

An investigation of quality assurance practices and teaching in a higher learning institution in Johannesburg South Africa



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Abstract

Higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing countries are increasingly focusing on quality assurance, as indicated by their development of relevant policies, structures, and procedures. This study aims to examine the quality control measures within HEIs and assess lecturers' knowledge of these measures. Institutional and national policy documents related to quality were analyzed to understand the regulatory framework for lecturers. Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching, such as assessment, curriculum, and teaching strategies, were established for data analysis.

Using an interpretative paradigm and qualitative techniques, the study involved interviews with three lecturers and a quality assurance (QA) manager. This approach helped gain insights into how quality measures are implemented and how lecturers utilize them to improve teaching. The study categorized and compared lecturers' practices with institutional and national policy documents to evaluate their alignment.

Findings revealed that lecturers have limited knowledge about the institution's QA measures. Their practices often do not align with the institution's QA policies, partly due to their lack of awareness of these policies. Although the institution has QA measures, many are adopted from national documents, but there is insufficient emphasis on these measures at both institutional and national levels.

The study recommends that lecturers should be involved in the creation, review, and evaluation of QA policies to enhance their engagement and understanding. Additionally, peer and student evaluations should be mandatory and conducted more frequently than the current three-year cycle. Finally, having teaching qualifications as a requirement for employment is suggested to improve QA in teaching.

Keywords: Higher education, teaching practices, teaching in higher education, quality Assurance, lecturers, South Africa, quality teaching

Declaration

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.0. Introduction

Higher education is the education that is received after secondary school which is also known as high school, which is also occasionally referred to as high school in South Africa. Higher education is a structured, formal educational process that is pursued after high school and often results in the awarding of a degree, diploma, or other type of official certification of completion. A more comprehensive definition of higher education is provided by HEQC (2004), they claim that higher education includes all postsecondary education and training that is a part of a formal process leading to recognized credentials for particular jobs or for the general practice of a profession. According to Barnett (1997), higher education is defined in terms of the types and levels of educational opportunities available. They view higher education institutions as distinctive establishments that set themselves apart from others through their emphasis on research and the leadership of provosts, rectors, and vice chancellors.

In various parts of the world, higher education is widely recognised as a crucial tool for establishing a knowledge-based economy and fostering the growth of human resources (World Bank, 1999). Peretomode and Chukwuma (2007) assert that higher education institutions play a vital role as industries that generate wealth and human capital. Higher education serves as a catalyst, foundation, powerhouse, and propelling force for the profound socio-economic, political, cultural, health, and industrial advancement of a nation (Peretomode and Chukwuma 2007). The World Bank (2004) emphasizes that developing countries must prioritize higher education to thrive in a global economy where knowledge has become a significant competitive advantage. The competitiveness of a nation heavily relies on the quality of knowledge generated by higher education institutions. Only through high-quality education can individuals' intellectual capabilities be nurtured, leading to economic, social, and political transformation within a society. Greater work prospects and job stability are frequently the results of higher education. Higher education often translates into lower unemployment rates for South Africans than for people who have simply completed secondary school. The unemployment rate for those with higher education qualifications is substantially lower than the national average, according to Stats SA (2022).

Quality assurance (QA), according to Manghani (2011), is a measure of quality management that gives assurance that the standards are met. To maintain quality and ensure responsibility, quality assurance becomes a crucial component. The diverse curriculum and pedagogical approaches used in higher education have a direct impact on the sort of graduate that universities generate. Since the value of university graduates is measured in relation to their ability to contribute to economic growth and development, the issue of graduate employability is crucial. Any higher education system that generates graduates who are unemployed or unable to find their own employment is a waste (Netshifhefhe et al., 2016).

Teaching quality assurance is a crucial part of educational institutions all around the world, and South Africa is no different. South Africa, a growing nation with a critical shortage of skilled labour, has prioritised higher education to suit the needs of the business and society at large. However, ensuring that the education offered by South African higher education institutions is of a high calibre is a challenging endeavour that needs careful planning and execution. Numerous studies have been conducted on this subject recently, with the goal of identifying the main difficulties and potential for teaching quality assurance.

1.1. Background of the study

South Africa which is a developing country in Africa has a complex and diverse higher education system. This country has made significant strides in transforming its education system since the end of apartheid. It has over 20 universities and numerous private higher education institutions. It has also made significant progress in expanding access to higher education, with enrolment rates increasing from 15% in 1994 to 26% in 2018 (Mabizela and Potgieter, 2020). However, because the quality of education has not kept up with growth, many institutions are struggling to meet the demands of their students. Furthermore, it should be noted that in South Africa, quality assurance in teaching is a topic of utmost significance (Chimombo and Wadesango, 2017). Ensuring that universities and other educational establishments give their pupils a top-notch education Quality assurance (QA) is an essential component of the educational system, and it plays a big part in this. QA is significant because it is a systematic and exacting procedure that assesses a program or organization to determine whether or not satisfactory educational standards are met (Hayward, 2001). In order to ensure that standards are met, QA has become an essential technique.

1.2. Aims and Purpose of the study

A very significant part of education is quality assurance, and institutions must ensure that they have effective quality controls in place. The purpose of this study is to investigate the quality assurance procedures higher education institutions have used to guarantee excellent teaching. The investigation will also examine the strategies the university employs to ensure high-quality teaching. Furthermore, the study intends to provide insight into how academics perceive quality, throw light on the quality control mechanisms placed by the educational organisation to ensure that excellent teaching is carried out, and ultimately generate theories regarding the connection between educators and quality.

1.3. Problem statement

The higher education sector holds a crucial role within South African society, serving as an essential institution. Current policies focus on enhancing teaching quality, not only to improve student achievement but also to address broader social challenges such as increasing access to post-secondary education and transforming the higher education landscape. Concerns have been raised, as noted by Ballim et al., (2014) and Martin (2016) (Williamson et al, 2020), about the potential decline in teaching quality due to many issues. Quality in higher education is a complex issue with various perspectives. Given these complexities, the study aims to investigate whether lecturers are actively promoting quality in teaching through their practices and whether they are adhering to the established guidelines, even in the face of increased enrolments.

Since quality lies at the core of academic activity, it is a crucial concern in higher education (Watty, 2006) (Biggs et al, 2022). The success of higher education institutions is assessed through the following sectors: teaching, investigation, and involvement in the community, per Richard et al (2008) and Krause (2012) (Fitzgerald et al, 2020). Quality problems affect each of these areas of emphasis. Quality in each of the aforementioned fields is a key objective for the higher education sector in South Africa, as stated by the Department of Higher Education and Training (2019). Although universities have numerous missions, teaching is merely one of them (Ewell, 2010), teaching is one of the institution's primary functions. It's crucial to focus on lectures in order to raise quality (Chen et al., 2014). In the context of South Africa, the university must prioritise teaching because it receives financing (Moraru, 2012) from the government after students graduate (Tsotetsi and Onaolapo, 2024). Besides being financed by

the government, there are other reasons why it is crucial for higher institutions to focus on good teaching practises. According to Hèrnard and Roseveare (2012,p8): *“Institutions must prove that they are dependable sources of excellent teaching because both students and employers want to be sure that their education will result in gainful employment. Institutions must demonstrate their ability to strike a balance between research and teaching if they want to keep their good names.”*

From enrolment to completion as well as afterward, teaching requires interaction with students. Students who pursue higher education gain skills and information that they use to every aspect of their lives (Puška et al., 2016). A crucial part of teaching is information sharing amongst teachers and pupils as well as among students themselves. It is challenging to judge the quality of teaching, in contrast to research. The importance of a strong teaching emphasis is recognised within the larger framework of the expanded emphasis on research. Since teaching is not given as much priority in university rankings, the higher education industry is frequently attacked for this practice (Ewell, 2010). Although research is viewed as an activity of more prestige, focusing on high-quality teaching is essential since it affects graduation rates, completion rates, rates of retention, and success rates for students in any higher education (Biggs, 2001) (Dowling et al, 2024). These may represent the institution's most crucial features of quality which is why in this study lecturers' knowledge on teaching strategies will be observed.

Various situations have raised concerns about the correlation between scholars and quality matters, as indicated by literature. Skolnik (2010) asserts that academics generally hold unfavourable perspectives on quality. For instance, Harvey and Williams (2010, p. 84) highlighted that many lecturers fail to perceive a tangible link between quality, their academic work, and the evaluations conducted through quality assurance processes. This lack of connection suggests a potential gap between academics and the concept of quality. Consequently, doubts surrounding quality assurance have emerged among many individuals (Mårtensson et al., 2014). Moreover, in the specific context mentioned, Dongwe (2018) states that academics' understanding of national and institutional quality initiatives and improvements in teaching and learning remains ambiguous.

Furthermore, insufficient attention has been devoted to what is happening locally in higher learning institutions regarding quality issues, with the majority of attention going to national and institutional levels (Filippakou and Tapper, 2008) (Biggs and Tang, 2022). Similar issues were found in China, where teaching and learning quality has received less attention (Zou et

al, 2012) and there has been little discussion of practises at an individual lecturer level (Tadesse, 2014). There has been a call for work that can “provide deeper contextualised understandings of what is happening on the ground with regards to quality assurance and that can then contribute to the development of 'bigger picture' analyses” (Masehela, 2015, p. 160). This call has been made in order to examine the quality of what is occurring at the classroom level.

This investigation examines the teaching standards at an institution of higher education, a subject that is receiving more attention internationally (Wei-ping and Shuo, 2010). The investigation is particularly concerned with scholars, who are lecturers at universities. It focuses on the quality-related activities academics engage in, the standards they set for themselves in light of their particular circumstances, and the factors that drive them to take certain actions. Lecturers serve an essential part as policy players in higher education. The research emphasizes how crucial lecturers' duties as university lecturers are to maintaining and raising teaching quality. Given that academics are marginalised in various quality procedures, it is imperative that the higher education sector devote significant attention to academics and their practises (Skolnik, 2010). Lecturer's practises are a crucial component of quality, very few of them spend the time reviewing them in order to make improvements. According to Watty (2002), they are accountable for the university's performance.

1.4. Rationale of the study

A crucial component of education is quality assurance, which makes sure that higher education institutions deliver high-quality teaching and research outputs. Due to the realisation of the necessity of QA within higher education organisations, efforts have been made in South Africa to ensure that universities abide by national standards. Additional investigation is needed to determine whether QA techniques utilised by South African higher education establishments have been adequate because the efficacy of these programmes is in doubt.

The methods and practises used in higher education, such as teaching and learning, should constantly be examined, researched, and criticised to ensure their suitability for the goal as well as suitability for the intended use. A South African university's use of quality assurance procedures was examined in a study by Mokoena and Mapotse (2019). The authors discovered that although the institution had set up a number of quality assurance measures, their efficiency

and aim were not entirely clear. The study stresses how important it is for organisations to develop clear, established QA processes which are consistent with their entire vision and objectives.

In a different study, Geyser and Coetzee (2021) looked at how academic employees at a South African institution felt about teaching quality assurance. The authors discovered that although academic staff recognised the need of quality assurance in teaching, they also saw it as a time-consuming bureaucratic process that wasn't always effective in improving teaching and learning. The study emphasises the necessity for institutions to adopt more academics-involved quality assurance strategies that include them in the development and application of quality assurance systems.

The difficulties and possibilities for ensuring teaching quality in the South African higher education system were the focus of another investigation by Van der Merwe and Fourie (2020). The authors found numerous significant obstacles, such as a shortage of funding, the requirement for academic staff capacity training, and the complexity of the regulatory framework. A number of opportunities were also recognized by the study, including the possibility for worldwide benchmarking, the use of technology to improve teaching and learning, and the necessity of institutional collaboration.

In this study, as stated in the problem statement, I will be investigating the quality assurance measures that higher education in SA has put in place to ensure quality teaching and the lecturers knowledge on the QA measures which are put in place by the institution. I will be looking at one institution and it will be referred to as South African University (SAU) for the sake of this study. This research is significant in the sense that it aims to get an in – depth understanding of the QA measures employed by a successful high institution of learning. This information might help underperforming higher institutions of learning with information that they can employ to enhance their teaching qualities.

1.5. Objective of the study

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To determine the lecturer's knowledge of quality assurance measures that are put in place in a South African university (SAU).
- To investigate what quality measures are put in place by a higher education institution (HEI) in South Africa to ensure quality teaching.

1.6. Research questions

1. What is the level of knowledge among lecturers at a SAU regarding the university's quality assurance measures?
2. What quality assurance measures are put in place by higher education institutions to ensure quality teaching in South Africa?

1.7. Significance of the study

This study is significant since it tries to provide light on quality assurance practises adopted by institutions of higher learning. The research also seeks to understand lecturers' perspectives on quality control, as they are at the forefront of quality control in education. If any quality control procedures were implemented by the institution, the research would also like to know what instruments I utilised to enforce them. The study generally tries to examine quality assurance in teaching at higher education institutions on a classroom level because, according to the literature, the majority of studies examine quality assurance on a national and institutional level.

1.8. Conclusion

My justification for the necessity of carrying out this research study was discussed in this chapter. The context of the study, the problem statement, the rationale, the objective, and the research questions, as well as the importance of the investigation, have all been outlined. The next chapter, Chapter 2, will examine the literature that is relevant to this topic and the framework which is employed by this study.

Chapter 2

Literature review and Conceptual Framework

2.0. Introduction

I reviewed many academic works that are pertinent to this study in this chapter in an effort to establish the state of the field, pinpoint any knowledge gaps, and provide guidance for future practice. A thorough and well-organized discussion of QA in higher education teaching was conducted in this chapter

Over the past few decades, the quality of teaching has grown to be a crucial strategic concern in tertiary education systems around the world (Harvey and Williams 2010). According to Manghani (2011), quality assurance is a measure of quality management that gives assurance that the standards are being met. In order to maintain quality and guarantee accountability, quality assurance becomes a crucial component. Since there are a variety of curriculum and pedagogical methods used in higher education, teaching directly affects the sort of graduate that universities generate. Graduating students are judged on their ability to contribute to economic growth and development, making graduate employability a crucial problem. The disparity in skills between what companies want and what university graduates possess is noted by Andrews and Higson (2008). If university curricula fall short of providing graduates with the necessary preparation for the labour market, this becomes an issue. This makes reference to the problem of quality and how it can be guaranteed to ensure a match between graduates' knowledge, abilities, and values and the expectations of the labour market.

2.1. The role of higher education in society

Before delving into the topic of QA in higher education, it is important to reflect on the nature and significance of higher education in society. The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE Report, 1996) established a framework for understanding the role that higher education can and should play in South Africa's reconstruction, development, and transformation. According to the NCHE (1996), higher education is a critical determinant of an individual's future prospects. This highlights the responsibility of higher education in equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills to make a meaningful impact across various socioeconomic and political spheres. This aligns with Mammen's (2006) assertion that higher

education institutions should continually seek ways to enhance the abilities of both faculty and students to gain a competitive advantage. Therefore, by examining the nature and purpose of higher education, we can better explore the importance of quality assurance within this context. According to Pavlenko et al., (2008), the question of the quality of college and university courses and teaching and learning processes is crucial in this perspective. Graduates from higher education must also be competitively advantaged and on the same level with graduates from other universities. Higher education has varied connotations for different people in a multicultural nation like South Africa. Higher education refers to more than just the nation's higher educational framework. Higher education refers to the degree of teaching at universities, where students work to advance towards receiving higher education credentials. Higher education's goal is to give students the freedom to discover and advance new areas of knowledge across a range of fields and topic specialties.

Four primary goals of higher education were emphasised by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC, 2007). A professional and qualified human resource base is created as the initial step. According to this viewpoint, higher education should offer students the values, knowledge, and skills necessary to succeed in the labour market. In doing so, society will advance and grow. Research skills should be taught in higher education to students. As a result, there will be a constant stream of highly qualified scientists and researchers leading social innovations. Teaching and learning are the main activities of higher education institutions. Higher education ought to ensure efficient administration of the teaching and learning processes. Therefore, institutions of higher learning should look for ways to improve teaching and learning as well as take steps to ensure that student completion rates are increased. Additionally responsible for increasing life chances is higher education. Access to higher education and improved prospects of success should be made available to students (Akoojee and Nkomo, 2007). The fact that these four ideas about higher education are not mutually incompatible is really intriguing. Instead, they are incorporated and present a comprehensive view of what higher education is. The three primary purposes of higher education are teaching and learning, research, and community participation, as seen in the activities of South African universities and technological institutions.

Higher education has a significant role to play in society, as evidenced by the several goals of higher education that were discussed above. Higher education guarantees that individuals with pertinent and practical expertise and abilities are fed into the various sectors of industry and

commerce for the purpose of human resource generation. Graduates with knowledge and skill are essential for economic development. Highly skilled individuals are significant in improving the ability of a country for a knowledge-driven economy, according to Blankley and Booyens (2010). The quality of higher education ought to be the top priority for every institution of higher learning because it serves as a measure for managerial performance. Institutions of higher learning ought to strive to meet the needs of their stakeholders, the community at large, their stakeholders, and any applicable regulations.

2.2. Conceptualizing quality

The basis for this research is Harvey's description of what constitutes "quality" in higher education. It examines several viewpoints on quality, assesses how well they apply to higher education, considers how they interact with one another, and explores the philosophical and political foundations of each viewpoint. First of all, how "quality" is defined depends on who is using it and under what circumstances. This suggests that different people have varied ideas about what quality is. For instance, there are many stakeholders in higher education, including students, employers, teaching and non-teaching staff, the government and its funding agencies, as well as accreditors, validators, auditors, and assessors (Burrows and Harvey, 1992).

In addition, quality relativism based on "benchmarks" is a perspective that admits the existence of standards or benchmarks for evaluating quality while simultaneously acknowledging that the perception of quality is not simply dependent on absolutes. It implies that although there might be benchmarks or objective standards for evaluating quality, there is also a subjective component that fluctuates from person to person or context to situation (Harvey and Green, 2006). As with management and compassionate services, there has been a lot written about quality in education. The majority of this has dealt with quality assurance, management, auditing, assessing, policy, and finance. The topic itself has not been extensively discussed in literature (Scott, 1987; Goodlad, 1988). Although quality is a term that we all intuitively grasp, it can be challenging to define due to its ambiguous nature.

As forementioned, there are many different ways that people conceptualize quality (Schuller, 1991). However, according to Harvey and Green (2006) these can be categorized into five distinct but linked conceptions of excellence. The following definitions of quality include exceptional, perfect (or consistent) and suitable for purpose will be discussed.

2.2.1. Exceptional Quality

The idea of exceptional quality assumes that there is something unique about quality. This comes in three different forms. First, the conventional idea of quality as unique second, a view of quality as contained in excellence (exceeding extremely high criteria), and third, a weaker idea of outstanding quality, as passing a set of required (minimum) standards.

2.2.1.1. *The conventional idea of quality*

Quality has historically been associated with the concepts of superiority and uniqueness, denoting something uncommon or of a higher calibre. A high-quality product gives its owner or user a feeling of status. This traditional definition of quality emphasises exclusivity and supports the idea that a prestigious education from an Oxbridge institution (Oxford or Cambridge) is the pinnacle of high quality. Quality is believed to exist in an Oxbridge education's uniqueness and achievability rather than being decided by an assessment of the educational experience itself. It is not a trait that can be measured against a predetermined set of standards; rather, it stands for a unique and unreachable standard for most people.

The traditional concept of quality lacks standardized benchmarks for assessment, as it does not provide a clear definition of quality itself. The assumption is that quality is immediately recognizable without the need for explicit criteria. In the field of education, there is a prevailing belief that universities inherently embody quality and therefore do not need to provide substantiated evidence of it, as suggested by Church (1988). This perspective was also evident in the British research assessment exercise, where it was presumed that the assessors would intuitively identify quality (UFC, 1991). However, the conventional understanding of quality in higher education is inadequate for evaluating and measuring quality systematically. Moreover, the conventional notion of excellence, which is often employed, can be ambiguous and mask the underlying significance and political implications associated with it.

2.2.1.2. *Excellence 1*

Both excellence and quality are frequently used synonymously. Regarding excellence and quality, there are two ideas to consider: excellence based on standards and excellence referred to as "zero defects". Excellence 1 rejects the absolute nature of quality but defines it in terms of high standards, much like the conventional viewpoint. It lists the qualities of greatness while making them very challenging to attain. This viewpoint is exclusionary because it implies that quality can only be obtained under particular circumstances. For instance, having Nobel Prize-

winning lecturers, well-stocked labs, and a large library may have a positive impact on student performance in the educational setting.

When it comes to input and output, excellence is number one. A school is by definition successful if it enrolls the best pupils and gives them the best human and physical resources. The greatness endures regardless of the method used to teach students. No matter how ordinary the teaching may be, the information is still there and can be retained. The institution's standing and the extent of its resources are frequently used to assess excellence in this sense (Astin and Antonio, 2012). A lot of resources support reputation, while a strong reputation draws resources. Typically, both go hand in hand. This kind of excellence is frequently assessed by the institution's standing and the extent of its resources (Astin and Antonio, 2012). These two things typically go hand in hand; a lot of resources support a good reputation, and a good reputation draws resources.

'Doing the right things well' can be interpreted as excellence number one. At the institutional level, this entails hiring the best graduates and creating the best conditions for learning so that each student has the chance to advance their knowledge. It suggests that high-quality input determines high-quality output. Excellence 1 is an absolutist standard of quality since it places a strong emphasis on the "level" of input and product. Despite giving in to overall quality control, the idea of centres of excellence in higher education is inextricably linked to this perception of exceptional quality (DTI/CIHE, 1989).

2.2.1.3. Checking standards

The final idea of quality being extraordinary weakens the idea of excellence. In this context, a "quality" product is one that has passed a series of quality inspections. The checks are based on realistic standards that are intended to reject "defective" things rather than being unachievable standards. Thus, all goods that meet the minimum requirements imposed by the producer or monitoring authority are referred to be "quality." Thus, quality is the end result of "scientific quality control," or standard compliance. The product will always be compared to a "absolute" benchmark; only those that meet the operationalized criteria will cross the quality bar (Harvey and Green, 2006).

The approach to quality management based on standards suggests that elevating standards leads to enhanced quality. A higher standard is seen as an indication of a superior quality product or outcome. In the realm of higher education, this strategy has historically been employed, associating quality with the maintenance and elevation of standards (Church, 1988). Various measures are implemented to raise quality, such as refining course structures, enhancing content, and adopting improved validation methods. The government evaluates quality based on the extent to which standards are met, as evidenced by reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) indicating efforts to maintain and enhance the quality of teaching in technical schools and colleges. Notably, during the 1980s, there was a noticeable increase in the proportion of first- and second-class degrees conferred by universities, polytechnics, and colleges (HM Government, 1991, para 9). However, this quality management approach implicitly assumes that "standards" are both "objective" and "static" in nature (Walsh, 1991).

