for quality learning at University (2nd edition). Berkshire: Open University Press, Kolb, D.A. (1984) Experiential learning experience as a source of learning and development, Englewood cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. I also used Quality Assurance Agency: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en> and the HEA academy: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/> although unsure whether this would be applicable to you?

I am also wondering whether it would be worth using the key words from the task requirements table as your subheadings as this will ensure that you cover all aspects required for this assignment?

I hope you find this helpful. I will offer feedback on another assignment next week. My apologies, I was expecting a few pages of a draft.

I hope you are feeling well?

Best wishes

Geinor

Module Assignment: Context in Higher Education and Perspectives

The impact of contextual factors on teaching and learning in Higher education and perspectives - University of Namibia

Introduction

This assignment explore the impact of contextual factors in higher education and the implications they have to teaching and student learning. In addition, it discusses the interplay of structure, culture and agency on teaching and learning in consideration of the contextual factors. Furthermore, it explains the role of a reflective practitioner in teaching and learning where concepts criticality, reflectivity and praxis which are key piece of educational codes that can help in gaining scholarly and analytical understanding of issues in teaching and learning are understood. The discussions centre's around the University of Namibia (UNAM) where I am an academic in the capacity of a lecturer in the discipline of health sciences at the school of medicine.