The application of the concept of "quality as exceptional" in higher education raises a significant issue regarding measurement. As we have observed, the traditional notion lacks a foundation for evaluating or quantifying quality in a definitive manner. The notions of excellence and adherence to standards both imply that the quality of a service can be described in terms of easily measurable and quantifiable standards, whether they are high or minimal. However, there exists considerable disagreement regarding the feasibility of this approach in the context of higher education. As Taylor (1981, cited by Harvey and Green, 1993, p8) aptly remarked, "Superficially appealing analogies can prove to be perilous metaphors, which distort the essence of education." Consequently, the term "quality control" has been argued to be ineffective when applied to educational contexts.

2.2.2. Quality as accuracy or consistency

Another way to think about quality is in terms of consistency. It emphasises procedure and establishes standards that it strives to flawlessly satisfy (Ingle, 1985). Zero flaws and accomplishing things right the first time serve as a concise summary of this.

2.2.2.1. Excellence 2 (Zero defects)

The idea that "quality is excellence" invites imitation and further claimants. Processes might take on more importance than inputs and outcomes when it comes to accomplishing "the right things well." By turning the old idea of quality into something that anybody can have,

Excellence 2 undermines exclusivity. Excellence can be described as meeting requirements rather than exceeding strict criteria (Harrington, 1988). As stated in Sallis and Hingley's 1991 article, this method makes a distinction between standards and quality. Conforming to a certain specification is what is deemed to be of high quality. The specification is not compared to any standards and is not considered a standard in and of itself. The standard (which is pre-defined and measurable) by which the product or service is evaluated is its compliance to the standard. Instead of satisfying (external) benchmark norms, conformance to specification is preferred.

This results in excellence having "zero defects" (Halpin, 1966; Crosby, 1979). In excellence 2, the "special" of excellence 1 becomes the "perfect." To ensure that there are no errors, everything must be perfect. Furthermore, excellence must be constantly given in order to achieve zero defects. In the perfection view of quality, reliability—which is taken for granted in the exceptional notion of quality—becomes the means by which excellence is claimed (Carter, 1978; Garvin, 1988). Excellence 2 encompasses more than merely meeting requirements; it also promotes prevention over inspection (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Instead, then waiting until final inspection to find flaws, the emphasis is on making sure that errors do not occur at any level. Zero faults and the idea of a quality culture are inextricably linked.

2.2.2.2. Quality culture

according to Crosby (1986). Everyone in the organisation, not only the quality controllers, should be held accountable for quality in a culture of quality. The organisation is simplified to a collection of connected nodes, each representing a single person or small group. There are inputs and outputs on every node. These interfaces are of a high calibre. The node serves as a supply, processor, and customer simultaneously. Each node is in charge of making sure that its outputs match the necessary receiver inputs and that its necessary provider inputs are specified in plain terms.

The concept of zero faults and getting things right from the start encompasses the preventive mindset of a quality culture. This approach seeks to instil accountability for quality at every level of involvement in a product or process, thus promoting a "democratization" of quality. Similarly, excellence is "democratized" through a redefinition based on specifications and procedures, rather than rigid input and outcome standards. In this context, there are no

universally applicable benchmarks or absolutes to assess production. However, such an emphasis on process rather than inputs and products raises concerns when it comes to establishing, maintaining, and evaluating standards in the realm of higher education. The predominant notions of quality in higher education do not readily align with this emphasis on processes. Therefore, it raises important questions about the development, maintenance, and assessment of standards in this context.

The issue still exists in terms of how "zero defects" or "getting it right the first time" are used in educational contexts. Higher education is not about meeting requirements as closely as possible. It may be said that the goal is to support the student's growth in analytical and critical thinking, among other things. This entails a continuous process of revising and reconceptualizing "specifications."

2.2.3. Fitness for purpose: customer satisfaction and mission

The third method connects product's or service's quality to its intended use. According to this method (Ball, 1985b), quality is only significant in respect to the product's or service's intended use. This concept has little in common with the sense of quality being unique, distinctive, elite, that confers rank, or as something that is challenging to achieve. Anything that performs the function for which it was created is of high quality. Fit for purpose, like "zero defects," is pluralistic, in contrast to the uncommon concept of quality, which is required to be exclusive by nature. Each product or service that can fulfil its intended function is then known as quality (Harvey and Green, 2006).

According to how well a product or service satisfies the needs of the consumer, this is how quality is determined. This implies that a quality good or service will satisfy the needs of the buyer. This method offers a template for deciding what constitutes the requirements for a high-quality good or service. It also realises that objectives might shift throughout the years, necessitating ongoing evaluation of the specification's suitability, making it progressive. This approach may be used to evaluate higher education quality on a variety of levels. However, identifying higher education's target audience and understanding their needs can be challenging (Harvey and Green, 1993).

Because they are the ones who go through the system, take advantage of what is offered, and leave as "educated," students might be considered as clients of higher education institutions.

On the other hand, they accept what is offered to them rather than setting the standards. Due to entrance restrictions, a shortage of open spots on courses, ignorance of the complete spectrum of courses, and other factors, this may result in a very limited option. In the case of education, the consumer does not directly choose the specifications. Once enrolled in the system, students may, at most, have some control over the final product's form. However, it is incorrect to believe that students are the sole group of individuals who directly use higher education. Employers consume educational products as well, whether they be graduates they hire or personnel they send to training courses (Harvey and Green, 2006).

Returning the focus to the institution will help to avoid the challenging problem of identifying who the higher education market is and what their needs are. Quality can be described in the context of the institution satisfying its own declared aims, or purpose, as opposed to worrying and emphasising meeting client needs. A high-quality institution, according to Harvey and Green (2006), is one that is efficient and successful in achieving the objectives that it has set for itself. It should also have a clear statement of its mission (or purpose).

2.2.3.1. Quality assurance

The goal of quality assurance is to verify the anticipated quality, however, it is defined and evaluated, is delivered by putting techniques, procedures, and processes in place. Setting the benchmarks or requirements for quality regulation or measurement is not a concern of quality assurance. The practise of upholding standards in goods and products using sample evaluation or screening is known as quality assurance (Ramson-Yusuf, 2005). According to Okebukola (2010), quality assurance is a catch-all phrase for a variety of initiatives intended to raise the calibre of the higher education system's inputs, processes, and outputs. According to Ayodele (2007), quality assurance includes the standard of educational resources that are available, as well as the equipment, surroundings, students, curriculum, manner in which teaching is delivered, and teachers. According to Oyeboode et al., (2008), quality assurance is intended to demonstrate and enhance the caliber of an institution's practises, teaching materials, and results.

The creation of mandatory requirements for teacher qualification, institution teaching quality, expected student academic achievement, and the creation of a more strict management system for education are important components of quality assurance in education. This will help the entire industry create stronger operating policies and procedures that are well-documented and followed.

2.3. Focus on quality assurance in HEI

The importance of quality assurance in higher education has grown significantly (Skolnik, 2010) and explosively (Jarvis, 2014) around the globe. This emphasis on quality and quality assurance is essential, according to Shanahan and Gerber (2004), who state that in order to develop, ensure, or improve quality, one must first recognise that quality is vital. Furthermore, global movement to improve quality is also starting to pick up steam.

Different structures and procedures have emerged both internationally and domestically as a result of the improvement in higher education quality. I highlight the focus on quality on a global and national level by citing examples of systems and some processes that have been established are pertinent to quality in higher education. This is done so that the study can be placed within this larger perspective. I begin by discussing recent developments around the world. I'll start the conversation off with the growth of QA at worldwide higher education institutions before switching to a South African context.

2.3.1. Global perspective on quality assurance at HEI

Many international networks and distinct groups that have been developed globally have a definite focus on higher education quality. The role of numerous quality associations and agencies in many countries, some of which have a specific focus on teaching quality, has tremendously benefited the growth of a concentration on quality. The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) was founded in North America in 1992. According to MacAskill et al., (2008), the INQAAHE is comprised of several nations. Worldwide assistance for quality assurance organisations is provided by this network (Elassy, 2015). In addition, there is a network of quality assurance agencies for higher education in Central and Eastern Europe (Ewell, 2010). According to Ewell (2010), similar networks have also been found in Asia and South America. The Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education is present in Saudi Arabia (EI-Maghraby, 2011). The Southern African Quality Assurance Network (SAQAN) was established as an umbrella organisation in Africa, according to the Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification's (2012) report.

Half of the world's countries utilize quality assurance systems, as indicated by Jarvis (2014). The initial emphasis on quality can be traced back to Britain, as noted by Mertova and Webster (2009), and subsequently extended to other nations such as France and the Netherlands. The

establishment of the Council for the National Academic Awards (CNAA) in the UK, which operated from the 1960s to the 1990s, was a significant development in promoting quality assurance, commencing in 1965. Europe is home to prominent organizations like the European University Association (Tsinidou et al., 2010) and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The focus on quality in higher education institutions during the 1970s was influenced by economic considerations, as discussed by Skolnik (2010). The higher education sector is entrusted with the responsibility of contributing to and fostering the nation's economic growth. The establishment of the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs) in England, Scotland, and Wales (Colleen, 1999), as well as the CNAA in the UK, which was later dissolved in 1992, exemplify the existence of dedicated bodies focusing on quality assurance in each country. The Higher Education Quality Council emerged as a substitute entity. Greece implemented an accreditation body and enacted legislation for quality assurance in 2005 (Papadimitriou and Westerheijden, 2011).

In an effort to raise the standard of higher education in Australia, various initiatives and national organizations have been established (McInnis, 2000). According to Shah and Jarzabkowski (2013), the Australian University Quality Agency was replaced by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), which was abolished in 2011. According to Shah and Jarzabkowski (2013), the TEQSA heavily relies on compliance. Regular audits were conducted, and they had some impact on funds (Anderson, 2006). Quality assurance organisations frequently have the official authority to provide or deny the permission required for an academic course to be offered, as well as the ability to determine how the curriculum should be structured (Skolnik, 2010).

The higher education system in Africa is likewise becoming more and more reliant on quality assurance, maybe as a result of a desire to compete worldwide (Tadesse, 2014). Increasing interest in higher educational institutions among various stakeholders may be another factor. The South African Development Community (SADC) is made up of 14 countries, seven of which have developed quality assurance bodies and procedures (The Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012). Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho are listed as the seven nations by this body (Technical body on Accreditation and Certification, 2012). South Africa is a member of SADC. In Malawi and Zambia, respectively, there is a National Council for Higher Education. The Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), a national organisation in Zimbabwe, supports universities

in raising standards (Garwe, 2012). In collaboration with both public and commercial organisations, ZIMCHE establishes criteria that must be met by all parties (Garwe, 2012). Additionally, there is the Swaziland Higher Education Council in Swaziland and the CHE in Lesotho. According to the Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification (2012), South Africa, Namibia, and Mauritius all have quality assurance systems in place with national entities in charge of coordinating quality activities. In Namibia, there is a body called the Namibian National Council for Higher Education (Kadhila, 2012). National quality organisations have also been formed in African nations outside of SADC. According to Materu and Righetti (2010) and Kagondou and Marwa (2017), concerns regarding the quality of higher education led to the establishment of the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in Kenya in 1985. Additionally, a number of organisations have been set up in nations like Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Uganda (Materu and Righetti, 2010).

The emergence of regional QA associations demonstrates the significance of quality issues as well as the increasing emphasis on quality across the higher education industry globally (Elassy, 2015). Many nations, which involve South Africa, have established quality assurance methods. Additionally, there are proposals for regional as well as national policy harmonization of higher education in Africa, guaranteeing articulation and movement across courses and institutions on both a horizontal and vertical axis (Woldegiorgis, 2013). The definition of harmonization given by Woldegiorgis (2013, p15) is "the coordination of educational programs with agreements to minimum academic standards and ensuring equivalence and comparability of qualifications between and within countries." In order to achieve harmony, many stakeholders must examine carefully the quality of various activities and adopt uniform standards for those programs. In order to concentrate on quality in teaching and learning across the African continent, the African Quality Rating Mechanisms (AQRM) were additionally established (Kagondou and Marwa, 2017).

2.3.2. South African perspective on quality assurance at HEI

There is a lack of available literature on quality assurance systems in Sub-Saharan Africa, as noted by Nabaho et al., (2016). This particular study focuses on a university in South Africa, which is one of the countries within the Sub-Saharan region. The research investigates the

teaching practices of academics (lecturers), their perspectives on quality assurance, and the strategies they employ to enhance the quality of their teaching. The growing emphasis on quality, observed globally, is also evident in the South African higher education system. The establishment of various structures in South Africa reflects its alignment with the prevailing beliefs worldwide. Only a small number of national higher education systems can claim to operate independently from the global context, as highlighted by Woldegiorgis (2013), and policies and practices should conform to international standards (Zaki and Rashidi, 2013). In South Africa, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), established in 1997, has played a crucial role in enhancing the focus on quality in higher education. One of the initiatives undertaken to improve overall quality was the formation of the CHE and its Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), as emphasized by Mammen (2006).

In South Africa, the CHE, which is in charge of making sure that higher education institutions abide by the Higher Education Act of 1997, is in charge of quality assurance (CHE, 2021). The CHE is charged with overseeing and enhancing institutional quality as well as providing advice to the Minister of Higher Education and Training on matters pertaining to higher education. For South African higher education institutions, the CHE has created the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). The QAF is a thorough system that addresses every facet of quality assurance in higher education, including teaching, research, and community participation. The QAF urges institutions to continually assess their performance and make improvements in line with the idea of continuous improvement (CHE, 2021). Through the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), the CHE concentrates on the quality agenda (CHE, 2004). The HEQC is responsible for carrying out the duties of promotion and quality assurance. The HEQC's mandate was outlined in its founding document as "developing a quality assurance framework which involves a particular emphasis on the standard of teaching, research, and community service with the goal to further develop and broaden the process of higher education transformation" (CHE, 2001).

The CHE and the HEQC were believed to help address historical inequalities in higher education (Masehela, 2015). Although quality is given a lot of attention in the context of higher education in South Africa, quality is considered as a vehicle for encouraging transformation in the sector (CHE, 2008), and the fundamental goal of this transformation is to address historical imbalances.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), which is the framework's custodian, and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which has since been referred to as the National Qualifications Sub-framework (NQS), are further national efforts that have been established (Leibowitz et al., 2017). SAQA oversees the NQS's administrative operations. According to Sutherland (2007), the introduction of these bodies at the national level in the 1990s marked the beginning of South Africa's quality assurance system. To register qualifications at various levels, there is a system called the NQS. Offering qualifications that are registered with SAQA is required of all higher education institutions.

In South Africa, higher education institutions are facing increasing pressure to deliver quality education, as highlighted by Stander and Herman (2017). Various challenges within the higher education sector, such as massification, a growing emphasis on research, low throughput rates, high dropout rates, and low graduation rates, have further intensified the attention on quality. Enhancing throughput, graduation, and retention rates is a national priority in South Africa's higher education sector, as emphasized by Sikhwari et al., (2015). The National Development Plan sets targets for increased throughput and graduation rates by 2030 (NPC, 2011). One strategy to improve throughput, graduation, and retention rates is to prioritize teaching quality (Badsha and Cloete, 2011). However, the impact of quality assurance on teaching is not well comprehended, as stated by Houston and Paewai (2013). Jones and De Saram (2005) argue that quality systems within a university can shift attention away from the actual teaching and learning occurring in the classroom. Ntshoe et al., (2010) suggest that quality assurance in South Africa has primarily focused on input/output and performance assessment, rather than promoting collaborative teaching and research that encourages critical inquiry. This shift may have a detrimental effect on the standard of teaching and learning inquiry. This change might have a negative effect on the standard of teaching and learning.

2.4. Purpose of quality assurance

The need for more accountability and reflection in higher education institutions' commercial practises is a global issue involving quality assurance. According to Strydom and Lategan (1998), "quality assurance practices as well as processes vary from institution to institution" in the system of colleges and universities in South Africa. There are numerous descriptions of quality assurance in higher learning in the academic literature. A collective method by which the higher education institution, as an academic institution, ensures that the quality of the educational procedure remains up to the requirements it has set itself, according to Wilger

(1997), can be referred to as quality assurance in higher education. A university can reassure itself, its students, and interested outside stakeholders that its courses meet the necessary scholarly and professional standards, that their goals are correct, that the methods they have chosen and the resources at their disposal to accomplish those goals are appropriate and sufficient, and that they are constantly working to improve their quality.

Wilger (1997) expands on this definition by stating that it includes a few crucial measures that provide confirmation in higher education. First and foremost, quality assurance focuses on methodology; it strives to convince both internal and external stakeholders that an organisation has forms that produce excellent results. Additionally, quality assurance explicitly assumes responsibility for quality at various institution-wide foci. Everyone at an institution has a responsibility to provide quality. Additionally, quality assurance is a continuous, responsive, and dynamic process that includes reliable input and assessment rings. Effective communication is essential for a successful quality assurance strategy. The core question of quality assurance is, "How does an institution know that it is achieving the desired results?"

Strydom (2001) indicates that improving institutions and their academic offerings is the goal of quality assurance at the level of the institution. It demonstrates to society as a whole that the required overall degree of value has been achieved. Additionally, quality assurance serves as proof to the public and other interested parties that a particular set of professional and academic standards has been met. It demonstrates sustainability and assigns accountability for whether institutional and program objectives are satisfied to a commendable degree. It demonstrates the impact of productivity on the institution's performance at all levels and enables institutional decisions to be made in favour of government financing while also empowering high-quality advocacy decisions in institutions and higher education. According to Kis (2005), the quality assurance approach can meet the needs for change and responsibility. For ethical reasons, quality control is centred on standards set by external institutions and bodies, such as the Higher Education Quality Council in the Republic of South Africa. They aim to strengthen external comprehension and control with the potential to engage in external corrective action, if necessary. Instead of passing judgment on previous performance, quality systems for growth focus on increasing future execution. To strengthen the circumstances, inspirations, degree, and level of knowledge of higher education institutions toward quality change, the criteria and techniques used are proposed.

Wilger (1997) (Javed and Alenezi, 2023) highlights the significance of research on quality assurance in higher education, emphasizing the key elements required for an effective quality assurance framework. One fundamental aspect is the presence of well-defined and shared missions and objectives that are widely understood and embraced within the institutions. It is crucial for institutions to establish a clear understanding of quality within the context of their mission and objectives. Additionally, institutions must have robust communication systems in place to facilitate effective information sharing. These essential "preconditions" serve as the foundation for the successful implementation of a comprehensive quality assurance program throughout the campus.

2.5. Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework, according to Orodho (2009) (quoted by Waititu, 2013), is a model that researchers use to show how various study variables relate to one another. A conceptual framework in natural science is a structure or framework that describes the basic ideas, hypotheses, rules, and connections that serve as the foundation for scientific research and understanding within a particular topic or discipline.

The study aims to investigate the quality assurance teaching strategies that are put in place by higher education institutions to ensure quality teaching. Lecturers are at the forefront of this research as they are one of the stakeholders who play a role in quality teaching. Their knowledge base is therefore considered important. This includes knowledge of curriculum, knowledge assessment and knowledge teaching strategies (Gess-Newsome, 2015) among others. It is therefore empirical to know if lecturers know the curriculum, assessment and teaching strategies that can be used to deliver quality education. Below, these aspects are discussed as part of the conceptual framework of this study.

2.5.1. Lecturers' knowledge of assessment

2.5.1.1.Types of assessments

Universities typically conduct various assessments to evaluate students' academic performance and understanding of the course material. Two common types of assessments are formative assessments and summative assessments.

2.5.1.1.1. Formative Assessments

Formative assessments according to Black and Williams (1998) (Bennett,2011) are ongoing evaluations that take place during the learning process. They are designed to provide feedback to students and lecturers, helping identify areas of strength and weakness. Examples of formative assessments include Quizzes, in-class discussions, homework assignments, presentations, class polls, practicals, and group activities.

The primary purpose of formative assessments is to offer timely feedback to both students and instructors. This feedback helps identify misconceptions, gaps in knowledge, or areas of strength, allowing for adjustments in teaching methods and learning strategies (Black and Wiliam, 1998) (Bennett,2011). Formative assessments engage students actively in the learning process, promoting a dynamic and participatory educational experience. Instructors can use formative assessments to monitor students' progress throughout the course, enabling timely intervention and support for those who may be struggling.

Incorporating formative assessments requires careful planning to ensure they do not overwhelm the teaching time. Balancing these assessments with the overall curriculum is essential. Formative assessments can take various formats, and instructors need to choose methods that align with learning objectives and cater to diverse learning styles. Effective feedback is a critical component of formative assessments. Instructors need to provide constructive feedback that guides students toward improvement without discouraging them.

2.5.1.1.2. Summative assessment

Summative assessments are typically administered at the conclusion of a specific teaching period, such as the end of a semester or academic year. These assessments are designed to provide a comprehensive measure of a student's overall mastery of the subject matter covered during that period (Brown, 2004). Unlike formative assessments, which are focused on ongoing feedback and improvement, summative assessments serve a judgmental or evaluative purpose. Examples of summative assessments include final exams, standardized tests, term papers, and comprehensive projects.

Summative assessments aim to assign grades or scores to represent the overall achievement of students (Brown, 2004). They provide a summary judgment of what the student has learned over a specific period. The primary goal of summative assessments is to assign grades or scores that reflect a student's overall performance in a particular course or academic period. These grades contribute to cumulative grade point averages (GPAs) and play a crucial role in certifying whether students have successfully met the requirements for progression or graduation. Summative assessments are often used to assess institutional effectiveness and for external comparisons between educational institutions. They provide a standardized measure to evaluate the success of educational programs.

Unlike formative assessments, summative assessments typically provide limited feedback to students. While they offer a final evaluation, they may not offer detailed insights into specific areas of strength or weakness. The high-stakes nature of summative assessments, especially final exams, can create stress for students. Some educators advocate for a balanced assessment approach that includes opportunities for feedback and improvement throughout the learning process.

2.5.1.2. *Lecturers' choice of assessment*

2.5.1.2.1. Alignment with Learning Objectives

The choice of assessments given by lecturers at the university is informed by several factors that align with educational goals, teaching strategies, and the specific needs of the course. Various considerations influence the selection of assessment methods. The alignment of assessment with other features of a course is the basis of course design and is central to effective assessment (Brown, 2001).

Before selecting assessment methods, lecturers typically establish clear and specific learning objectives for their courses. Learning objectives articulate the intended knowledge, skills, and competencies that students should acquire by the end of the teaching period. Assessments are chosen to align closely with these learning objectives. This alignment ensures that the assessments are relevant to the course content and directly measure the skills and knowledge specified in the objectives. The primary purpose of evaluations is to evaluate students' mastery of the intended learning outcomes. By aligning assessments with learning objectives, lecturers can gauge the extent to which students have achieved the specified goals. When assessments are closely tied to learning objectives, the results provide valuable feedback to both students and instructors. Instructors can identify areas where students excel or struggle, allowing for targeted adjustments in teaching methods and content delivery to better meet the learning objectives.

The significance of aligning assessments with learning objectives has been emphasized by educational theorist John Biggs (1999). Biggs argues that this alignment is crucial for accurately measuring students' achievements in relation to the intended outcomes. Furthermore, Brown (2001) attests that the system fails if the goals are not defined. Both students and lecturers benefit from clear and realistic outcomes, which provide the former a good idea of what needs to be learned and the latter of how to educate and what learning opportunities to offer.



Figure 1: Coordinating teaching strategies, learning objectives, and evaluation with teaching and learning activities (Kurt, 2020)

2.5.1.2.2. Diversity of Assessment Methods

Lecturers consider employing a variety of assessment methods to cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. The term "assessment method" describes the process of evaluating learning through the use of essays, problems, multiple-choice exams, and other tools to give a thorough picture of students' comprehension (Race, 2001; Brown, 2001). Students have diverse learning styles and preferences. Some may excel in traditional written exams, while others may prefer more hands-on or interactive assessments. By incorporating a variety of assessment methods, such as quizzes, presentations, group projects, and practical demonstrations, lecturers can accommodate different learning styles, ensuring that all students have opportunities to showcase their understanding (Race, 2001). Furthermore, Race (2001) stated that different assessment methods provide a more holistic evaluation of students' knowledge and skills. For instance, a combination of formative assessments, such as ongoing quizzes and discussions, and summative assessments, like final exams or term papers, allows for a comprehensive understanding of both the process of learning and the final outcomes.

Boud and Falchikov (2006) state that diverse assessment methods mirror real-world scenarios where individuals encounter various challenges that demand a range of skills. Case studies, simulations, and practical evaluations can help close the knowledge gap between theory and practice by preparing students for obstacles they may encounter in the workplace. The positive impact of different assessments was identified by Wiggins (1998) when they stated that different assessment formats can enhance student engagement and motivation. Incorporating interactive elements, such as group projects or multimedia presentations, can make the learning experience more dynamic and enjoyable. This can therefore lead to a rise in motivation and a

better comprehension of the material (Nichols and Dawson (2012). Using a variety of assessment techniques helps minimize the impact of potential biases inherent in any single method. Students with diverse backgrounds, learning abilities, and experiences may be better represented and evaluated fairly when a mix of assessment approaches is employed (Wiggins, 1998).

2.5.1.3.Sources of assessment methods

Brown (2001) defines sources of evaluation as individuals such as lecturers, postgraduate tutors, employers, or student peer groups. Although more and more sources are being used, the lecturer remains the primary source of assessment. Hounsell and Thompson (1995) offer useful recommendations for lecturers and demonstrators at the postgraduate level. Examples of work-based learning advice and assessment, including the employment of mentors or supervisors, are given by Ashworth and Saxton (1992), and Brennan and Little (1996) examine work-based learning theories, practices, and the significance of assessment (Sweet, 2013). Regardless of the assessment's origin, self-consistency—or consistency between and among assessors—must be maintained. According to the criteria to be employed, quick training sessions do increase consistency, but they don't aim for perfection (Brown, 2001).

2.5.1.4.Practical Considerations

Practical constraints, such as class size, grading workload, and time limitations, influence the choice of assessments. Lecturers must choose methods that are logistically feasible and can be effectively administered within the given constraints. The size of the class is a crucial factor influencing the choice of assessments (Smith, 2005). Smith (2005) further explains that in larger classes, traditional assessment methods like exams might be more challenging to administer, grade, and provide timely feedback for. In contrast, smaller classes may allow for more personalized and interactive assessments, such as discussions or individual presentations. Time limitations, including the duration of the course and the need to cover a specific curriculum, impact the design of assessments. Assessments must be realistic within the allotted time frame, balancing the need for thorough evaluation with the constraints of the academic calendar (Smith, 2005).

The workload associated with grading assessments is a practical consideration. Some assessment methods, such as essays or project-based evaluations, may require more time for grading than multiple-choice exams. Lecturers need to assess the trade-off between the depth of assessment and the practicality of grading within the available resources. Hence assessment has different sources to assist with the workload (Smith 2005; Brown 2001).

2.5.1.5. Marking and moderating

Fundamental to the marking and moderating procedure are validity, feasibility, and reliability inquiries. In educational assessment, validity is a question of judgement: do the criteria align with the targeted learning goals and the assessment task? What is feasible considering the length of time and resources that are available is the focus of feasibility. The uniformity of grading in relation to the specified standards is what reliability is all about. It guarantees equitable marking for pupils (Brown 2001).

The process of marking and moderating assignments involves evaluating students' work and maintaining academic standards. According to Smith (2018), lecturers play a vital role in providing constructive feedback on students' assignments. This feedback not only helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses but also facilitates their overall academic development.

In the context of moderation, Jones et al., (2020) argue that it is essential for universities to establish robust moderation procedures. Moderation, as defined by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA, 2017), involves the review of assessment decisions to ensure consistency and fairness across different modules and academic staff. Lecturers, as part of this process, need to adhere to the guidelines set by the university and regulatory bodies.

Furthermore, in the assessment process, lecturers must consider the principles of fairness and transparency. As highlighted by Brown and Miller (2019), transparent marking criteria and clear communication of expectations contribute to a fair assessment process. Lecturers need to provide explicit guidelines to students regarding the assessment criteria, enabling them to understand how their work will be evaluated.

In some cases, lecturers may enlist the help of markers to assist with the grading process. Markers are often graduate students or teaching assistants with expertise in the subject matter. Markers work closely with lecturers to ensure consistency in grading, following established guidelines and criteria (Brown, 2001; Smith, 2018). Furthermore, in the process of marking there are moderators. A moderator, in the context of university assessment and grading, is an individual responsible for overseeing the quality and consistency of the marking process. The role of a moderator is to ensure that assessments are graded fairly, accurately, and in accordance with established academic standards (Brown, 2001). Moderators play a crucial role in quality assurance. They review a sample of assessed work to ensure that marking has been carried out accurately and fairly.

2.5.1.5.1. Tutors as marker

Exam and assignment marking by tutors may affect students and the educational system in both positive and bad ways. Positively, tutors provide students with tailored feedback that highlights their strengths and areas for development. According to research by Hattie and Timperley (2007), which emphasizes the value of precise, timely, and actionable feedback, this input is essential for students' improvement. Additionally, tutors can help students understand the material better by elaborating on difficult ideas or misinterpreted areas. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) view that social contact provides scaffolding and support to facilitate learning. Additionally, research like that of Corno and Snow (1986), which stresses the significance of goal-oriented feedback in improving intrinsic motivation, shows that students' interest and engagement with the subject matter may be increased by receiving individualized attention from a tutor (Kim, 2013).

There are, nonetheless, drawbacks to take into account. One of the main issues is the potential for grading inconsistently since various tutors have different criteria. According to a meta-analysis by Kulik and Kulik (1988), tutoring is most successful when consistent procedures are used, and this problem might compromise the validity and fairness of assessment results. Additionally, tutors' subjectivity or prejudices may affect how they grade, which might disadvantage some pupils (Smith and Coombe, 2006). Sue's (2010) research highlights the influence of latent biases on assessment procedures, generating questions regarding the impartiality and equality of grading methodologies.

Many steps may be done to guarantee that tutors' marking is implemented properly. Initially, in order to reduce prejudice and discrepancies in grading, precise rubrics and grading criteria should be developed. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), transparent criteria can direct efficient feedback processes. Furthermore, enhancing reliability may be achieved by guaranteeing uniformity in grading procedures and offering tutors training. To raise the calibre and consistency of education, the National Education Association (NEA) advises tutors to pursue ongoing professional development. Furthermore, putting quality control procedures into place like lecturers reviewing graded assignments on a regular basis, can guarantee assessment accuracy and impartiality.

In summary, while tutors who mark assignments can provide useful advantages like tailored feedback and idea clarification, it is important to take precautions against potential negative effects like biases and inconsistencies. To guarantee that tutors mark assignments efficiently and equitably, which in turn promotes student learning and accomplishment, straightforward guidelines, training, and quality assurance procedures are crucial.

2.5.2. Lecturers Knowledge of curriculum

University lecturers have a significant impact on how students learn, and their familiarity with the curriculum is essential to provide them with instruction that is both efficient and pertinent. According to Spranger (2010), a curriculum is a methodical approach to teaching that involves students in the acquisition of knowledge and abilities through a lengthy questioning process organised around challenging, real-world questions and thoughtfully created assignments and outcomes.

2.5.2.1. *Importance of Curriculum Knowledge for Lecturers*

University lecturers are not merely conveyors of information; they are educational architects responsible for designing and implementing curricula that align with academic standards and industry requirements. Deep knowledge of the curriculum is essential for lecturers to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for the challenges of their chosen field. In a study conducted by Smith et al., (2019), it was found that lecturers with a

comprehensive understanding of the curriculum were more effective in delivering engaging and relevant content, contributing to higher levels of student satisfaction and academic achievement.

2.5.2.2. Alignment with Academic Standards

Lecturers need to be well-versed in the intricacies of the curriculum to ensure alignment with national and international academic standards. This involves staying updated on the latest developments in their respective fields and incorporating emerging trends into their teaching methods. As highlighted by Jones and Brown (2020), lecturers who continuously engage with the curriculum and participate in professional development activities are better equipped to adapt their teaching strategies to meet evolving academic standards.

2.5.2.3. Defining Learning outcomes

Any course outline must include learning objectives. A learning objective is a precise declaration of what a student should know, be able to do, and/or appreciate at the end of an entire course of study, together with an estimate of how well the student should do in order to meet those expectations (Allan, 1996). It outlines the subject matter of education as well as the requirements for proving it. The purpose of learning outcomes is to clarify the intentions of educational interactions, modules, programs, and qualifications for various stakeholders such as students, teachers, assessors, and quality assurance authorities (Prøitz, 2010). They provide a clear understanding of what learners are expected to achieve. Qualification frameworks that are focused on learning outcomes, like the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF, 2014), are becoming more and more significant at the national, international, and higher education sector levels.

Learning outcomes can differ in their purpose and level of detail. They might focus on different aspects of learning and achievement. There are different levels of defining outcomes within an educational framework. These levels include:

- Qualification level: Describing what a learner should achieve to obtain a particular qualification or degree.

- Program level: Outlining the overall goals and objectives of a specific educational program.
- Module level: Detailing the specific learning objectives of individual modules or units within a program.
- Learning outcomes of learning-teaching interactions: Describing the expected outcomes of interactions between teachers and learners during teaching sessions or events. This could involve specific skills or knowledge gained through the teaching process.

The relationship between exit learning outcomes and module learning outcomes lies in their hierarchical structure within an educational program. Exit learning outcomes typically represent the overarching goals and objectives of a qualification or degree program. They encompass the totality of knowledge, skills, and competencies that students are expected to achieve by the time they complete the entire program (Nusche, 2008). In contrast, module learning outcomes are more specific and focused on the objectives of individual modules or units within the program. Additionally, Module learning outcomes should align with and contribute to the achievement of exit learning outcomes. Each module within a program serves as a building block toward the attainment of broader program-level goals (Sobrinho and Ryan, 2010). Therefore, module learning outcomes are designed to support the overall objectives of the program. In an educational framework, module learning outcomes often serve as intermediate steps toward achieving exit learning outcomes. As students' progress through various modules, they acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies that collectively lead to the attainment of the broader exit learning outcomes. Lastly, both module and exit learning outcomes guide the assessment process. Module assessments evaluate students' achievement of specific learning outcomes within a particular module, while exit assessments assess students' overall attainment of program-level outcomes.

According to (Sobrinho and Ryan, 2010) adopting a nested approach where learning outcomes at lower levels (e.g., module level) align closely with those at higher levels (e.g., program or qualification level). This alignment ensures coherence and consistency in educational objectives across different levels.

Apart from steering the content and structure of a unit of study, learning outcomes also serve as the foundation for assessment and are connected to the broader learning goals established by the university as general and/or discipline- or course-specific graduate qualities. The degree to which students meet the learning goals varies because of their obvious connection to the evaluation.

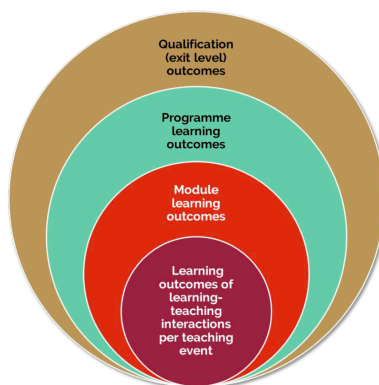


Figure 2: Various levels at which learning objectives are relevant (Stellenbosch University Learning outcomes and Associated Assessment Criteria, 2022)

2.5.2.4. *Meeting Diverse Student Needs*

An in-depth understanding of the curriculum allows lecturers to cater to the diverse learning needs of students. With knowledge about various teaching methodologies, assessment techniques, and learning resources, lecturers can create inclusive and supportive learning environments. Research by Garcia and Patel (2018) emphasized that lecturers with a nuanced understanding of the curriculum were more adept at addressing the unique needs of a diverse student body, fostering a positive and inclusive educational experience.

2.5.2.5. *Challenges and Opportunities for Curriculum Knowledge Enhancement*

Despite the importance of curriculum knowledge, lecturers often face challenges such as heavy workloads, limited resources, and time constraints. Institutions must recognize these challenges and provide opportunities for professional development, workshops, and collaborative initiatives to enhance lecturers' curriculum knowledge. According to a survey conducted by Johnson (2021), university lecturers expressed a desire for more institutional support and opportunities for continuous learning to stay abreast of changes in the curriculum.

In conclusion, the proficiency of university lecturers in curriculum knowledge is integral to the delivery of quality education. Lecturers serve as educational leaders who shape the academic journey of students, and their depth of understanding of the curriculum directly influences the effectiveness of their teaching. To ensure continuous improvement, institutions must prioritize professional development and support mechanisms that empower lecturers to stay informed and engaged with evolving educational standards and practices.

2.5.2.5.1. Professional development

The quality of education offered at higher education institutions may be significantly impacted by lecturers who do not hold official teaching qualifications. The possible variation in the calibre of education is one noteworthy effect. Studies reveal that lecturers with teaching credentials typically use evidence-based techniques and more successful teaching tactics than instructors without formal training (Hattie, 2009). This implies that when teachers are skilled in pedagogy, students may gain from a better calibre of teaching.

Furthermore, the credentials of their teachers may have an impact on pupils' contentment and level of participation. According to [Kembel et al., \(1997\)](#), lecturers who possess teaching qualifications could be more adept at fostering student engagement, fostering a supportive learning environment, and meeting a variety of learning requirements. Under the direction of skilled teachers, children may therefore experience greater levels of happiness and academic achievement.

Another area that is impacted by lecturers' teaching credentials or lack thereof is professional development. Acquired via teaching credentials, formal training in pedagogy, instructional design, assessment, and classroom management can support continued professional growth and enhance teaching practices ([Gibbs and Coffey, 2004](#)). Students may experience improved learning outcomes as a result of this ongoing development in teaching techniques. Furthermore, the credentials of a the educational institution's faculty might have an impact on the school's reputation. According to Marginson (2013), educational institutions that place a high priority on hiring academics with teaching credentials might be seen as dedicated to both quality teaching and excellent education. This may positively affect the institution's standing and appeal to potential students.

In conclusion, while the impact of lecturers without teaching qualifications can vary based on individual circumstances and subject matter expertise, the presence of formal teaching qualifications is generally associated with positive outcomes for both students and institutions of higher learning.

2.5.2.6. Improving Learning Outcomes

Lecturers play a pivotal role in enhancing learning outcomes for students, and there are several reasons why they should continually strive to improve these outcomes.

Firstly, improved learning outcomes positively impact student success and achievement. Research by Hattie (2009) demonstrates that effective teaching practices have a significant impact on student learning. When lecturers focus on refining their teaching methods, students are more likely to grasp and retain the material, leading to better academic performance.

Secondly, enhancing learning outcomes fosters student engagement and motivation. When lecturers employ innovative teaching techniques and create stimulating learning environments, students are more likely to be actively involved in their own learning process (Freeman et al., 2014). This engagement can lead to deeper understanding and long-term retention of the subject matter.

Furthermore, by improving learning outcomes, lecturers contribute to the overall quality of education. Institutions that prioritize student learning and invest in faculty development tend to produce graduates who are better equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in their chosen fields (Gallup-Purdue Index Report, 2014).

Additionally, in today's rapidly changing world, where new information and technologies are constantly emerging, it is essential for lecturers to continuously update their teaching methods to meet the evolving needs of students (UNESCO, 2015). By staying current with best practices in teaching and learning, lecturers can better prepare students for the challenges they will face in their future careers.

In conclusion, improving learning outcomes is crucial for lecturers because it leads to student success, enhances engagement and motivation, contributes to the quality of education, and prepares students for the demands of the modern world.

2.5.3. Lecturers' knowledge on teaching strategies

University lecturers have a more important role than just imparting knowledge; they also help students develop critical thinking abilities, develop a love of studying, and get ready for the difficulties of the real world. Achieving these goals depends critically on the use of effective teaching techniques. Teaching strategies are a broad category of techniques that instructors use to help pupils learn and understand (Oviawe, 2020). These approaches can take the form of cutting-edge methods like case studies, experiential learning, technological integration, and more conventional lectures and debates. As the main agents of change in the learning process, lecturers must have a thorough awareness of these tactics to foster a stimulating and engaging learning environment (Gow et al., 1992; Hénard and Roseveare, 2012).

2.5.3.1. The Impact on Student Engagement

Effective teaching strategies enhance student engagement, promoting an active and participatory learning experience. As highlighted by Chickering and Gamson (1987) and Shieh and Chang (2014), employing active learning techniques such as group discussions, problem-solving activities, and hands-on projects fosters higher levels of student engagement. Lecturers well-versed in a variety of teaching strategies can adapt their approaches to cater to diverse learning styles, ensuring that students remain actively involved in the learning process.

2.5.3.2. Meeting Diverse Learning Needs

Students at universities come from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and learning demands. With a thorough grasp of teaching techniques, lecturers are well-equipped to handle this variation. By implementing multimedia tools, collaborative learning, and individualized teaching, lecturers may better meet the requirements of their varied student body and provide an inclusive and fair learning environment (Cunningham, 2013).

2.5.3.3. Adapting to Technological Advancements

In the era of digitalization, technology is integral to education. To improve the quality of the learning process, lecturers need to be skilled at incorporating technology into their lesson plans. Online resources, flipped classes, and blended learning are just a few instances of how technology may be used effectively (Mardiana, 2020). By remaining up to date with technological changes, lecturers may effectively utilize digital tools to engage students and create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment.

2.5.3.4. Types of teaching strategies employed by lecturers.

The choice of strategies often depends on the subject matter, the nature of the course, and the diverse needs of the student body.

2.5.3.4.1. Lectures and Discussions

Lectures remain a staple in university education, providing a platform for instructors to deliver key concepts. However, the integration of discussions within lectures fosters interaction and critical thinking (Freeman et al., 2014).

2.5.3.4.2. Active Learning

Through exercises like group discussions, problem-solving, and practical projects, active learning engages students in the educational process. Chickering and Gamson (1987) and Munna and Kalam(2021) highlight the effectiveness of active learning in promoting student engagement and understanding.

2.5.3.4.3. Case Studies

Case studies immerse students in real-world scenarios, encouraging them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. This strategy enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Herreid, 2005).

2.5.3.4.4. Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom model involves students reviewing teaching materials independently before class, allowing in-class time for discussions and application of concepts. This approach enhances student participation and comprehension (Tucker, 2012).

2.5.3.4.5. Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

PBL engages students in solving real-world problems, promoting collaboration and independent learning. Savin-Baden and Major (2004) and Akcay (2009) emphasize the benefits of PBL in developing critical thinking skills.

2.5.3.4.6. Peer Teaching and Peer Assessment

Encouraging students to teach concepts to their peers enhances their understanding and communication skills. Additionally, peer assessment promotes a sense of responsibility and collaboration (Topping, 1998; Havard et al, 2023).

2.5.3.4.7. Technology Integration

Leveraging technology, such as online resources, multimedia presentations, and interactive platforms, enriches the learning experience. The integration of technology aligns with the contemporary digital landscape of education (Mishra and Koehler, 2006; Kearney et al, 2020).

2.5.3.4.8. Service-Learning

Through the integration of academic study and community involvement, service-learning enables students to apply what they've learned to real-world scenarios while making a positive impact on the community (Valarmathi et al, 2024)

2.5.3.4.9. Role-Playing and Simulation

Role-playing and simulations immerse students in dynamic scenarios, enhancing their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. This strategy fosters experiential learning and critical thinking (Duch et al., 2001; Fitrianto and Saif, 2024).

2.5.3.4.10. Assessment for Learning

Formative assessments, such as quizzes, feedback sessions, and self-assessment, help lecturers gauge student understanding and adjust teaching strategies accordingly (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Angelo and Zakrajsek, 2024).

Incorporating a combination of these strategies allows lecturers to create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that caters to the diverse needs of students at the university level.

2.5.3.4.11. Question and answer

Question and answer (QandA) as a teaching strategy involves engaging students by posing questions and eliciting responses from them, either individually or as a group. This method promotes active participation and encourages critical thinking, as students must process information and formulate responses. According to Angelo and Cross (1993) and Ningsih, (2023), this approach is part of the "interactive lecturing" strategy, which emphasizes student engagement during lectures through questioning and discussion. By asking questions, instructors can assess students' understanding, address misconceptions, and facilitate deeper comprehension of the material (Brookfield and Preskill, 2012).

QandA sessions can take various forms, such as:

Socratic Questioning: Instructors use probing questions to guide students in uncovering concepts and principles on their own (Paul and Elder, 2006).

Peer Discussions: Students engage in dialogue with their peers to explore different perspectives and collaboratively solve problems (Tinto, 1997).

Think-Pair-Share: Students individually consider a question, discuss it with a partner, and then share their ideas with the class (Lyman, 1981).

Research suggests that incorporating QandA into teaching can enhance student learning outcomes by promoting active engagement, improving retention, and fostering critical thinking skills (Chi et al., 1994; Prince, 2004).

2.5.3.5. *Measuring teaching strategies*

In the pursuit of educational excellence, university lecturers continually seek ways to enhance their teaching strategies. However, the efficacy of these strategies can only be determined through systematic assessment and evaluation. This essay explores various methods through which lecturers can measure the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, drawing on research findings and best practices in higher education.

2.5.3.5.1. Student Feedback and Surveys

Gathering feedback from students is a valuable tool for assessing teaching effectiveness. Anonymous surveys at the end of the semester or mid-course evaluations provide insights into students' perceptions of the teaching methods used (Sozer et al., 2019). Questions can focus on the clarity of teaching, engagement level, and usefulness of learning activities.

2.5.3.5.2. Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The alignment between teaching strategies and learning outcomes is paramount. Lecturers can assess whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes through various assessment methods, including exams, quizzes, essays, projects, and presentations (Biggs and Tang, 2011). Analyzing student performance against predefined criteria helps gauge the effectiveness of teaching strategies in facilitating learning.

2.5.3.5.3. Classroom Observation and Peer Review

Peer observation and review provide an external perspective on teaching effectiveness. Colleagues or teaching designers can observe lectures, review course materials, and provide constructive feedback based on predefined criteria (Bell, 2005; Baltzersen, 2024). This collaborative approach fosters professional development and enhances teaching practices. According to Berk (2005); Fairman et al, (2022) and Fitzgerald et al, (2020), measuring the effectiveness of teaching strategies is essential for enhancing student learning and teaching quality in higher education. By employing a combination of student feedback, assessment data, observation, analytics, qualitative research, and reflective practices, lecturers can gain valuable insights into the efficacy of their teaching methods. Continuous assessment and adaptation of teaching strategies are crucial for promoting student engagement, fostering learning outcomes, and advancing educational excellence.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I evaluated the literature in relation to this study using a thorough but persuasive argument. The main findings and recommendations drawn from other studies on this topic have been discussed. The main ideas of this particular conceptual framework have already been

covered. Furthermore, this chapter provides a thorough justification for using the conceptual framework supporting this research study. The subheadings in this chapter clearly outline what lecturers should know and how it will benefit the quality of education. For instance, the importance of knowing curriculum, importance of knowing that curriculum should be aligned with national and international academic standard, the importance of learning objectives in each course, the importance of diverse assessment methods etc. The important question and what this study is trying to establish is do lecturers have this knowledge? If they have it, are they implying it? Literature review also highlights the importance of marking and moderation to enhance quality of education, are lecturers aware of this? Are their assessment papers moderated since it is one of the quality measures as stated in subheading 2.5.1.5? What other QA measures are in place by the university to ensure that they are offering high quality education? The aim of this study is to get answers to the above questions. The following chapter (Chapter 3) will explain the methodological strategy used in this research investigation.

Chapter 3

Research design and methodology

3.0. Introduction

In chapter 2, I investigated a variety of sources that were pertinent to this study in an effort to establish the state of the field, identify any gaps in the literature that might have existed, and provide guidance for future practice. The objective of Chapter 3 is to discuss the research paradigm, research approach, population and sampling, research site, data collection and ethical considerations.

3.1. Methodology

3.1.1. Research paradigm

According to Kumar (2018), positivist, interpretative, and critical are the three main types of research paradigms. I decided to use an interpretivist paradigm, which helped me construct my research's goals, methodology, and data collection techniques following interpretivists' worldviews and presumptions. The interpretive paradigm considers individuals' ideas, beliefs, and perceptions that develop into enduring routines, practises, and procedures (Kumar, 2018). To explore ideas, beliefs, and practises of academics regarding quality in teaching, it is appropriate to use an interpretive paradigm to examine quality practises in teaching in the present study. This can be done by responding to the study's research questions. Given the different functions of a higher education institution, quality teaching practices are complex in this setting. Semi-structured interviews were employed since the interpretivism paradigm was used in this study. Semi-structured interviews provide a plethora of information on the viewpoints, experiences, and personal narratives of participants, which makes them a valuable tool in interpretive research (Balushi, 2016). Since semi-structured interviews were used in this study, a qualitative research technique was also used. Semi-structured interviews and qualitative research methods will be discussed in depth under different subheadings.

3.1.2. Research Approach

Case and Light (2011) defined methodology as a framework within which research approaches are placed. As a result, methodology can be characterised as a systematic approach that guides the study plan and determines the type of data that is gathered and how it was processed (Bernard, 2017). This study employed a qualitative research methodology. Moser and

Korstjens (2018) define qualitative research as a type of study that focuses on actual problems and provides a deeper knowledge of them. In contrast to quantitative research, which collects numerical data points and involves intervening or providing treatments, qualitative research helps in the formulation of hypotheses as well as the further exploration and interpretation of quantitative data (Tenny et al., 2023). Qualitative research aims to discover factors, viewpoints, and attitudes that underlie the issues that are under investigation (Rahman, 2016). Qualitative research method is important in this research because it enables the researcher to better understand the quality measures implemented by higher education institutions and how lecturers use them to improve the quality of their teaching. The drawback of qualitative research, according to Cousin (2009), is that it does not generate numerical figures and instead relies on descriptions that are occasionally influenced by the researchers' preconceptions. Utilizing qualitative research and other types of descriptive research, which provide a review texture and an explanatory context, one can paint a richer picture of the intervention, its effects, how or why it achieves those effects [or not], and other comparable aspects.

3.2. Population and sampling

To explore the quality measures that are put in place by this higher institution to ensure quality teaching, the QA manager was interviewed. Furthermore, three lecturers were interviewed to investigate their knowledge of quality assurance measures.

The study chose volunteers for the research using a convenient and intentional sampling technique. According to Petty and Thomas et al., (2012), purposive, theoretical, convenience, and snowball sampling are only a few of the sample methods frequently used in qualitative research. According to Cresswell and Clark (2011), purposeful sampling is choosing participants based on their applicability to the research and the particular goal at hand. Purposive sampling is appropriate for this study because it enables the purposeful selection of three lecturers who are actively involved in teaching. They were from the humanities faculty, the school of education, and the science and technology department. In order to capture a variety of viewpoints and increase the study's validity and trustworthiness, a wide range of lecturers from various backgrounds were chosen. Additionally, easy-to-accessible lecturers who are available during the data collecting time were chosen using convenient sampling.

These individuals were specifically chosen to reflect a range of demographics, including age, years of employment at the university, gender, race, discipline, and highest degree attained by

that academic. To give a variety of viewpoints, participants were chosen to reflect a spectrum of academic professors (Hemer, 2014). Quota sampling is a technique used to ensure variation in a sample (Neuman, 2014). Qualitative practices and the explanations given by academics about their practices may be influenced by factors such as age, years spent at the institution, gender, colour, discipline, and highest qualification. Moreover, these discrepancies may impact the way scholars define quality and their relationship to quality-related institutional procedures.

In this study, the three lecturers had diverse backgrounds, as highlighted in Table 1. Their ages ranged from 31 to 62 years old. When it came to their time at the university, some had only been there for a short period (with the shortest tenure being one year), while others had been part of the university for a longer duration (up to sixteen years). As previously mentioned, three participants were interviewed for this study, one male and two females, among whom one was of Indian, and the other two identified as Africans. Some lecturers had PhDs while one lecturer had masters.

Pseudonym	Age range	Race	Gender	Position	Faculty	Discipline	No of years in institution	Highest qualification
Ben	50+	African	Male	Lecturer	Humanities	Life science	6-9	PhD
Olunje	50+	African	female	Associate Professor	Humanities	Life science	16+	PhD
Anika	30-39	Indian	Female	Associate lecturer	Humanities	Science and technology	1-2	Masters

Table 1: Summary of the information related to participants.

3.2.1. Research site

The research was conducted in one of the universities in Johannesburg, South Africa. The study was conducted at this university due to convenience for the researcher and the school of education was investigated. The research took place in the faculty of humanities, in school of education, and in the science and technology department.

3.3. Data collection

3.3.1. Interviews

Interviews are a crucial method of gathering data and serve as essential sources in qualitative research (Yin, 2003). In qualitative research, the information is gathered by the researchers themselves, according to Creswell (2017). They seldom make use of or depend on tools or surveys created by other researchers. Because this study is qualitative, it is permissible to employ semi-structured interviews in it. According to Qu and Dumay (2011), interviews are a crucial technique for gathering data and are valuable sources for case study research (Yin, 2003). According to Hartel and Bradley (2009), interviews can be classified as organized, semi-structured, or unstructured. Semi-structured interviews are well-liked due to their adaptability and capacity to reveal frequently obscure aspects of organizational behavior (Qu and Dumay, 2011). Semi-structured interviews are those in which the researcher is guided through the interview process by a predetermined interview protocol. Despite some conversational elements, the engagement is mostly focused on the researcher and the participant. It allows the researcher to explore further into the issue in quest of new data while still maintaining some structure (Schmidt, 2004; Dearnley, 2005). This approach was useful in this research because of its adaptability and capacity to reveal frequently concealed characteristics of organisational behaviour, which is important given the importance of QA in higher education institutions in SA. In this case, the researcher will have the chance to probe deeper into any new information the interviewees may present.

Interviews were first piloted with an academic from the investigated institution who was not a participant in the study. To improve credibility, the interview questions were piloted to see if they asked precisely the same questions that the study was trying to learn. Piloting interviews is crucial to ensuring that the data gathered will be valuable, as Matthews and Ross (2010) describe (before commencing the main research). Research questions were improved with the use of piloting (Turner, III, 2010). I was able to add more probes where necessary and better explain and improve the interview questions after doing the test interview. I also used this interview to improve my interview skills, for example, when a participant responds I don't interject.

Participants were asked to participate in 45-minute to 1-hour semi-structured individual interviews on their quality procedures during the major post-piloting interviews. Focus group interviews, according to Connelly (2015), shouldn't be utilized to gather sensitive data. My

goal in conducting the study was to gather sensitive data on the knowledge of academics about institutional quality systems as well as the relationship between academics and quality. I utilised the interview schedule found in Appendix A of this research as a reference for the questions I wished to ask the participants. The institution's policy documents were used in the development of this interview schedule. The expectations for academics at this institution, as outlined in the policy texts, are guided by the institutional policy. I was able to ask more detailed questions during the interview than I could have with a questionnaire since it acted as an interview guide, allowing me flexibility (Walliman, 2011). Probing is defined by Harrell and Bradley (2009) as a technique to elicit more information and to energise the interview. I was able to learn more about how academics conceptualised and implemented excellence in their teaching by probing them during interviews. The researcher has the option to request further details and clarification during a semi-structured interview (May, 2011). By asking follow-up questions, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the justifications and details offered by academics for their high-quality teaching techniques (Turner, 2010). Interviews were important to my study because I desired a deeper understanding of this issue.

Interview questions were designed to be primarily open-ended, enabling participants to discuss any concerns they may have about the quality of teaching in higher education or to openly describe their quality methods. Despite having prepared a list of questions beforehand, I let the interview flow like a conversation, which led to the creation of new questions during the exchange and the removal of ones that the participant had already addressed. I paid close attention to the participant's replies in order to do this. Qu and Dumay (2011) agree that conducting an interview calls for certain abilities, including the interviewer's ability to listen and take notes as well as meticulous planning and preparation. Prior to beginning the actual interviews, I put a lot of effort into honing these abilities since I realised how important they were during the piloting process.

Because the interviewer asks the interviewee questions and the respondent responds in real time, MST interviews are classified as synchronous communication in time (Qu and Dumay, 2011). Opdenakker (2006) states that this synchronous communication has the advantage that the interviewee's reaction is more immediate and doesn't take a lot of thought. This is why Microsoft team (MST) semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study. This is because some lecturers were not in the country and they were not accessible at the time of the interview to conduct a face-to-face interview. Academics have very hectic schedules, thus scheduling

these interviews was crucial to getting access to participants. Negotiating access is as crucial as gaining access for interviews (Harrell and Bradley, 2009; Tietze, 2012). I contacted the participants via email, asking them to confirm their availability for an interview at the time they recommended. To convey to participants that I was well-organized and eager to hear their opinions, I made sure to be on time for every interview. I did, however, repeatedly underline during the interviews that I was not dispatched by the university Quality Unit to determine whether or not they practiced quality. To better understand and evaluate their excellent teaching approaches, I informed them that I am conducting these interviews with them in my position as a researcher and Masters's student.

Participants were reassured at the start of the interview that there were no right or incorrect responses. I encouraged participants to share with me whatever thought first sprung to mind. To show that the other participants had greater influence during the conversation, I made sure to speak less than them. Additionally, I told them and gave them my word that although I am listening, I won't be showing any active listening signs since it would disrupt the transcription process. Taking a step back and letting the participants talk more was a crucial lesson discovered during the interview pilot. The interview begins with broad, less demanding questions and progresses to more focused ones (Magnusson and Marecek, 2015). A laptop was used to record these interviews and the interviews were recorded to make transcription simple. This method requires a lot of time; according to Bryman (2001), it takes five to six hours to transcribe an hour of tape. The use of this strategy has benefits, including an accurate interview report. While I did take notes during the interview, I did it quickly since I was paying close attention to the participants and paying close attention to what they had to say. and since this is a semi-structured interview. I would then probe more into what they are saying. A total of two months were spent conducting the interviews. A statement acknowledging that the participant had given up valuable and fascinating information and expressing gratitude for their time were exchanged after the interview.

Luckily, there were not many difficulties for me to arrange these interviews with participants in this study. Two potential participants declined to engage in an interview and preferred a questionnaire, and one was unable to participate in the study because of other obligations.

3.3.2. Documentation

In the course of the interviews, participants were requested to submit any documentation that they felt demonstrated their excellent teaching methods or was indicative of their practices to help answer research question one on the knowledge of lecturers on QA measures. The objective of obtaining these materials was to enhance comprehension of the practices' underlying principles and to learn more about the methods used by scholars. According to Rule and John (2011), the documents serve to support and validate the information gleaned from the interviews. Moreover, these records frequently include insightful data that validates or adds to the material gathered using different research techniques, including surveys or interviews (Smith, 2018).

Obtaining access to the document is the first step. Getting these documents turned out to be difficult because some academics did not have any to share and others made it difficult for me to gain them. Some professors acted without supporting documentation. Particularly, one lecturer promptly supplied me with documentation that supported their actions following the interview. A lecturer did not have a document; instead, they followed the procedures followed by others in their field and mentioned Bloom's taxonomy as a way she sets assessments. The final lecturer directed me to the high school curriculum.

Documents from the institution and CHE were utilised to address the second study question on the QA procedures implemented by the institution. The QA manager supplied some of these materials, while others could be found on the university's website. Having received CHE paperwork from the manager, I visited their website to access further quality documentation. A portion of these records were sourced from the website of the Department of Higher Education. Because the institution's QA unit was still in the development stage and lacked numerous quality-related documents, national records were used instead.

The next part discusses how the data collected from documents and interviews was analysed.

3.4. Data analysis

3.4.1. Interviews

The data was analysed using both deductive and inductive methods. Babbie (2013) defines a deductive approach as one where the researcher starts with an abstract, obvious relationship between particular concepts before going on to more overtly direct experimental proof

provided by their data. The inductive elements, however, resulted from my willingness to accept any new patterns that surface during the examination. This takes into account the possibility that various institutions may employ various quality control procedures. Babbie (2013) asserts that an inductive approach requires a researcher to begin with an open mind and no prior notions about what will be uncovered.

Every interview was done in English, and all of the transcripts were written word for word. When dealing with spoken data, it is necessary to first transcribe the information into written form (Braun and Clark, 2006). Translation of qualitative research data, such as audio recordings of interviews, into typewritten text is known as transcription (Johnson and Christensen, 2012). It entails sitting down, listening to the recorded audio on tape, and directly transcribing the spoken words into a word processing document. In this investigation, MST automatically transcribed the tape; however, I manually reviewed the transcription to ensure that the interviews were accurately captured. There were, in fact, a few mistakes, which I fixed. I took care to ensure that I used proper spelling, grammar, and paragraph structure when transcribing to avoid losing the essence of the conversation.

Case study researchers should not assume that "data will somehow speak for themselves," according to Yin (2012, p. 15). Instead, data need to be analysed in order to make sense of the gathered information. This study's data analysis was done manually rather than by device. In order to extract meaning from the data and address the primary study objectives, I manually analysed the interview transcripts. According to Best (2012), the method of transcript analysis involves closely examining the transcript in order to determine its main points. Scholars explore for correlations and explanations across different data sets to arrive at a meaning (Phillips and Pugh, 2010). The difficulty in analysing interview data stems from the fact that accounts "may be told by participants in a chaotic iterative and non-linear manner" (Holloway and Brown, 2012, p. 1945). As such, researchers must tell "the story in a coherent way," borrowing words in order to transform them into written texts (Tietze, 2012).

Before coding the data, I thoroughly reviewed all information extracted from interview transcripts. According to Rule and John (2011), the study concepts formed the basis for coding. The interview questions were categorized into themes such as curriculum, assessment, peer and student evaluation, program design, and teaching practices. These themes needed to be strongly supported by direct textual examples (McAdams, 2012, p. 18), enabling the identification of data patterns (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Subsequently, the research questions

were used as subheadings after transcribing and analyzing all data. This structuring method aimed to facilitate reader comprehension of the study's findings.

The process of analysing the interview data was not linear. The data was collected using an iterative method that involved a back-and-forth approach while examining interview transcripts in order to completely capture the breadth of information revealed throughout the interviews (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Holloway and Brown, 2012; Grbich, 2013). In order to become comfortable with the data, this approach required listening to interview recordings several times (May, 2011; Spencer et al., 2014).

3.4.2. Documents

The documents were set up logically. The initial stage in the analysis process is reading each document to identify any present practices. Firstly, the documents were used to answer the second research question to determine the QA measures that are in place at the institutional level and national level. Secondly, the interview responses were compared to the given policy documents to determine how lecturers use these materials to improve their teaching. And if their practices were aligned with the expectations of the institution. According to Silverman (2011), there are three approaches to document analysis: The first strategy focuses primarily on the content of the document, the second on its creation, and the third on its intended use.

In the study, document analysis was done using the first and third approaches. The first approach aimed to determine the content of the document and identify the most prominent practice or practices. Following this, similar practices were grouped into categories. Once subcategories were established, practices identified in both interviews and documents were combined, and commonalities among them were identified and evaluated. A triangulation approach was applied, comparing practices identified in the records with those in the interview transcripts. At times, the records were utilized to validate information gathered from the interviews. The third method aimed to determine the usage of the material. This involved assessing whether the document was employed as intended or if it was independently utilized to establish an academic teaching framework.

Interpreting the data came next, after the analysis of the interview and document data as outlined in this section.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

The most crucial components are the ethical interactions and conduct that ensure the caliber of the study (Rule and John, 2011). Thus, carrying out a study in an ethical manner enhances the research's integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness. This study applied for ethical approval before gathering data from participants. In order for participants to give their informed consent to engage in the study, Babbie and Mouton (2001) contend that the ethical principles of no harm to participants and voluntary participation must be explicitly explained to them and in this study, it was explained.

I sought ethics clearance from the Faculty of Humanities Ethics Committee before beginning data collection and a certificate was given. All volunteers received information sheets detailing the study's goals after permission has been granted. Once they read and fully understand the purpose of the study, they were given consent forms to sign and return.

Additionally, participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time if they decide they no longer want to or feel uncomfortable doing so. The researcher made sure that the participant's right to privacy and confidentiality was never abused given that this study was done online and interviews were audio recorded (Babbie and Mouton 2001). Since they were given pseudonyms to protect their identities and privacy when reporting the investigation's findings, the participants were reassured that the information they provided was kept private.

3.6. Limitations of the study

In the latter section of this chapter, I draw attention to the study's shortcomings and how they were addressed. Acknowledging the limitations of the study is essential to appreciating its strengths (Vithal and Jansen, 2010). The study's fundamental drawback is its narrow focus on academics, which ignores other stakeholders in higher education. It's possible that this restricted concentration on academics resulted in skewed viewpoints about teaching strategies, variables impacting teaching quality, and institutional quality controls. The decision to concentrate primarily on one specific higher education stakeholder meant that other stakeholders received only cursory treatment, which might have harmed the study's breadth and depth, despite the study's strength, which entailed a detailed analysis of academics. Another constraint might have been that the lecturers originated from the identical campus, school, and

department. To address this issue, I took steps to sample diverse academics with varying characteristics. The absence of observational support represents the third constraint. But in other ways, the utilization of documents and interviews made up for this restriction on data collecting.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research design, methodology, data collection procedures, and subsequent analysis. It also delved into the limitations and ethical considerations pertinent to this study. The next chapter will primarily focus on the data analysis and the discussion of outcomes.

Chapter 4

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presented and discussed the study's findings. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the participants as means of contextualizing the results. The research questions were then used as headings as means of coherently presenting the findings of this study to the reader.

4.1. Background information of the three participants

As earlier mentioned in the previous chapter, three lecturers were interviewed and they vary in age and experience. Pseudonyms were given to the lecturers, Olunje, Anika and Ben. All lecturers are from the faculty of humanities, two are from the life science discipline and one is from the science and technology discipline. Olunje is a 50-plus-year-old female who has been with the institution for 16-plus years. She obtained her PHD's while working at the institution and she is now an associate professor. Ben also has PhDs, he is 50-plus years old and has been with the institution for six to nine years and he is a lecturer. Anika on the other hand is a novice lecturer with one to two years' experience of lecturing at the institution. She has masters and she is an associate lecturer. Lastly, the QA manager was interviewed due to lack of resources on the quality unit website of the institution.

4.2. RQ1: What are the lecturer's knowledge about quality assurance measures that are put in place?

4.2.1. Lecturers Knowledge of assessment

Assessment is a tool for tracking, encouraging, or assessing student learning. Assessments may help students learn throughout a course, depending on the type of activity and when it is assigned. This is especially true when students get insightful feedback on their assignments. Additional activities are used to gauge the amount of learning that has occurred, either at the conclusion of a period of student learning and organized teaching or cumulatively over time (Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, 2022).

4.2.1.1. *Formative and summative assessment*

Lecturers used different kinds of assessments to assess the students for different reasons. The lectures mentioned using formative and summative assessments in their courses. Anika stated that she believes in a continuous assessment approach which enables her to use different types of formative assessments. These assessments ranged from essays to projects and practical assignments. Anika shows good teaching practices as she continuously assesses her students.

Anika “*..I mean myself personally as well, I believe in a continuous assessment approach*” [formative assessment] [lecturers interview]

Anika has good teaching practices as continuous assessment is beneficial to learners. Attesting to this statement is Race (2001) who states that, continuous assessments provide ongoing feedback to students, enabling them to monitor their progress and identify areas for improvement throughout the course. Additionally, continuous assessments also promote active engagement in learning by encouraging students to stay consistently involved in their studies rather than relying solely on cramming before exams (Gibbs and Simpson, 2004).

Olunje on the other hand highlighted that her assessments start when she does a question-and-answer series. She recognizes that as a form of formative assessment, which she usually has at the beginning or end of the lectures. She also states that her courses are practical which requires her to have practical assessments.

Olunje “*Formative the moment you ask questions you are already part of formative assessment in the classroom. and some of you think of it before maybe you give it the end of the lecture or before the lecture....So yes, being a practical subject, they are practical for undergrads and also for my honors.*”

This technique allows lecturers to gauge students' prior knowledge, identify misconceptions, and assess their understanding of key concepts before delving into new material as noted by Morrison (2013) in their study. By engaging students in active participation and immediate feedback, question-and-answer sessions can help lecturers tailor their teaching to address the specific needs of the class (Crouch and Mazur, 2001). Furthermore, a research study by Knight

and Wood, (2005) suggests that interactive questioning strategies promote deeper engagement and better retention of information among students .

Ben also agrees to this and stipulates that he also does formative and summative assessments in his courses. His formative assessments include practical assignments which are done after teaching to check students' theory understanding. Lecturers use practicals because they provide students with hands-on experiences that enhance their understanding of theoretical concepts. A study by Martinez and Schultz (2016) showed that, practical activities engage students in active learning, allowing them to apply their knowledge to practical situations and gain valuable abilities including teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Additionally, practicals can cater to different learning styles, making the learning process more inclusive and effective for all students (Martinez and Schultz, 2016).

Ben *“One of them is practical assessments where after teaching, we don't teach practicals, but we assess the learners understanding of content through practical activities”*. [formative assessment] [lecturers interview]

Ben also mentions that the university requires summative assessments at the end of every semester. Universities conduct summative assessments at the end of each semester for several reasons. Firstly, according to a study by Gibbs and Simpson (2004), summative assessments serve as a way to evaluate students' overall understanding of the course material and their ability to meet the learning outcomes set by the university. Secondly, summative assessments provide a means to assess students' academic progress and determine whether they have achieved the required level of competency to advance to the next stage of their education and that is according to Boud and Falchikov, 2007). Thirdly, summative assessments help universities maintain academic standards and ensure consistency in evaluating student performance across different courses and departments (Boud and Falchikov, 2007). Overall, summative assessments play a crucial role in the quality assurance and accreditation processes of universities. Lastly, Ben also recognizes some of the formative assessments as summative as they are done at the end of a certain period and they are for marks.

Ben *“there are two their main groups of assessments, some they have summatives, some are formative and at the end of every semester it is expected by the university to have summative assessments and during the course of the semester it is an expectations that*

students receive formative assessments and some of them are not really formative. They are actually summative in a way, because when you give a test you're giving a test after a period of time, let's say, why didn't half months, two months of teaching.” [lecturers knowledge on assessment] [lecturer interview]

A range of evaluations should be used, according to national policy documents (CHE, 2010a). Additionally, according to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013) and the CHE (2014), assessments that are diagnostic, formative, and summative are anticipated. The SSO evaluation of student learning document stipulates that assessments offered to students at the institutional level should be diverse. The lecturer’s statements throughout their interviews indicate that they are compliant with both institutional and national policy documents.

4.2.1.2. Alignment with learning outcomes

The lecturer’s choice of assessment is informed mostly by the learning outcomes, aims and objectives which were listed in their course outlines. Olunje highlighted that for her it depends on the level for instance, is it undergrads, honors students or masters students? She said it also depended on the skills she would like the students to obtain at the end of the course.

Olunje “So so it depends on the outcomes or you what I will be focusing on, I want to develop...And it depends on the level as well. The undergrad, honors, masters. The skills that I may want them to develop, whether it's cognitive skills or... it depends only a number of things, So what informs? Pedagogical. What informs is what I would think this is the kind of assessment that would develop, for example, critical thinking schools. or that to develop manipulative schools or that to develop handling data. So it depends on the aim or my outcomes, what is it that I want them to develop. informs the type of assessment” [Alignment with learning outcomes] [lecturer interview]

Anika also mentioned that her choice of assessments is informed by the learning outcomes to ensure that the students leave the university with the necessary skills.

Anika “...And then is what we try to build into these assessments is again to cover both your theoretical and practical concept. So we ensure that our students basically leave here being skilled from all the different angles and then also with the assessments. I

mean, we do a regular if you an update of the assessments to again ensure that those are aligned with the learning objectives and the content and that as well.” [Alignment with learning outcomes] [lecturer interview]

Ben stated that they have freedom when it comes to assessments however the university requires them to use course outlines that they created as guidelines. The course outline is basically the university’s Bible for the work that lecturers do.

Ben “A number of factors. One of them is still them learning outcomes. What is it that I would like my learners to have achieved by the end of my teaching period of over the topic of over that section and and the other one could be coming from their questions. When I'm teaching and I realize that my there’s an area which remains hazy to many is they ask questions, then I will still pose questions that helps them to work and clarify.” [Alignment with learning outcomes] [lecturer interview]

Interviewer

“Is there a document, umm, that informs the choice of assessment?”

Ben “We being at university, we we have that freedom to choose what you want to assess and then and it is not quite a lot of freedom because you are guided by your own course outline. So when you produce a course outline, it becomes the Bible for them, for the work that you do, that- That is why we always produce a course outline at the beginning of the teaching period and usually at the beginning of the year.” [Alignment with learning outcomes] [lecturer interview]

Aligning assessments with learning objectives is crucial because it ensures that assessments accurately measure whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes. When assessments are closely aligned with learning objectives, they provide a clear and focused framework for evaluating student performance. Kurt (2020) also attests that this alignment helps lecturers determine whether students have mastered the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined in the objectives.

According to a study by Biggs and Tang (2011), "Alignment between assessment and intended learning outcomes is essential because it is through assessment that the presence and nature of those outcomes are made manifest." In other words, assessments serve as a direct reflection of

what students are expected to learn, making it imperative that they accurately represent the intended learning objectives.

Additionally, alignment between assessments and learning objectives promotes transparency and fairness in evaluation practices. Students understand what is expected of them and how they will be assessed, which can enhance their motivation and engagement with the learning process. Furthermore, aligned assessments provide lecturers with valuable feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching methods and the clarity of their learning objectives, enabling them to make informed decisions about teaching design and curriculum development (CHE, 2011).

Lastly, aligning assessments with learning objectives is essential for ensuring validity, reliability, transparency, and effectiveness in the assessment process, ultimately supporting student learning and success. Students' assessments should be aligned to The Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, which clearly states that the assessments must be clearly outlined in the course outline with their weightings. Furthermore, the document states that the learning objectives should be aligned with the assessment. Therefore, lecturers meet the expectations of the university. The university teaching and learning document 2020 -2024 also attest to this. The national policy review also shows that assessments must be placed within an appropriate higher education qualification framework (HEQF) level and be in line with the program and module outcomes (CHE, 2011). It is also anticipated that curriculum must be informed by assessment, and that assessment and teaching should be coherent.

4.2.1.3. Diversity of Assessment Methods

Promoting and assessing varied learning outcomes for various students requires diversity in assessment formats and techniques. Lecturers do different assessments to accommodate their student's learning styles. Their assessments range from practicals, projects, essays, etc and they have various reasons for these diversified assessment methods.

For instance, Olunje uses quizzes with multiple choice to assess her undergrad students and uses essays to assess her honors and masters students. She wants the postgrad students to be able to synthesize information from different sources which will help them with their dissertation.

Olunje *“It's short answer questions true and false quizzes. Those are the kinds of questions now I ask it, undergrad, essays are only for honours and masters level. for essays is I will be, the reason why I would give essays give for example essays is the type of an assessment. There will be a one thing to assess several things. Being able to synthesize information from different sources, being able to search for information for the, being able to interpret the question and search for the correct information, and so on.”* [Diversity of Assessment Methods] [lecturer interview]

Anika also uses different assessment methods to cover both theory and practicals.

Anika *“there's number of assessment. But I mean, they range from having your projects, your essays, the different practical assignments, presentations and all of that. And then is what we try to build into these assessments is again to cover both your theoretical and practical concept.”* [Diversity of Assessment Methods] [lecturer interview]

Ben mentioned that he uses different kind of assessments due to the fact that he teaches Life sciences which is a practical subject. He mentions that he does not teach the practicals, however he assesses them. Some of the assessments he gives his students are not for marks but to check understanding. He states that this method assists him in knowing what his student understands and what they don't.

Ben *“we also have a different types of assessments in in, in life sciences for education. One of them is practical assessments where after teaching, we don't teach practicals, but we assess the learners understanding of content through practical activities..... I give my learners tasks to engage with in class. They are not necessarily a a marked or or or given in the evaluated for marks. But they help me to see whether my learners are understanding or not. So I give them questions, they go and work they out some answers. And in the following session I asked them to make presentations, or through question and answer activities and the times when we give them a tutorial tasks you give them a head of the day so they go home, do their researches and then come during a tutorial activity they share this. Some people don't want to look at these as assessments, but I do because they help me to understand what my learners are able to do or not do.”* [Diversity of Assessment Methods] [lecturer interview]

Lecturers should employ a diversity of assessment methods to cater to the varied learning styles, preferences, and abilities of their students. This approach promotes inclusivity, equity, and fairness in the assessment process, accommodating the diverse needs of learners and enhancing their overall learning experience (Holley and Dobson,2008).

According to a study by Race (2014), "Offering a diversity of assessment methods enables all students, whatever their individual learning style, background, or needs, to demonstrate their achievements." This means that by incorporating various assessment formats such as essays, presentations, quizzes, projects, and practical demonstrations, lecturers can provide students with multiple opportunities to showcase their understanding and skills in different ways.

Furthermore, a diverse range of assessment methods encourages student engagement and motivation by offering variety and novelty in the learning experience. It also allows students to develop a broader set of skills beyond traditional academic abilities, such as communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity (Holley and Dobson,2008).

Employing a diversity of assessment methods is essential for promoting inclusivity, engagement, fairness, and skill development among students. By accommodating diverse learning styles and abilities, lecturers can create a more supportive and enriching learning environment that fosters student success. The Senate Standing Orders (SSO) on Assessment of Student Learning supports lecturers using different assessment forms and different practices to promote and measure diverse learning outcomes for diverse students.

4.2.1.4. *Sources of assessment methods*

Sources of assessment as described in Chapter 2, it is the people who are responsible for setting, marking, and moderating the assessment. In some cases lecturers mark their own assessments while others use tutors to assist with the marking. Olunje uses tutors to help her mark her assessment. She states that she gives the tutors the memorandum and asks them to mark 5 or 10 scripts to see how they mark and then let them continue.

Olunje *“So initially when we introduced the tutors. The measures that were put in place we firstly that, you go through the rubric with the tutors before they mark, so the measures in, then you you do, you ask tutors to mark like 5 scripts or 10 scripts and*

you go through those before they mark the rest.” [Sources of assessments methods]
[lecturer interview]

Ben also makes use of tutors when he marks his assessments.

Interviewer *“Do you allow tutors to help with marking assessments?”*

Ben *“Yes. I would set the rubric or memorandum then let them mark.”* [Sources of assessment methods] [lecturer interview]

Anika on the other hand prefers to do her own marking, she doesn't have tutors to assist her.

Anika *“So I don't really have any tutors on my module”* [Sources of assessment methods] [lecturer interview]

According to Hounsell et al., (2008) letting tutors mark students' papers can have several effects, both positive and negative, on the assessment process and student learning outcomes. One effect is that it can provide students with timely and detailed feedback from individuals who are familiar with the course material and expectations. This feedback can help students understand their strengths and weaknesses, identify areas for improvement, and guide their future learning efforts.

However, if tutors are not adequately trained or supervised, there is a risk that marking may lack consistency and reliability. This could lead to disparities in grading standards among different tutors, potentially resulting in unfairness or bias in assessment outcomes (Hounsell et al., 2008).

According to Rust (2002), "If tutors are to be involved in marking then it is essential that they are properly briefed and trained to do so. They must be clear about the assessment criteria and have practiced marking assignments themselves before they are allowed to mark independently." Proper training and guidance for tutors are crucial to ensure that marking is conducted fairly, consistently, and in alignment with the intended learning outcomes of the course.

Letting tutors mark students' papers can be beneficial in terms of providing personalized feedback and sharing the workload of assessment. Still, it requires careful consideration of training, supervision, and quality assurance measures to maintain fairness, consistency, and reliability in the assessment process.

I was unable to locate any documentation from the institution mentioning tutors as the source of evaluation. There are also no measures put in place to ensure that tutors' marking is fair and consistent. Lecturers do what they see fit. Furthermore, according to the SSO on assessment document, staff members who possess the necessary subject-matter competence are required to mark assessments.

4.2.1.5. *Marking and moderating*

Moderation in this paper is referred to as a procedure for guaranteeing correctness, impartiality, and consistency in the evaluation of pupils' work by several assessors or markers. The process includes examining and modifying evaluation outcomes to uphold criteria and dependability. All the lecturers mentioned that not all their assessments are pre-moderated and post-moderated. They all expressed that only the summative assessments are externally moderated as requested by the university but other assessments whether they are for marks or not, they are not moderated.

Olunje *“Our end of the semester of our summative assessments also will go through moderation. Moderation as well, as external moderation, but for Formative assessments like tests, there is no moderation with internal or external.”* [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *“So not all assessments go through this moderation process?”*

Ben *“When they are high stakes, yes, for the high stake's ones like exams.”* [lecturers interview]

Anika first gets her papers internally moderated before they go for external moderation. She also highlighted that the moderators look at the quality of the question paper to see if it is not too easy or too difficult.

Anika *"Yeah, the exam is with the external moderator, your June exam, December exam, November exam."*

Anika *"I set my exam, then I'll get it internally moderated by one of my colleagues and then within the university itself. And then after that we send it out for external moderation as well"* [lecturers interview]

Anika *"So they'll (moderators) look like if the marking must fair if everything was marked correctly. So and the same, when they are doing the actual review moderation of the question papers itself, they also look to see, you know, is it at a fair level, does it have earlier you mentioned the blooms taxonomy and all of that. I just want to add on to that. I mean, at the end of the day, when we set papers as well, that's one of the things that we can incorporate in terms of the type of questions that we ask that all recall it's not all Uhm too high level."* [lecturers interview]

Handa (2018) mentions that assessments are moderated to ensure consistency, fairness, and reliability in the grading process. Moderation involves reviewing and comparing the assessments and grading decisions made by different assessors or markers to identify and address any discrepancies, biases, or inconsistencies .

According to Race (2014), "Pre-moderation helps to ensure that assessors are applying the assessment criteria and standards consistently and fairly." By reviewing assessment materials in advance, moderators can identify any ambiguities or discrepancies in the criteria and provide guidance to markers to ensure consistent interpretation and application. Boud (2000) states, "Moderation is an essential process to ensure fairness and equity in assessment practices. It involves comparing the judgments made by different assessors to ensure that they are consistent and reliable." Moderation helps verify that assessment criteria are applied consistently across different assessors and that grading standards are upheld.

It is also anticipated that moderation, in particular, would need to be put into practice in order to guarantee the validity and fairness of the exams that students take. Furthermore, according to the CHE (2003), provisions for external examination and internal moderation should be made. Moderation also serves as a quality assurance mechanism to validate the reliability and

validity of assessment outcomes. This means that by comparing the assessments of multiple markers, moderators can identify any outliers or discrepancies that may indicate errors in judgment or assessment practices. This process helps ensure that assessment results accurately reflect students' knowledge, skills, and abilities, rather than being influenced by individual biases or inconsistencies.

4.2.1.5.1. lecturers working closely with markers.

As was previously noted, moderation is an important part of quality assurance. Therefore, the interviewer was interested in learning if lecturers who utilize tutors as their markers first examine their students' papers before submitting them to external moderators. Secondly, to guarantee consistency and equity in marking, do lecturers moderate assessments that are not susceptible to external moderation, such as formative assessments that are graded?

Olunje indicated that when it comes to her she sees it as time-consuming to moderate assessments that are not going for external moderation as students will pick up any discrepancies when they get feedback from the lecturer. She did mention that for those assessments that are going for external moderation, she works closely with the tutors to ensure consistency in marking.

Olunje *“There's just no time to do that every time, unfortunately of marking Together, the ten or so scripts, and then doing the discussion, especially for things like practicals and tutorials. it's only for tests and the summative because it's one test per block so we can afford to do this. But the tutorials are every week. So the chances of doing that are very slim and mostly anyway they are more of the way the answers or figures. So if a memo is detailed enough, they should give them the benefit of the doubt. So, for those who go through the memo say here I'm looking for this year I'm looking for this and then after the mark I just if randomly check. If you, because there's no time. Also why I don't do that seriously is because students will get back their scripts and discuss their memos. so I have this assurance that if your marking was not there was some incorrect”*
[lecturers interview]

Ben attests that training for tutors is also provided by lecturers for assessments that are externally moderated.

Ben *“When they are high stakes, yes, for the high stake’s ones like exams. I go through that and in many, many cases I sit down with them (markers) and then they go through a bit of marking, and I moderate what they have marked to look at where they are, too generous or too strict or not even noticing, and what students have written and then advise them on what what I am expecting. It's the one is is the one who knows the task and then and I let the mark when they have marked, I go through, you know, even as they are marking.. you-you as the moderator one is able to tell who is too generous and who is too stingy and you going to a moderation process where you moderate the scripts again, once they've been marked.”* [lecturers interview]

Brown (2001) recommends that lecturers moderate assessments marked by tutors to ensure consistency, fairness, and reliability in the grading process. Moderation involves reviewing the assessments and grading conducted by tutors to verify accuracy, adherence to assessment criteria, and consistency in grading standards (Grainger et al., 2016). According to Rust (2002), "Moderation ensures that assessments are marked to an appropriate standard and that any inconsistency or error is identified and corrected." Lecturers play a crucial role in moderation as they possess expertise in the subject matter, an understanding of assessment criteria, and familiarity with the intended learning outcomes of the course.

Moderation by lecturers helps maintain consistency in grading practices across different markers or assessors, mitigating variations in the interpretation and application of assessment criteria (Wyatt-Smith., et al). This ensures that all students are evaluated fairly and equitably based on the same standards. Moreover, moderation provides an opportunity for quality assurance by identifying and addressing any discrepancies, biases, or errors in the grading process. Lecturers can provide feedback and guidance to tutors to improve the accuracy and reliability of their assessments, ultimately enhancing the validity of assessment outcomes (Ross, 2019).

Additionally, moderation allows lecturers to monitor the effectiveness of tutoring and provide support or training as needed to ensure markers are adequately prepared and competent in their grading responsibilities (Handa,2019).

Therefore, moderation by lecturers is essential for maintaining the integrity and quality of assessment practices, ensuring that assessments are conducted fairly, consistently, and in alignment with learning objectives.

4.2.1.5.2. Transparent marking criteria

Olunje and Ben indicated that lecturers use rubrics for assessments that have objectives answers. Olunje indicated that for her masters' students, she uses essays mostly as a form of assessment, so she uses a rubric so that students know what she expects from them. However these assessments are not moderated.

Olunje “but in my case what I do is to try and for for masters the rubric that we use to it developed by a collective. a number of us were involved in developing the rubric, so that was the kind of Quality assurance at masters level. The answers are objective, so in terms of where the answers are correct or not, objective answers don't need moderation.” [lecturers interview]

Interviewer “Do you allow tutors to help with marking assessments?”

Ben “Yes. I would set the rubric or memorandum and then let them mark”

Interviewer “OK. What measures are in place in cases where tutors help with marking?”

Ben “The measures a start off with them the lecturer coming up with they're the rubric or or marking guide. That is the first thing. The lecturer is the one who sets the tasks in the lecturer is the one who sets the rubric. Then the next thing the lecturer is supposed to coordinate them understanding of the the the other the markers so that in the end they should be more or less and at the same level it is more like the it's not coordination on. I wanted to say moderation. They should be moderation processes which allows the the the markers to mark on their own but still umm within the umm ambit of the the expectations of of the one who set that task.” [lecturers interview]

The university has no policy document which guides lecturers on how to go about moderation when tutors are marking student's scripts nor is there a policy which requires lectures todo a

memo discussion or some sort of a workshop with the tutors before they mark. This is noted because different lecturers are doing different things. Some, for instance, sit down with tutors before they mark and do a workshop, and some just the tutors the rubric or memo. There were documents available on the duties of tutors, but nothing is indicated on lecturers' duties which ensure fair and consistent marking by the tutors. According to Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, assessments should be internally moderated before they can be externally moderated. Furthermore, only Anika highlighted that her assessments are moderated internally before going for external moderation.

5. Practical considerations -time constraints, work overload and class size

Lecturers who allow tutors to mark their assessments highlighted that the reason they cannot moderate all assessments was due to time. They also highlighted that the time of assessments they use depends on the level of their students and class size.

Olunje “So, so for those who go through the memo say here I'm looking for this year I'm looking for this and then after the mark I just if randomly check. If you, because there's no time. Also why I don't do that seriously is because students will get back their scripts and discuss their memos. so I have this assurance that if your marking was not there was some incorrect marking and then some of the things will be fixed.”

Olunje “But the tutorials are every week. So the chances of doing that are very slim and mostly anyway they are more of the way the answers or figures. So if a memo is detailed enough, they should give them the benefit of the doubt and students who anyway highlight those things.” [lecturers interview]

Ben “But when you when it is, let's say in assignment, if it is an assignment, it is a fairly high stake. I do that as well, but I don't do that. They, with practical with the practicalities, just sit together and I give them a marking guide and once in a while, once in a while I check, but I don't spend too much time because when it is effectual when it is an effectual task, it is easier for anyone else to mark, but when it is more like a in a quality oriented like a methods task then that one it requires a very much a stronger moderation.” [lecturers interview]

Olunje additionally stated that her assessments are also based on the workload. For instance, undergrads do not get essays as assessments as the class size is big.

Olunje

“informs the type of assessment, but also these days, class size Also dictates the kind of assessments they can do. for example. Now I hardly use essays for undergrads, because I cannot mark those Because of the class (size).” [lecturers interview]

4.2.2. Lecturer’s knowledge of curriculum

4.2.2.1. *Alignment with academic standards*

Lecturers are aligned with some of the academic standards as all their course outlines have aims and learning outcomes. According to Ben, these aims and learning outcomes comes from the syllabus book. However other lecturers did not mention where their learning outcomes come from nor which university document guided them. Additionally, the learning outcomes and exit learning outcomes must go hand in hand, however, it was discovered that some lecturers are not even aware what ELO

Interviewer *“So do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes?”*

Olunje *“Yes. They do.”*

Interviewer

“Do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes?”

Anika *“Uh, yes.”* [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *“OK, so let's start. Umm so Doc, do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes.”*

Ben *“All courses have aims and learning outcomes, which are derived from the syllabus.”* [lecturers interview]

In this study, the statement "lecturers must be in alignment with academic standards," emphasises that lecturers should adhere to the norms, principles, and expectations set forth by their institution and the broader academic community. Lecturers must be in alignment with academic standards to ensure that their teaching practices, curriculum, and assessments meet established benchmarks of quality and rigor. Alignment with academic standards helps maintain consistency and accountability in higher education, ensuring that students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for future academic and professional endeavors (Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck, 1995).

According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), "Alignment with standards ensures that there is coherence and consistency across the curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment tasks." When lecturers align their teaching with academic standards, they provide students with clear expectations and learning objectives, guiding them toward achieving specified learning outcomes.

Alignment with academic standards also enhances the credibility and reputation of educational institutions by demonstrating their commitment to excellence and accountability. By adhering to recognized standards and benchmarks, lecturers ensure that their programs and courses are comparable to those offered by other institutions, facilitating the transferability of credits and qualifications (Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck, 1995).

Furthermore, alignment with academic standards supports student learning by providing a framework for curriculum design, teaching strategies, and assessment practices. When teaching is aligned with established standards, students have a clear roadmap for their educational journey, enabling them to monitor their progress and make informed decisions about their learning goals and pathways (Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck, 1995).

Moreover, alignment with academic standards promotes continuous improvement and innovation in teaching and learning. By regularly reviewing and updating their practices to align with evolving standards and best practices, lecturers contribute to the advancement of higher education and the enhancement of student learning outcomes (Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck, 1995).

In summary, alignment with academic standards is essential for ensuring coherence, consistency, credibility, and quality in higher education. By aligning their teaching practices with established standards, lecturers support student learning, promote accountability, and contribute to the overall excellence of educational programs and institutions.

4.2.2.2. *Defining Learning outcomes*

Some lecturers use external resources such as high school syllabi to write their learning outcomes. They do not use the syllabus book from the university which contains the exit learning outcomes of their respective courses. Some lecturers adopt their course outlines from previous lecturers who were teaching their courses.

Olunje stated that she was part of the academic development and she used a high school curriculum and textbooks to come up with her learning outcomes for her undergrads and honors students. For masters, she stated that she adopted the course outline. According to Olunje, even with the exit learning outcomes she was not aware of them and used textbooks to guide her. She states that these documents were not provided by the university.

Interviewer *“OK. And what informs such aims and learning outcomes or new on on your course? Also, are you the one who is doing the course outlines and I mean the the aims and learning outcomes on your course outline.”*

Olunje *“So I was saying, umm the current in syllabus descriptions for undergrad I was part of the development of the syllabus description, so it was during that it was a collective process. where we looked at it the secondary school the Caps document was not CAPS at that time, but the syllabus documents. We looked at textbooks and then from all that we came up with the syllabus description for the courses. And when you do that your syllabus description is sections where you indicate the aims of the course. And so that was the source of the aims that are have for undergrads. And then the same with the honours. The Master as I just adopted.”* [lecturers interview]

Olunje highlights that if it wasn't for her Ph.D. studies and her getting involved in the development, she wouldn't have known about exit learning outcomes.

Interviewer *“And are you aware of the exit learning outcomes or qualification outcomes related to the course that you are teaching?”*

Olunje

“Yes, and I got to know of those because of being involved in the first place, in the what we call academic development for those courses.”

Interviewer

“how do the learning outcomes of your course contribute to the qualification outcome?”

What document do you use to get such exit learning outcomes? Or is it also based on the development that you guys did?” [lecturers interview]

Olunje

“Yeah. so is the result of that.

I don't think initially before we getting involved in the academic development, there was not even a way of those. Oh, that they exist.

So it's possible that.. because when you get employed, you normally.. you are given the previous course outline aims and objectives and the description of content no one gives you that stuff of what are the exit outcomes.

Even the syllabus description, people are not given those syllabus booklets for them to know. So the people I think just we use.... So initially I just use text books. the high schools textbooks. The tertiary textbooks and the high school syllabus documents and until I got involved in the development of the course and that was in prompted the prompted (because for) my PhD. I looked at it, it was a learning how-to teach preservice teachers” [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *“And when you are teaching before joining the development of course, You are not aware of any exit outcomes, exit learning outcomes or anything like that, and there was no document guiding you?”*

Olunje *“I think they documents were somewhere, but I was not aware of them. even like the syllabus. Every course has a syllabus description, where the syllabus, the university syllabus, but i was not aware of it. I didn't know that it existed.”* [lecturers interview]

Anika also did not know what ELO are. Her learning outcomes were based on what she wanted her students to obtain and what is currently happening in terms of the high school curriculum. She also highlighted she sometimes depends on her colleagues to assist with some aspects of her course especially the curriculum since she's been lecturing for two years.

Anika *"No, no, it won't be our own decision. Like I say, it will be based on what content we need to cover And What competencies we need our students to leave with. And I mean because we are in the education sector, uh it does come from, I'm gonna say your CAPS and that as well in terms to see what knowledge they need to leave with."* [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *"OK, so are you aware of the exit level outcomes of that qualification that that module is in?"*

Anika *"No, no, I don't think so."* [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *"OK, so so then if, if you don't think so, then I guess the following question which ask how do the learning outcomes, your learning outcomes contribute to the exit learning outcomes I don't think you'll be able to answer that then if you don't know the exit learning outcomes, am I correct to assume that?"*

Anika

"Look like I said for me because I just started, right? I do sit with my colleagues and then we go through like planning the curriculum for this particular courses that it is that we teach in and I mean like I said, we see for example what IT in schools in the public schools, the students are doing like programming Delphi for example, right. And then like in the private schools, also training a programming language called Java.

So and then now we put in robotics we also introducing Python or have introduced Python so it it's more of, to my best ability, or my best exposure, it's to see OK with my colleagues."

What is it that the students need to know and then we put it and we basically designed

the curriculum like that. It's highly possible that they know about this outcome.”

[lecturers interview]

When Ben was asked what informed his changes in his learning outcomes, he stated that he gets his information from the rules and syllabus book which is available on the university website.

Ben

“But okay as I told you at the very beginning. This is coming from the syllabus book. The university has a syllabus, the university has a syllabus for each of those courses, and then they will derive, I derive the aims from the syllabi from, from the syllabus and the objectives from that syllabus. In fact, it is a translation process where I make meaning of them, the syllabus outlines the syllabus guidelines and then convert them into, now the aims and objectives or stroke cause out like I mean outcomes.” [lecturers interview]

It is also evident that Ben was also involved in the development of the course hence he has so much knowledge regarding the ELO and LO. He could even link the two outcomes and show the relationship between them as explained in the conceptual framework.

Ben *“When we are coming up with courses. When we are coming up with courses, we have to look at the exit level for that course. And the exit level for a a bachelor's degree is is 7 and it it exit level #7 then you you're guided by the Guidelines for Exit level 7, which is the first degree the graduate level. And when it is now, it's E owners. It is postgraduate, it is I think Level 8. Umm, I'm not too sure there. and then Master's should be nine? I think so? For us to come up with a course. We go through a course development process. And that caused development process involves part of the university. I don't have the names of those of those levels, but we don't just come wake up to having a course.* [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *“OK, so how does the learning outcomes contribute to the exit learning outcomes?”*

Ben *“Learning, learning outcomes are at the practice level. You'll notice that when you are now talking about learning outcomes, you are talking about what happens in the classroom, the interactions that happen between the learner and the educator around the knowledge it is related to knowledge building and evidence of the knowledge having been built or having been expanded. So for the educator to plan. Learning activities and learning content they have to be guided by the by the exit level outcomes.”*
[lecturers interview]

It is concerning that lecturers use external books such as High school curriculum documents to improve or set the learning outcomes of their courses. LO's should be based on the ELO as stated in Chapter two. Once they are aligned such things as assessments can then be based on the LO. But if the LO and the ELO are not aligned, then the quality of graduates will not be aligned to what the ELO wanted to achieve.

Lecturers should be familiar with the syllabus book of the university for several reasons. Firstly, the syllabus book outlines the learning objectives, content, and assessment criteria for each course, providing lecturers with a clear roadmap for what needs to be covered throughout the semester (Tobias, 2017). By understanding the syllabus, lecturers can effectively plan their lectures, assignments, and exams to align with these objectives, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive education (Bartsch and Cobern, 2003).

Secondly, being familiar with the syllabus book enables lecturers to maintain consistency across different sections of the same course and across multiple semesters. This consistency is essential for ensuring fairness and equity among students and helps prevent confusion or discrepancies in grading and expectations (Trigwell and Prosser, 2004).

Additionally, the syllabus book often contains important information about university policies, such as academic integrity guidelines, attendance requirements, and grading scales. By familiarizing themselves with this information, lecturers can ensure they are adhering to institutional guidelines and can effectively communicate these policies to their students (Barr and Tagg, 1995).

All in all, knowing the syllabus book and other university documents such as teaching and learning plan for the current year of the university is crucial for lecturers to effectively plan

their courses, maintain consistency, and adhere to institutional policies, ultimately contributing to a positive learning experience for students.

4.2.2.3. *Improving learning outcomes*

Lecturers improve their learning outcomes every year and this is based on different current affairs such as covid 19, ICT integration, and alignment to current secondary education curriculum. They would want their students to gain certain skills in response to current affairs

Olunje highlighted that she changes her outlines to current issues in science and science constantly evolving. She then needs her students to be equipped with necessary skills for when they go to schools to teach.

Interviewer *“And have you made any changes in the learning outcomes of your courses recently?”*

Olunje *“Yes, and yeah, is it's more of not Changing as such or maybe Modifying. Maybe it's the same thing. It just for it to cater for some Current staff.”*

Interviewer *“OK, So what inform that's changes or such modification?”*

Olunje *“Contemporary issues, yes. things are always changing their new things. covid came and we realized that there was a lot expected of teachers. be the Gauteng Department of Education. Is rolling out The use of interactive white boards. But the teachers don't know.*

Now you are asked to go and do something to help them to know about using interactive whiteboards. When your learners ... your current students don't know, so they're always changes that are happening because of digital changes for example and many other changes that are happening that require us to also continuously evolve when it comes to our courses and what should be done.” [lecturers interview]

Anika also changes her learning outcomes to accommodate the secondary education curriculum and also to keep up with the updated technology.

Interviewer

“And have you made any changes to the learning outcomes of your course?”

Anika

“Umm yeah.

It's not to say, OK, you set the course and then it's not set in stone for the next 10 years because things change. Topics change. What's relevant also changes. mean to look at like for example, the we gotta post grad diploma also that we're running and one of the bigger topics now that we also want our students to leave with is going to be around artificial intelligence. Now five years ago it might not have been a big topic at that point, but now to actually help them to umm use AI in their own teaching and learning. We're gonna bring in, from next year, a sole AI Literacy module as well. You see, so it's it's a thing of saying like it's this whole thing of doing these Regular reviews and updates of our courses to make sure, like they're align to the current education sector trends as well as what's happening within the school curriculum.” [lecturers interview]

Ben on the other hand looks at more than just the above mentioned. He is also responsive to the learners themselves, like where are they from?

Ben *“I don't see many others except for context response responsiveness to context. I get very responsive to their learner themselves. Where are they coming from? Like you are looking at where the learner is coming from, the learners that we are receiving these days are becoming more and more of. Umm. People from across the country and many of them I have got difficulties in learning, so we have learners from different learning backgrounds and when you are teaching you don't just teach anyhow.”* [lecturers interview]

It is important for lecturers to continuously strive to improve learning outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of their teaching and the success of their students. Improving learning outcomes directly contributes to the success of students. When students achieve their learning objectives and demonstrate mastery of course material, they are more likely to succeed academically and professionally (Hattie, 2009). By focusing on improving learning outcomes, lecturers can refine their teaching methods, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques to better meet the needs of their students (Angelo and Cross, 1993). This ongoing process of reflection and adjustment leads to increased effectiveness in the classroom. Lastly, improving learning outcomes is essential for maintaining accountability and ensuring quality assurance in higher

education. It allows institutions to assess the effectiveness of their programs and make data-driven decisions for improvement (Middaugh, 2017).

improving learning outcomes is important for lecturers because it directly impacts student success, enhances teaching effectiveness, ensures accountability and quality assurance, fosters student engagement and satisfaction, and promotes ongoing professional development.

Lecturers make use of external documents to improve their learning outcomes instead of using the exit learning outcomes which are available on the university website. Only Ben was aware of the exit learning outcomes and their contribution to the learning outcomes. So the lecturers are changing their learning outcomes yearly as indicated by them but are they aligned with the ELO? Since they were not aware of what exit learning outcomes are and using external documents such as high school syllabi books to update or inform their learning outlines, it is safe to say that these learning outlines may not be aligned with the ELO.

4.2.2.4. *Challenges and Opportunities for Curriculum Knowledge Enhancement*

One lecturer highlighted the opportunities they are faced with when it comes to teaching using technology. She stated that the university asks them every year how the infrastructure can be improved. As lecturers, they make recommendations. She stated that it would be hard to teach ICT literacy on old equipment hence the technology has to be upgraded every now and then. Anika also revealed that the university offers courses for self-development. She mentioned that the recent one was in January and the focus of it is blended teaching. These courses and programs are not compulsory.

Anika

“And then I think another point around quality assurance and that is well is we can have all the content in that we cannot teach our students how it is. Use certain technologies or integrate technologies into their classrooms. But if we don't have the actual hardware and software for the latest hardware and software, that also becomes an issue. So from what I understand is the university does do something where every year they see OK, what hardware, what software and that basically infrastructure is needed.

And then from understanding this we apply for that and then they get us, I must say updated technologies and that.”

Anika

“It was actually come check it out and I saw now or so last week these guys were replacing all the old computers and that. So basically what my point here is, is in addition to checking out the content is and all that alignment and that, it's also to ensure that the infrastructure is okay. [lecturers interview]

Anika

“And then it's also maintained because again, it doesn't help if, say for example, this is not the case of saying say for example, now we teach in for ICT literacy class, we teach in Word, PowerPoint, Excel and that in a 2003.”

Anika *“I mean just now they sent an email for a course or workshop that they're running in January, how to improve our blended course design, and that so it's also I think it's also important as lecturers faster attend these types of training and workshops and at actually increase our competencies and continue to upskill ourself.” [lecturers interview]*

Updating infrastructure for teaching is crucial for universities to keep pace with advancements in technology and pedagogy, enhance learning experiences, and remain competitive in the education landscape. With the rapid evolution of technology, updating infrastructure allows universities to integrate the latest tools and resources into their teaching environments. This can include interactive whiteboards, multimedia projectors, online learning platforms, and virtual reality tools, which have been shown to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Hew and Cheung, 2014).

Updated infrastructure enables universities to offer flexible learning options such as blended or online courses, catering to diverse student needs and preferences (Allen and Seaman, 2015). This flexibility not only accommodates students who may have constraints such as work or family commitments but also prepares them for the increasingly digital workplace. Universities that invest in updated infrastructure demonstrate their commitment to providing high-quality education and innovative learning experiences. This can enhance their reputation and attract

students, faculty, and funding opportunities (Altbach and Balán, 2007). In a competitive higher education market, staying up-to-date with infrastructure can be a strategic advantage.

Therefore, updating infrastructure for teaching is essential for universities to leverage technology, promote flexibility and collaboration, support research and innovation, and maintain a competitive edge in the education sector.

4.2.3. Lecturer's Knowledge of teaching strategies

Lecturers used different teaching strategies to ensure and improve student engagement. This was made possible by the lecturers trying to meet student's diverse learning needs. It was also observed that lecturers use different teaching strategies for different levels, the way they teach masters students for instance is not the same style they use for undergrad. One of the lecturers, Anika mentioned this during the interview.

Anika *"And I mean, obviously, some students will learn better with, let's just say a presentation itself. One will learn better with being hands-on and that so that will vary, but we also look at ways in which It can benefit the majority of them, but again also we myself, I don't just take one method that benefits majority of them will take a combination of that based on the positive feedback."* [lecturers interview]

4.2.3.1. Adapting to technological advancement

All lecturers integrated technology into their teaching due to different reasons. COVID-19 was one of the major reasons for ICT integration and the forever-changing world of technology. Lecturers want their student teachers to leave the university with ICT skills.

Olunje *"For example, my methodology course, undergrad methodology course. Yeah, there is section where I really I created this space for focusing on get them to know more of what it means ICT integration is actually practicing using interactive whiteboards, something that it was not doing in previous years. How to use interactive whiteboards so in that case the assessment that I gave them where they would need To do in actual presentation. To demonstrate that they can use the interactive whiteboard so that's the skills is that I wanted them to develop"* [lecturers interview]

Anika

“Use certain technologies or integrate technologies into my classrooms.” [lecturers interview]

Ben

“So those are two of them that have been used and the other one could be just sharing out.

I'll just be in class and I share a video and then we look at that video and we say what was what was highlighted, what did they say and what this mean and etcetera, etcetera. So it depends on what we are covering at that time, but I have used the lecture method. I've used a ICT's.” [lecturers interview]

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can significantly enhance teaching quality at universities by providing opportunities for innovative teaching methods, facilitating communication and collaboration, and offering access to vast resources. ICT tools such as multimedia presentations, simulations, and educational software can make learning more interactive and engaging for students (Shulman, 1986). Interactive activities facilitated by ICT encourage active participation, critical thinking, and deeper understanding of course material (Kozma, 1994). ICT allows for the customization of learning experiences to meet individual student needs and preferences (Means et al., 2009).

It is evident that the use of ICT improves teaching quality at universities by enhancing engagement and interactivity, facilitating personalized learning, providing access to rich learning resources, promoting collaborative learning, and increasing efficiency and flexibility in teaching delivery.

4.2.3.2. Flipped Classroom

Some lecturers expressed that they would have student-led classrooms where students read before class or do a task before class and do a presentation in class, teaching other students.

Anika *“And then also like with the Postgrad students, they come in where they’ll do like essays. They’ll do solution-based type of like for example right? I told you they had to develop or design and develop online course using a certain learning management system so they would do that. Then they’ll also have an opportunity where they write like response papers, and then they get a chance to do presentations and that is when we have our lessons. Umm, I’m just trying to think what the undergrads as well. I mean, they get their mini projects, uh, to complete and then also different types of online submissions and that as well.”* [lecturers interview]

Ben also attests to this as he also does the flipped classroom method, in his class, he expressed that this method is done using groups or individually.

Ben *“I do that (lecturing, Q and A) for about two to three weeks and then after that, I assume as well that my students have covered this in high school, but they may not have covered it to the same depth as we are doing now. So I ask them to go and read in and do presentations so it has more student, umm lead umm kind of presentation. So those are two of them that have been used and the other one could be just sharing out. I’ve just been in class and I share a video and then we look at that video and we say what was what was highlighted, what did they say and what does this mean and etc”* [lecturers interview]

Olunje did not mention anything about having a student-led classroom. However, flipped classrooms are beneficial to students. The flipped classroom model, where traditional lecture and homework elements are reversed, has several benefits for university students and lecturers. In a flipped classroom, students engage with course content through preparatory materials (e.g., videos, readings) before class, enabling discussion, problem-solving, and practical exercises to be the focus of active learning activities during class time. (Tucker, 2012). This active engagement promotes deeper understanding and retention of the material (Jensen et al., 2015).

The active learning approach inherent in the flipped classroom model fosters greater student engagement and participation compared to traditional lecture-based formats (Roehl et al., 2013). Students are more likely to be motivated and invested in their learning when they have opportunities to interact with peers and lecturers in meaningful ways. By taking responsibility for their own learning outside of class and engaging in collaborative problem-solving activities

during class, students develop important skills for lifelong learning and professional development (Bergmann and Sams, 2012). These skills include self-regulated learning, communication, and teamwork.

4.2.3.3. Effective questioning and answer

Lecturers use question and answer teaching strategy to test prior knowledge, to check if the students understand the concept and lastly to understand student's misconceptions.

Olunje mentioned that she uses the topic specific pedagogical content knowledge framework to teach her student. Topic-specific pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) is a framework that emphasizes the intersection of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge within a specific topic area. Developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), TPACK provides a lens through which educators can understand and integrate the complexities of teaching and learning in the digital age.

TPACK represents the intersection of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge within a specific topic area. It involves understanding how these three components interact and inform one another to support effective teaching and learning. TPACK emphasizes the importance of integrating technology in ways that are pedagogically sound and content-rich, ensuring that technology enhances, rather than detracts from, the learning experience (Mishra and Koehler, 2006).

Interviewer *"What teaching strategies do you use when teaching your courses and what informs these teaching strategies"*

Olunje *"The TSPCK framework, so it definitely I want to know what they're bringing in and many times I give them a pretest. Just to have an idea on different aspects. So because I want to start from what they know or what they're bringing in, even from one lesson to another, I have this strategy where I have today's question."* [lecturers interview]

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Anika as mentioned in assessments, does continuous assessments to constantly do concept check. She highlighted that she uses a question and answer method to check if the students understand the concept.

Anika *“So on uLwazi itself, we'll post a question depending again on the content that we covered for that the topic that we covered and then we pose a question and then they have to basically respond to those, let me say two or three questions and then in addition to that, they also have to respond to one of their colleagues or their peers responses to the question. And then that's all they get graded. Based on the response to their own response to question, and based on their responses to their colleagues, response to the question.”* [lecturers interview]

Anika also showed that she knows her students, because she highlighted that she is aware that students do not read unless if they have an assessment, so her reason for constantly doing concept checks is to push her learners to read and keep up with the work.

Anika *“So yeah, that that's an example I was using in terms of saying as part of this continuous assessment approach, but the reason also that I do a concept check is to check their understanding and then also what I've picked up with umm.. I'm going to say blended approach and I sometimes just don't come for lectures, and I know as a student myself. We don't really read until we have an assignment to something to do so. So to me the concept checks are there more to Push my students to actually keep up with work every week.”* [lecturers interview]

Ben uses a similar approach to Anika and Olunje.

Ben *“Mainly giving lectures the lecture approach which is umm linked to question and answer. Because I assume that my students do not know much and I need to put them into the right gear and look at the depth of level that I want them to get to.”* [lecturers interview]

Question and answer (QandA) as a teaching strategy involves engaging students by posing questions and eliciting responses from them, either individually or as a group. This method promotes active participation and encourages critical thinking, as students must process information and formulate responses. According to Angelo and Cross (1993), this approach is part of the "interactive lecturing" strategy, which emphasizes student engagement during lectures through questioning and discussion. By asking questions, lecturers can assess students' understanding, address misconceptions, and facilitate deeper comprehension of the material (Brookfield and Preskill, 2012).

QandA sessions can take various forms, such as:

1. Socratic Questioning: Lecturers use probing questions to guide students in uncovering concepts and principles on their own (Paul and Elder, 2006).
2. Peer Discussions: Students engage in dialogue with their peers to explore different perspectives and collaboratively solve problems (Tinto, 1997).
3. Think-Pair-Share: Students individually consider a question, discuss it with a partner, and then share their ideas with the class (Lyman, 1981).

Research suggests that incorporating QandA into teaching can enhance student learning outcomes by promoting active engagement, improving retention, and fostering critical thinking skills (Chi et al., 1994; Prince, 2004).

4.2.3.4. *Lecturing and discussion*

Lecturers use lecturing and discussion together with question and answer to ensure that content is delivered and understood by the students.

Olunje *“So I always start my lectures with that is content lectures with today's question to say so, I put questions for discussion at the beginning. And then we discussed those and then we jump into the days lectures.”*

Olunje *“three things informs my choice of strategies, the knowledge that they are bringing in, my knowledge of the common misconceptions about the content that I am teaching and then my knowledge of what makes this difficult to understand and also how does this topic link with others. so those things inform how I will teach it undergrad. so for concepts that I know are very difficult to understand. I will have lots of visuals to illustrate and for some, it would be more of questions and discussions the way I want them to talk and to discuss and add their views. so content matters, It's misconceptions, the difficulty or the easiness of the content that I'm teaching. All those things influence the team strategies that I use. So I use a whole lot of them, A lot of questioning, A lot of visuals, that is for undergrads”* [lecturers interview]

Anika *“I wanna give you example one of the other ones that I did like started doing and that is forum discussions. So on uLwazi itself, we'll post a question depending again on the content that we covered for that the topic that we covered and then we pose a question and then they have to basically respond to those”* [lecturers interview]

Ben assumes that when his learners come to class they don't have knowledge of the concepts and then start by lecturing them.

Ben *“I don't know why, but if for example, I'm teaching cell biology, and umm you look at the beginning at the beginning of that course, my students I assume that my students do not have a certain level of understanding of cell biology, so I start off mainly giving lectures. the lecture approach which is umm linked to question and answer. Because I assume that my students do not know much and I need to put them into the right gear and look at the depth of level that I want them to get to”* [lecturers interview]

The question of whether or not these teaching tactics are beneficial for teaching their courses arises because, despite the positive reviews found in the literature, the lecturers are not aware of the course proposal, rules and syllabus materials and other documents which are offered by the university on this matter. Teaching strategies are usually highlighted in the course development proposal for each course so if the lecturers didn't mention that they used this document to inform their teaching strategies it is safe to say that this document was not followed by the lecturers to inform them of their teaching strategies.

4.2.3.5. *Evaluating teaching strategies - Student feedback and survey*

In this paper, the term "student evaluation" refers to the process of getting official and informal feedback on teaching and learning from students while they are enrolled in classes. Some lecturers believe in checking if their teaching strategies are effective by doing student evaluations. The likes of Olunje and Anika highlighted that they find student evaluation effective. Ben however highlighted that these student evaluations are not effective as students do not answer the survey most of the time. Olunje stated that this year she did not do a student evaluation and has no measures in place to check if her teaching strategies were effective. She also agrees with Ben that sometimes these surveys are ignored by students if they are not for marks. Anika on the other hand, believes that these student evaluations are effective so much that she would conduct them informally as well.

Interviewer

And then how do you know or what quality measures do you use to ensure that your teaching strategies are of good standard? And how often do you check?

Olunje

"I don't know, I don't have any measures. previously what I would do is.. which I didn't do this year and I am regretting, it midway through the course I always have Questions to say what am I doing well, what you they stop doing? What should they start doing? Hoping that from those responses I know if what I'm doing is making sense. And of course, in masters, for example, that's the purpose of the mid-course essay, that is the purpose of the weekly submissions that students don't do anyway.

So, they are sabotaging my way off Assessing if my strategies are working. So that one for, for example, at masters is not working it all." [lecturers interview]

Olunje

"the same at undergrad because of ulwazi of having ulwazi.

I used it to create some quizzes. Posting questions on discussions just to initiate discussion, but the problem is at all levels, If it's not for Marks, no one bothers to do it. So so I don't have any measures now that can work, because I can't mark everything. But if you cannot mark it or not just marking, if you don't allocate marks, forget no one does the work. That was the only way of assessing if the strategies were working by assessing the students understanding." [lecturers interview]

Interviewer *"Do you allow student evaluation and if so, how often?"*

Olunje

"Yeah, I didn't do it this year." [lecturers interview]

Ben and Anika highlighted that the university requires lectures to conduct student evaluations and lecturers are aware of this as they get emails from the university. According to the QA manager and the policy on evaluations and teaching of courses, this is true, however, these student and peer evaluations are not compulsory and lecturers have to opt in. There is not much emphasis on student evaluation. According to the QA manager, these evaluations must be done quarterly but the institution document is not aligned with that.

Interviewer

"So you mentioned that you allow students to evaluate your teaching. How often do you do that?"

Anika *"So I do I do it at the end of each block Right. Myself personally, I'll also set up some I'll say, so the university actually has something where the students have to evaluate you, right? So that like goes on record and everything. Uh, I think it's done per block as well, but what I'll do is for my for myself, I do. Especially because it's the first semester course, second semester course right or full your course depending. So take for example a full semester course being from January to June. Then what I usually do with those type ones, I get messages to evaluate me through the universities one at the end of the semester. The same thing for a second semester Course they'll do it like in November, December, right. So then they get to evaluate the full semester, but personally what I also do is at the end of the block I'll also do like informal evaluation to see how it is that the things are going, and then I also have a discussion with my students today. I mean, we've put out especially towards the end of the block where we just having like a discussion, I'm like, OK, what did you enjoy? What methods did you feel that you learn the most with?"*

Anika *"If there's negative feedback, and especially if they agree on like, OK, know, we we shouldn't be doing something like this then and OK, let's take a step away from that."*

Ben *"Yes. I ask my students to evaluate and many of them, ignore it. Every course I'm expecting to... actually university expectations that all the lecturers, umm, but they have*

this to the devaluation at the end of the teaching. So I try to ask my students to evaluate what do you have gone through the teaching and learning experiences that they've gone through and but umm rarely do I get much. However, I've heard some that come individually and acknowledge umm what they had gone through, and those are not official..umm they're not official remarks.” [lecturers interview]

Student evaluation of teaching is a crucial indicator of teaching quality, according to national policy guidelines on quality teaching and learning in higher education. Nonetheless, the national policy papers that were examined lay little emphasis on using student evaluations to assess the institution's modules as well as the caliber of the teaching and learning that occurs in each module(CHE, 2004c). It was noted that there is a limited emphasis on using student evaluation at the institutional level because according to the policy on evaluation and teaching (2018), lecturers should conduct these evaluations once in a 3-year cycle and it is not compulsory.

Students evaluating their lecturers serves several crucial purposes in academia. Firstly, it fosters accountability and transparency within educational institutions. When students are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their lecturers, it creates a system of checks and balances that ensures lecturers are delivering quality education and meeting the needs of their students (Marsh,2007). This process can lead to improvements in teaching methods, course materials, and overall educational experiences.

Moreover, student evaluations can help identify areas of strength and weakness in a lecturer's performance. By collecting feedback on teaching effectiveness, communication skills, clarity of teaching, and engagement with students, educational institutions can provide targeted support and professional development opportunities to improve teaching practices. This continuous feedback loop contributes to the professional growth of lecturers and ultimately enhances the quality of education provided to students (Centra, 1993).

According to national policy papers, academics may utilise institutional forms or construct their own forms to ascertain the needs of the students in the classroom. Regular course assessments are mandated, and feedback from students must be taken into consideration for future improvements. Furthermore, surveys are anticipated to be conducted with a range of stakeholders, such as outside examiners, employers, peers of recent graduates, and professional

groups. The outcomes of the study of these surveys should be considered in programming reviews.

Lastly, student evaluations play a significant role in faculty assessment and promotion decisions. In many academic institutions, student feedback is considered alongside other evaluation metrics when determining faculty performance and tenure decisions (Seldin, 1999). Therefore, students' input can directly impact the career trajectory of lecturers, making it essential for students to provide thoughtful and constructive feedback.

4.2.3.6. *Class observation and peer review*

Peer evaluation in this context refers to academics assessing one other's work as peers to ensure that programs, assessments, and teaching are of a high caliber. Peer evaluation is one of the most important practices related to quality in teaching. Some lecturers expressed how they would benefit if peer evaluation would be standardized. However, they fear that lecturers do not know what to look out for in these evaluations and due to availability, this may not be practical. It was also noted that these peer evaluations are conducted for promotional purposes.

Anika gets her feedback not only from students but colleagues as well. According to Anika, it is also part of the universities processes to be evaluated by your peer. The Policy on the Evaluation of Teaching and Courses document from the university attests to this as it clearly stipulates that peer, student and self-evaluations should be conducted.

Anika “We spoke about the student feedback right also at the peer feedback. What happens is that with the university itself, you get pure part of the universities processes. There's peer evaluations, right?

And then what happens is somebody's senior to you, May not necessary my HOD, but maybe like a senior lecturer or associate professor or something will actually come into like a classroom observation, so they'll come into my class, see what it is that I'm teaching, and then provide me with feedback and that as well.” [lecturers interview]

Interviewer

“How do you know that this teaching strategy is proper and I'm I'm doing the right thing by implementing this teaching strategy?”

Interviewer

“What quality measures do you use, if any?”

Anika “For me, what I’ll do is I’ll get my basically, I think the keyword is feedback. And I’ll get feedback across 3 levels. So the one is from the external moderators, right? The one is from my own peers in it as well, and the one which I think is the main one for me personally is from the students itself.” [lecturers interview]

Olunje was last peer evaluated when she was doing her PhDs, this was specifically for her studies. She highlights that she would like to be evaluated and evaluate others so that they can grow in their profession. She expressed that peer evaluation is a taboo topic and this could be because lecturers don’t know what to look out for when evaluating.

Olunje

“Student evaluation yes. peer evaluation is also very good. just to say come and see.

I want for example, to try this in my class or this is what I’m trying in my class or come in give me your perspective of my teaching. it’s nice.

I learned alot when I was inviting colleagues to come and and give me feedback on my teaching. I remember one year I invited four of them and then at the end I actually compared what they were seeing, what they talked about. And then it was more of analysis to say so.

What themes are coming through of things that I may be doing well and things that I need to improve on so you learn a lot from, but it’s not easy to to get someone to come and sit in your lecture.” [lecturers interview]

Olunje *“it (peer evaluation) would be a great Quality assurance.*

What is wrong with this? Why are we afraid of bringing people into our classrooms, or why are we afraid of talking of our good stuff and our bad stuff. Why not put it out there? for me (that is) the greatest way of quality assurance.” [lecturers interview]

The national policy review states that the experience of a peer evaluator is essential. According to the CHE (2001b), peer reviewers are supposed to be subject matter experts with training in curriculum and assessment. The duty of keeping an eye on students' academic progress falls on these colleagues in academia (CHE, 2004c). To sum up, peer assessment of lecturers is an

important instrument for academic institutions' accountability, professional development, collegial support, and quality assurance. It fosters reflective practice, offers a platform for helpful criticism, and advances the idea of ongoing teaching and learning development.

Peer review ought to be used to regulate assessments (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). It is also anticipated that moderation, in particular, would need to be put into practice in order to guarantee the validity and fairness of the exams that students take. Furthermore, according to the CHE (2003), provisions for external examination and internal moderation should be made. It is expected of the programme coordinator to oversee the execution of the recommendations made during the moderation process in the practice of moderation (CHE, 2004a).

Peer evaluation provides an opportunity for colleagues to assess the effectiveness of teaching practices, teaching materials, and classroom management techniques. Constructive feedback from peers can help identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement, contributing to ongoing professional development (Seldin, 1999). Peers bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the evaluation process, offering insights that may not be apparent to the lecturer being evaluated. This diversity enhances the comprehensiveness of the feedback, providing a more holistic view of teaching effectiveness and student engagement (Barkley et al., 2004). Peer evaluation encourages lecturers to engage in reflective practice, critically examining their teaching methods and philosophies. Engaging in dialogue with peers about teaching strategies and receiving feedback fosters professional growth and encourages continuous self-improvement (Centra and Gaubatz, 2000).

4.2.4. Conclusion

Most lecturers are not aware nor do they mention the documents from the universities' quality assurance. Only one lecturer was aware of these documents (one document to be specific) and used it to inform his teaching. In the next section, we will look at what the lecturers know versus the universities' measures. We will look at what the quality assurance manager has to say about the measures that are put in place and compare that to the lecturer's knowledge. We will not only rely on the managers interview but we will also be looking at the university documents which speak on quality.

4.3.RQ 2: What quality assurance measures are put in place by higher education institutions to ensure quality teaching in South Africa?

As previously said, the primary focus of this section will be the documents that govern quality assurance in educational institutions. Because the required documents were missing from the university website, an interview was conducted with the manager of Quality Assurance (QA). I looked through the university website for information on internal quality assurance, but I didn't discover anything. When I followed up with the Quality Assurance division, the manager replied that the division is still working on developing a website, which means that there isn't much information regarding QA on the university's website.

QA manager *“So we busy working on our Internet for quality assurance for the institution, I'm hoping we should be finished with it before the end of the month. It's an external-facing website. We currently don't have a website for quality assurance. We have an intranet that is only accessible to lecturers and staff but working on a website that will be accessible to anyone else. On that website, we also going to include some of the documents from CHE.”* [interview with QA manager]

During the interview, the QA manager highlighted that the institution complies with CHE which is a legislative organization that is in charge of regulating and arranging programs and institutions of higher learning.

Interviewer *“And then in terms of Council of higher education (CHE), would you say that the University is aligned with their requirements or the university still need to work on QA?”*

QA manager: *“So, umm, interestingly I'm not sure if you were aware or not. So last year September we received an institutional audit from the Council of higher education,*

which looked at the quality assurance mechanisms for the whole university. And part of it was exactly what we are talking about., we we received a draft report earlier this year think in May and we got a final report from the CHE in in September this year. So there are three categories within that report that reflects whether the university meets or does not meet the requirements of the CHE. So of course we were happy that we do meet the CHE's requirements. So the CHE is quite happy with what we are doing. So what the HI is looking at in terms of the quality assurance of teaching is of course, do you have qualified lecturers who can teach, they can do research in all the rest of things. What are you doing to continuously improve the lecturers or the teaching within the university, so the CHE is quite happy that we putting systems in place for improvement because they are quite there are quality assurance mechanism is mainly based on continuous assessment evaluations of your system and improvement at the moment regular basis. They did find our system, to be meeting the requirements.” [QA manager interview]

Discovering that the CHE expresses satisfaction with the university's QA standards and anticipates improvements in the institution was quite positive. However, from the meeting, it became evident that the CHE's contentment may not necessarily be with the existing standards but rather with the forthcoming plans of the department. Additionally, it became apparent that there is a considerable amount of work to be undertaken in terms of quality assurance in teaching at the university.

Since this was highlighted by the QA manager, I will also look at the CHE documents versus the institution documents. All the documents which were used are listed in the table below.

Document name	Date published
revised policy on evaluations and teaching of courses version #1.1	2018
institutions learning and teaching plan 2020 to 2024	2019
Senate standard orders on assessment of student learning	2022

framework for improving teaching and learning project	CHE 2001b
Re-accreditation of MBAs 2003	CHE, 2003
Criteria for Programme Accreditation	CHE, 2004a
Criteria for Institutional audits (CHE, 2004b)	CHE, 2004b
improving teaching and learning resources	CHE, 2004c
Criteria and Minimum Standards for B Ed Programme	CHE, 2006
White Paper for Post-School Education and Training	Department of higher education and training 2013
Vital stats public higher education 2010	CHE, 2010a
'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance'	CHE, 2014

Table 2: A table representing documents reviewed.

Table 2 above illustrates the many institutional and national documents that have been made available to ensure, support, and enhance the quality of instruction in South African higher education institutions. This section looks at the national and institutional policy papers' standards for teaching quality. All of the institutional and national policy papers that were examined contained a number of required teaching methods.

4.3.1. QA measures of assessment

Since assessments are used to create data for grading and to provide timely feedback, they are an essential component of the teaching and learning process (CHE, 2004a: Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, 2022). The design of programs, as well as the development of students and staff, depend on assessment (CHE, 2006). National policy papers also recognize assessment activities as high-quality teaching practices. This is due to the relationships that exist between teaching and assessment. Thus, assessment is at the core of education. Policies at the institutional and national levels make clear how important it is to pay attention to assessment processes. It is anticipated that assessments should be a component of

teaching and learning and that they should be challenging, valid, fair, and reliable (CHE, 2003, 2004a, 2004c; Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, 2022; CHE, 2014).

According to Council on Higher Education (2003) and Council on Higher Education (2006), one of the requirements for assessments is that they ought to be included into teaching and learning processes with the knowledge that assessment procedures are an essential component of teaching techniques. The "Criteria for Institutional Audits" made it clear that assessments must be connected to instruction and learning.

“Assessment has a critical influence on the quality of teaching and learning and can be used as a powerful point of leverage for change and improvement of education.” (Council on Higher Education, 2004b, p. 5).

The institutional policy on assessment also explicitly states that: “In a well-designed course, there is good alignment (constructive alignment, in the words of John Biggs) among the intended learning outcomes, the teaching approaches and educational activities, and the assessment tasks.” (Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, 2022, p.6)

The ways that Anika and Olunje taught were in line with their assessment as their teaching strategies matched their assessments. Ben's teaching and assessments, however, were not in sync. Ben said that while he assesses practicals, he doesn't teach them. Practical are therefore used in assessments to gauge students' theoretical comprehension rather than as a component of teaching. Ben is not aligned with both institutional and national policies. Dewey (1938) asserted that while practicals are useful for assessing students' comprehension, experiential learning which includes practicals promotes greater knowledge by letting students actively interact with the material. But before students are assessed, they ought to be taught so that students can make the necessary connections between theory and practice.

4.3.1.1. Measures for alignment of assessments with learning objectives

Assessments must be placed within an appropriate HEQF level and be in line with programme and module outcomes, according to the institutional and national policy review (Council on Higher Education, 2011). It is also anticipated that teaching and assessment should be coherent,

and that curriculum development should be influenced by assessment. As per the learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024.

“The Assessment tasks are appropriately designed to align with the learning outcomes of course.” (learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024, 2019. p9)

It was observed in the last section that the lecturers are aligned with these expectations as their assessments are aligned with LO.

Olunje *“So so it depends on the outcomes or you what I will be focusing on, I want to develop....And it depends on the level as well. [lecturers interview]”*

However, there was little to no evidence of the learning outcome being aligned with the ELO. Assessments should be aligned with the LO because it is presumed that the LO are based on ELO. It was observed in section 4.2.2.2. that most lecturers are not aware of the ELO of their courses.

4.3.1.2. Measures for diversity in assessments

Numerous assessments should be used, according to national policy documents (Council on Higher Education, 2010a). According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013) and the CHE (2014), assessments that are diagnostic, formative, and summative in nature are also anticipated. The Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning, 2022 state that in order to foster inclusivity, the design and execution of assessment tasks must take into account the needs of students from a range of cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds as well as those who have disabilities. As Ben previously stated, it is crucial to match teaching tactics to the kinds of pupils that are enrolled.

Lecturers as mentioned in section 4.2.1.3. that they utilize different assessments including continuous assessment and they had different reasons for having different assessments.

4.3.1.3. Measures for marking and moderation

According to the Senate standing orders on assessment of student learning (2022) papers should be internally moderated or externally moderated. It is an expectation at the institutional level for summative assessments to be externally moderated while other assessments are internally moderated. Institutional policy document guidelines state that:

“For each course that is not at the exit level of a programme, summative assessments that, taken together, account for at least 30% of the final mark must be subjected to either internal moderation or external examination.

For each course that is at the exit level of a program, summative assessments that, taken together, account for at least 30% of the final mark must be subjected to external examination.” (Senate standing orders on assessment of student learning, 2022. p10)

Only one lecturer, Anika highlighted that her papers are internally, and externally moderated. Other lecturers only mentioned external moderation which is only done in summative assessments, and other assessments are not moderated at all.

Furthermore, papers should be moderated before they are given to students to write and once completed it is expected that a selection of students marked assessment should be selected and moderated for consistency and fairness.

“Internal moderation includes providing critical feedback to the assessor and Head of School on the standard, clarity, suitability and overall quality of summative assessments in relation to the course or programme learning outcomes before they are given to students and reviewing a selection of students’ marked assessments for consistency and fairness.” (Senate standing orders on assessment of student learning, 2022. p10)

As mentioned in section 4.2. Olunje stated that she does not moderate formative assessments that are marked by tutors as judgments will highlight any inconsistencies during feedback. This act is not aligned with the institutional policy document.

It was observed that the institutional policy document does not mention anything on tutors assisting lecturers with marking and what quality measures are in place should that happen. It

does however state that marking of assessments needs to be undertaken by staff who have the requisite knowledge of subject.

“The marking of assessments needs to be fair, consistent, accurate and undertaken by staff who have the requisite knowledge of the subject, the course and the demands of the tasks.” (Senate standing orders on assessment of student learning, 2022. p10)

4.3.2. QA measures about teaching strategies

According to CHE (2001b), this part discusses the actual process of teaching and learning. The required methods for teaching were emphasized in all of the national policy documents. It was observed that in terms of teaching strategies there are no documents at the institutional level. The QA manager directed me to the national documents. Therefore, the expectations which are highlighted in this section are those of national level. Prior to discussing the required behaviors, it is important to remember that quality is correlated with the application of proper teaching and learning techniques and methodologies (CHE, 2006). The "Criteria for Programme Accreditation" guideline states that the following should be present:

“Mechanisms to ensure teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning materials and teaching and learning technology.” (Council on Higher Education, 2004a, p. 11)

The understanding of methods that support student learning and educational philosophy should serve as the foundation for the pedagogical strategies employed (CHE, 2014). The CHE (2003, 2004a) recommends that higher education institutions employ current innovations and teaching methods, and (CHE, 2004b) there should be continuing conversations on teaching innovations, such as the use of technology in the classroom. However, as one of the advancements in teaching, the "White Paper for Post School Education and Training" (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013) issues a warning against the careless use of technology in that:

Teaching and learning interventions using ICT must be carefully planned and implemented. The success of an educational programme will be determined by its pedagogical strength and not by the integration of ICT, which can sometimes be used

poorly or as a gimmick. Furthermore, sufficient capacity is required in terms of financial and human resources. Staff and students require not only meaningful access to technology, but also the ability to use it effectively (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013, p. 53).

It was observed that lecturers integrate ICT in their teaching which is in line with the national documents, however, are these ICT tools used effectively? Seeing that none of the lecturers mentioned the national document's expectations.

As to the CHE (2003), teaching techniques have to be determined by the characteristics of the students who are enrolled in the course. This implies that student recruiting, selection, and enrolment processes must be connected to the strategies and techniques of teaching. The Department of Higher Education and Training (2013) states that there should be adequate teaching resources in addition to performance standards that are related to teaching techniques (CHE, 2011).

Some lecturers do not consider the type of lecturers that are enrolled in the course. Other lecturers like Olunje focused on the topic hence the he uses TSPCK framework nowhere did she mention looking at the type of learners. Anika aswell, didn't not mention anything about considering the type of students enrolled. However, it was observed that only Ben's teaching strategies are based on the kind of students who are enrolled. Ben mentions that:

Ben “ *I get very responsive to the learner themselves. Where are they coming from? Like you are looking at where the learner is coming from, the learners that we are receiving these days are becoming more and more of. Umm. People from across the country and many of them I have got difficulties in learning, so we have learners from different learning backgrounds and when you are teaching you don't just teach anyhow.* ” [lecturers interview]

Students' involvement in the teaching process is another requirement; this kind of involvement is referred to as proactive or active learning (CHE, 2003). Students' active participation in the teaching process and proactive learning were specifically mentioned in the "MBA Re-accreditation Manual":

Proactive learning is reflected in dialogue-oriented lectures, case studies, group work or interactive learning sessions in the context of management simulations and project work (CHE, 2003, p. 43).

Ben and Anika had active learning in their classroom as they would ask students to do presentations in class or have students led classrooms. Olunje did not mention anything regarding students' active learning or a flipped classroom teaching strategy.

Additionally, the study materials and course materials must correspond with the delivery method (CHE, 2003). For instance if ICT is a teaching strategy used, there should be computers, white boards and everything else that will be needed. Contextualizing teaching approaches was expected, according to national policy documents. This was made clear in the publication "Teaching and Learning Resources" (CHE, 2004c), which highlights the significance of contextualization and describes how it is accomplished by:

“Using appropriate teaching methods, for example, through work-site placements, service learning, community service, project work and South African perspectives in the curriculum. (CHE, 2004c, p. 45).”

This is why the university according to Anika will ask lecturers if they need resources. A lack of resources can decrease the quality of education. This means that the institution in terms of resources it is trying to improve, especially with technology.

Anika

“And then I think another point around quality assurance and that is well is we can have all the content in that we cannot teach our students how it is. Use certain technologies or integrate technologies into their classrooms. But if we don't have the actual hardware and software for the latest hardware and software, that also becomes an issue. So from what I understand is the university does do something where every year they see OK, what hardware, what software and that basically infrastructure is needed. And then from understanding this we apply for that and then they get us, I must say updated technologies and that.”[lecturer's interview]

Even though in terms of teaching strategies some lecturers are doing the right thing, it is concerning that none of the lecturers interviewed mentioned these documents. This means that their choice of teaching strategies is not informed by these documents. This is concerning as they don't know if they are on the right track or not. And it is even more concerning that the institution does not have documents which speaks to teaching strategies.

Lastly, monitoring and ongoing improvement of the employed methods of teaching is necessary. Plans for managing the quality of teaching and learning should include monitoring, evaluating the impact, and implementing improvements (CHE, 2003; 2004). Academic professionalism is being developed through the use of these monitoring strategies (CHE, 2001b). In the next section, we will dive into quality measures on teaching evaluations.

4.3.2.1. Quality measures on teaching evaluations

One of the things that are done during the course evaluation is the evaluation of teaching strategies. This is done through student evaluation, peer evaluation, and self-evaluation. According to the evaluation of the teaching and course document from the university, evaluations should be conducted in a three-year cycle and different types of evaluations should be conducted namely, student evaluation, self-evaluation, and peer evaluation. According to this document, lecturers must start the process, and academic staff members must utilise the findings to improve the way they teach. They may also be used to establish a case for their efficacy as teachers in yearly reviews or promotion applications.

“Teaching evaluations should be conducted for all staff members with teaching responsibilities at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Over a three-year evaluation cycle, staff members are required to evaluate their teaching using a variety of evaluation tools with at least one evaluation eliciting student feedback and at least one peer review.”

“1. An individual staff member is expected to initiate the process to have her/his teaching evaluated.

2. Results of the evaluation process should be used by academic staff in developing teaching practice and may also be used in building evidence of teaching effectiveness for promotion applications or annual reviews” (policy on evaluation and teaching, 2018, p4 and 5)

In the meeting, the Quality Assurance (QA) manager highlighted that lecturers are expected to undergo quarterly evaluations by students and peers, however it was observed that these evaluations are mostly done for promotion purposes. He explained that this practice aims to facilitate ongoing improvement among lecturers. Additionally, he emphasized that the university utilizes this feedback to enhance the teaching abilities of the lecturers. It was observed that the QA manager and the documents are not aligned as the document does not mention anything about quarterly student evaluations but mention a 3year cycle.

QA manager *“That’s the way of enhancing their teaching using students to give them feedback on how they experience their teaching or their classes, and that information is used by the university to train the lecturers according to what the students are saying for them to continuously enhance what they’re teaching in class.”* [interview with the QA manager]

According to Hamdi Serin (2019) Student evaluations play a crucial role in assessing the teaching proficiency of lecturers in higher education. Many universities administer these evaluations to provide valuable feedback for lecturers, aiding them in enhancing their teaching methods (Nargundkar and Shrikhande, 2012). Chen and Hoshower (2003) emphasize that student evaluations serve both formative and summative purposes in measuring teaching effectiveness. The formative function allows lecturers to adjust their teaching styles and course delivery based on feedback, serving as a primary source for improvement (Arubayi, 1987). Lecturers can leverage data from student evaluations to address weaknesses and enhance their overall teaching performance (Mart, 2017). Moreover, lecturers can use this feedback to make adjustments to course content and structure (Simpson, 1995). On the other hand, the summative function serves as feedback for the university, influencing matters such as promotions and salary increases in universities (Kemp and Kumar, 1990). Because of the perceived significance of student feedback, both for lecturers and the university as a whole, I opted to delve deeper into these evaluations. I aimed to investigate whether lecturers are cognizant of these evaluations and whether participation in them is mandatory. Lecturers are aware that they should be conducting student and peer evaluations but they are also aware that it is not compulsory so they don’t do it sometimes. As Olunje stated she did not do it this year.

Interviewer *“how often are these student’s evaluations done?”*

QA manager “quarterly. Uh students that will do, or some have already done, and some are starting now, but it started at think you know in Oct, where students do evaluations of their lecturers and that feedback, like I said, go back to the lecturers, I think the the most important part about that Is that historically that evaluation uh was mainly focused on enhancing the lecturer Pedagogy or their academic in terms of how they teach. Uh, but in future we want to focus more on student learning experience as well. So there has to be the closing of the loop in terms of giving feedback to the students because now it's been only focusing on how to improve the lecturers but neglecting improving and giving feedback to the students in terms of using that data to enhance the learning. then communicating that feedback to the students. So that's something that the university is looking to improve in future.” [interview with the QA manager]

Interviewer: “Regarding the evaluation, is it compulsory? Do lecturers have to have it every quarter and are they aware of this?”

QA manager: “Yeah. So another very good point Or question that you're raising. So currently in the current system, lecturers have to opt in to be evaluated by this student, so it is not compulsory. But we have identified that as one of the weaknesses of our quality assurance system. So more likely some lecturers do not even opt-in because they know that they're going to get a bad evaluation.” [interview with the QA manager]

Interviewer “Do you think it should be compulsory for colleagues to evaluate each other?”

Olunje “you see when you make something compulsory, you are.. there is a tendency of resistance. I don't know what can be done to just create a safe space That will allow us to do that without feeling vulnerable. Maybe if we were trained doctors, we would be thoroughly trained. but us lecturers as we are not trained and to just call someone to come in when I'm not even sure that what I'm doing is the right thing. That's where the issue is.” [lecturer interview]

The literature, national policy documents and the QA manager agree that evaluating lecturers by students plays a vital role in the quality of teaching.

“student opinion on courses and student or graduate opinion on programmes – gathered through student evaluations – is one of the most direct measures of teaching and learning quality (CHE, 2004c, p.59).”

It is then unreal as to why it is not compulsory at the university in the case study. It is also apparent that the QA department is under major construction and there are loopholes in their QA when it comes to teaching.

Interviewer: *“Are student evaluations part of your annual quality monitoring kind of thing to see if the lecturers are doing the ‘right thing’?”*

QA manager: *“ Exactly. Exactly. So there are a number of things that we're doing this year, so what we are doing is to review firstly because you need to have a framework when you work with academics or in any profession, you cannot just impose processes they have to be informed by policy. So what we're doing is to revise The previous policy that allow this kind of discretization where lecturers can opt in or decide to do it or not. so that policy is currently being reviewed to make sure that we do this as part of the quality assurance, Regine and it's not something that you can decide to do or by the way, not to do if you like So that's one thing that we currently addressing and once that policy assess is addressed, of course then. So you want to have a situation where from the end of the year you haven't evaluated anyone.”* [interview with the QA manager]

As stated in section 4.2.3.5, there is little emphasis on using student evaluation to measure quality in teaching. When reviewing the national documents, it was observed that in some instances the institutional policy document was not aligned with the national policy documents. For instance, in the national policy documents, it is required that the evaluation of courses be conducted on a regular basis (CHE, 2003), and that student comments be utilized to inform future developments (CHE, 2004b). Additionally, surveys are expected to be carried out with a variety of stakeholders, including professional associations, employers, peers of recent graduates, and outside examiners (policy on evaluations and teaching, 2018; CHE, 2001b; 2003; 2004b).

“User surveys are undertaken at regular intervals for feedback from academics involved in the program, graduates, peers, external examiners, SACE and other professional bodies and employers, where applicable, to ascertain whether the program is attaining its intended outcomes” (CHE, 2006, p.10).

The institutional policy document on the other hand states that the evaluations should be done in three three-year cycles and according to the QA manager, this is not compulsory.

Peer assessment is a crucial activity linked to teaching quality, as mentioned in section 4.2.3.6 underclass observation and peer review. According to 4.2.3.6, lecturers are open to peer assessments but express fear of criticism and worry that their colleagues may not be aware of any concerns due to the fact that they (the colleagues) are not aware what to look out for. They believed that these evaluations were significant and may help them. Peer reviews are a key component, according to the national policy statement. The following is an illustration of the value of peer review from the "Criteria for Institutional Audits":

“Clear and effective systems are in place (including internal and external peer review) to evaluate programs on a regular basis” (CHE, 2004b, p. 13).

Additionally, the lecturers stated that the assessments are conducted only for promotional purposes rather than for the purpose of promoting best practices. A qualified peer reviewer should conduct peer assessments on a regular basis, according to the national policy documents as mentioned above. The institutional document however state that:

“All staff members are expected to have at least one peer review in each three-year evaluation cycle.” (policy on evaluations and teaching courses, 2018)

Finally, according to CHE (2001b), peer reviewers should be subject area specialists who have received training in curriculum and assessment. This policy is in line with the institutional policy document, which specifies that academic developers may be asked to conduct a review if the focus is on pedagogical competence and that peer evaluators should undergo training to prepare them to carry out the peer review process (Policy on evaluations and teaching courses, 2018).

4.3.3. Quality measures for curriculum

4.3.3.1. *Self-development*

During my discussion with the quality assurance manager regarding quality documents, he mentioned that there is a document called Learning and Teaching Plan from 2020 to 2024. The document doesn't specifically focus on quality assurance but rather encompasses various aspects related to teaching and learning. It outlines the strategies for teaching and learning during the period from 2020 to 2024, considering the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The document addresses online and blended teaching methods and highlights the university's preparedness with modern technology to support these approaches. However, while the document emphasizes the university's technological resources for facilitating teaching and learning, it doesn't explicitly mention any training initiatives for lecturers to ensure proficient use of this technology to enhance their teaching practices.

Chapter 3 of this document caught my eye as it talks about enhancing academics as university teachers. This is relevant to this study because lecturers' development enhances the quality of teaching. The document states that:

“Though quality teaching has long held significance, the growing diversity among students, alongside an educational system in South Africa that increasingly prioritizes exam-oriented teaching over fostering critical thinking and independent learning skills, highlights the vital importance of effective university teaching for the academic success of most students. This necessity was acknowledged by the Department of Higher Education and Training through the release of its National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers in 2018.” [learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024, 2019. p17]

Reacting to the national framework, the university then came up with its framework for Continuous Professional Learning for Academics as University Teachers

“This Framework will serve as a guide for coordinating many of the activities in the focus area on enhancing academics as university teachers.” [learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024, 2019. p17]

The framework is aimed at assisting academics with professional development in university teaching through a formal qualification such as a post-graduate diploma in education in higher education. During the meeting I enquired about this qualification and how the university knows that a lecturer can teach and more importantly how the university knows that the lecturer's teaching is of quality. He mentioned that at the university this qualification is not compulsory but it is encouraged by the university.

QA manger: *“So look, you ask me a very important question and it's one of those that the university continuously looks at in terms of how we can improve in terms of ensuring that all our lecturers. Have this same level of teaching skills. So what the university has done is that the is all the lecturers can enroll for a teaching program, a postgraduate diploma in Higher Education which focuses exactly on, on teaching, and how uh teaching takes place in the classroom. And so it has very good modules that focuses on how teaching and assessment happens in the classroom. So all lecturers that do not have formal teaching qualifications are usually channelled through or encouraged to take that, that that particular course before they can teach, uh or enhance they're teaching style. So there's that kind of professional development that happens”* [QA manager interview]

The document on teaching and learning attests to this and states that they support lecturers who are learning to be university teachers. therefore this is in alignment with what the QA manager said and what Olunje said during the interview.

“Participation in professional learning related to university teaching will be supported and encouraged through workload policies that explicitly provide time for this, as well as human resource processes and policies, such as promotions criteria, that recognise and reward activities associated with enhancing university teachers and teaching.” [learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024, 2019. p17]

Due to the support given by the university and the encouragement, I was curious to know if this course was compulsory.

QA manager *“So the lecturers have to opt-in in terms of enrolling for the PG dip. Obviously, if you do not have a teaching qualification, my recommendation would be that all lecturers need to go for it, but that's a yeah school decision and faculty decision that needs to be made at that level.”* [QA manager interview]

According to Hellison (2005), Several institutions either possess or are in the process of establishing competency standards for their lecturers. However, in most instances, these standards apply solely to a specific subset of lecturers rather than encompassing the entire industry. Additionally, Evertson (2019) state that, having a collective agreement across the entire system outlining the minimum qualifications and abilities expected of lecturers poses challenges in ensuring and guaranteeing the quality of education.

The lecturers interviewed in this study are qualified teachers with either a Bachelor of Education or Post Graduate Certificate in Education. at the end of the interview when asked if there was anything they would like to add regarding QA in teaching, Anika and Olunje highlighted that self-development may help lecturers better their craft and better the quality of teaching at higher learning institutions.

Anika *“So I think it's important also that we attend these different training or workshops and that especially in our CLTD and that I mean just now they got they send an email for a course or workshop that they're running in January, how to improve our blended course design and that so it's also I think it's also important as lecturers faster attend these type of training and workshops and at actually increase our competencies and continue to upskill ourself”* [lecturers interview]

Olunje also mentioned that some lecturers who are not trained teachers may pull back and state that they are not teachers but lecturers and therefore do not need to do the diploma that the university is offering them. Studies show that lecturers who hold teaching certifications use evidence-based methods and more successful teaching tactics than lecturers who do not hold such certifications (Hattie, 2009). This implies that with lecturers that have pedagogical knowledge, students could gain from a better calibre of teaching.

4.3.4. Conclusion

In this section, it was observed that numerous measures are put in place at national and institutional levels which the lecturers did not mention during their interviews. Additionally, when reviewing both national and institutional policy documents, it was observed that even though there are expectations on certain quality measures, there was less emphasis on how to go about it which then left loopholes for lecturers to do as they see fit. As stated before in the rationale of this study, the study stresses how important it is for organisations to develop clear, established QA processes which are consistent with their entire vision and objectives. As mentioned above there is not much emphasis on some of the QA measures put in place by both the institution and nationally. In the next chapter, we shall look at the summary of research, recommendations, and a direction for future research.

Chapter 5

Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0. Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings from the study, offers recommendations based on the findings, and states further research that can be done. The objective of this study was to determine the lecturers' knowledge of quality assurance measures that are put in place. Also, the study sought to investigate what quality measures are put in place by higher education institutions to ensure quality teaching. The findings indicated that lecturers are not knowledgeable about QA measures put in place by the institution. It was also observed that they do not know about the policy documents that the institution has in place nor were they aware of the national policy documents. This conclusion was made based on their practices being based on literature such as TSPCK and external policy documents such as high school syllabi.

5.1. Summary of Findings of the study

A global concern is the quality of higher education. Different continents have established various institutions to address the problem, especially with regard to the quality of education. Over the years, South Africa has implemented several policies and programs to highlight the importance of quality. since lecturers are at the forefront of quality it was essential to

investigate their knowledge on QA measures in teaching. below I will highlight and summarise some of the findings.

5.1.1. Knowledge of curriculum

In this study, it was observed that only one out of three lecturers knew about learning outcomes and exit learning outcomes, the other two base their learning outcomes on what they wanted their students to obtain at the end of the module, not at the end of the course. In other words, the learning outcomes were not based on exit learning outcomes and one lecturer had no idea what exit learning outcomes were, while the other lecturer stated that she knew about the exit learning outcomes due to her own PhD research, but she doesn't necessarily know the exit learning outcomes of her course. The danger of not aligning learning outcomes with exit learning outcomes lies in the potential for creating inconsistencies, inefficiencies, and mismatches within the educational system.

5.1.2. Knowledge on teaching strategies

Lecturers used diverse teaching strategies to accommodate their students. these strategies are informed by literature and not by the institutional nor national quality assurance policy document. in fact no data was obtained from the university that talks about teaching strategies.

5.1.2.1. *Peer and student evaluations*

During the study it was also observed that the QA manager and the institution policy documents are not aligned as the manager stated that the evaluations are done quarterly while the policy documents stated that it was done on a three-year cycle. It was also observed that there was little emphasis on teaching evaluations from both national and institutional levels even though both levels highlight the importance of evaluations on quality assurance in teaching. Furthermore, at the institutional level, it was made clear by the QA manager that these evaluations are not compulsory, and lecturers have an option of not opting in, which is exactly what Olunje did this year.

5.1.3. Knowledge of assessment

In terms of assessments, the national and institutional policy documents were clear on their expectations. It was however discovered that some lecturers are not in compliance with these expectations. Another discovery was that the assessment policy document by the institution does not mention anything about tutors assisting lecturers with marking assessments both formal and informal assessments. Instead, the documents state that marking should be done by staff members who have the requisite knowledge of the subject. While there is nothing mentioned about tutors marking assessments, it was observed that unless it is a summative assessment, lecturers do not moderate these assessments marked by tutors and this may affect the quality assurance of teaching. The absence of moderating tutor-marked examinations compromises the integrity of university teaching by causing grading irregularities, subjectivity and prejudice, inconsistent feedback, a departure from institutional norms, and possible moral and legal issues.

5.1.3.1. Moderation and marking

One of the expectations at both the national and institutional levels is that assessments must be either internally moderated or externally moderated depending on the type of assessment. In this study it was observed that some lecturers do not moderate formative assessments whether they are for marks or not, they only moderate summative assessments. This practice and the practice of using tutors can have significant implications for the quality assurance of teaching. Standardizing assessment procedures and maintaining quality control depends heavily on moderation. It guarantees that tests satisfy predetermined standards for relevance to learning objectives, validity, and reliability. In the absence of moderation, assessments run the danger of departing from these norms, which might lower their quality and compromise their alignment with learning objectives. Lastly, unmoderated assessments could not meet expectations for teaching and learning or institutional norms, regulations, or guidelines. Disparities between the expected and actual results of assessments may result from this, making it more difficult for the institution to maintain its standing in the academic community and carry out its goal of teaching.

These are just some of the things that were picked up in the study that could affect the quality of teaching.

5.2. Answering Research Question

5.2.1. What are lecturer's knowledge about quality assurance measures that are put in place?

The study revealed that lecturer's knowledge about the quality measures that are put in place by the institution is limited. This conclusion was reached due to the fact that lecturers practice are not informed by the institution's QA measures And policies which are in place. It was also discovered that lecturer's knowledge of QA measures is affected by not knowing about the documents which the institution has in place.

5.2.2. What quality assurance are put in place by higher education institutions to ensure quality teaching in South Africa?

The institution has some QA measures and most of them are adopted from the national policy documents. Documents that were reviewed on the institutional level were Senate Standing Orders on Assessment of Student Learning and teaching plan 2020 – 2024, policy on evaluations and teaching. However, as stated in Chapter 4 the institutions QA unit is still under construction. There are a number of measures which are put in place by the institution such as:

- Different assessments should be used to assess students (diversity in assessments) to ensure that all students are accommodated.
- Learning objectives should be aligned with assessments.
- Whether assessments are formative or summative, there should be moderated.
- In terms of marking assessments, the institution expects marking to be fair, consistent accurate and marked by staff member who have the suitable knowledge of the subject.

In terms of teaching strategies, the institution does not have QA measures. However, the national policy documents state that effective teaching methods which are innovated must be employed such as the use of technology in the classroom. Furthermore, it is expected that students should be involved in the teaching process. These teaching strategies used by lecturers should be measured by using student, peer and self evaluations to ensure that they are of good quality. The institution stated that these evaluation should be done in a three-year cycle. The results from these evaluations should be used to enhance quality in teaching.

5.3. Recommendations

Taking into consideration the key findings of the study and theoretical explanations, the study proposes the following recommendations.

Institutions ought to assess their policies on a frequent basis. A procedure for assessing how well institutional rules and procedures are being implemented and how they might be improved to enhance teaching quality need to exist. Therefore, it is important for institutions to determine if the policies are yielding the intended results (Miller and McTavish, 2014). In order to improve the quality of teaching, I would advise lecturers to become active in the creation, review, and evaluation of policies, as one of the lecturers in Chapter 4 stated that her engagement in course development is responsible for the majority of the knowledge she possesses, such as ELO.

Peer and student evaluations ought to be highly valued at the institutional and national levels. However, as it stands, both evaluations are only done and beneficial for promotion reasons. Rather than simply mandating that student evaluations be completed on a regular basis, national policy documents have to provide a deadline in order to avoid leaving room for institutional interpretation. Due to this, the institution needs to update its evaluation policy document, which was last updated in 2018. In the new updated policy, peer and student evaluations should be mandated and completed every quarter rather than in a three-year cycle. This is taken into consideration by the findings that some lecturers do not do student and peer evaluations. It was also noted that these reviews might be helpful to some lecturers so that they know what they are doing right or wrong and also grow professionally. These suggestions could help raise the standard of teaching.

The study's conclusions suggest that some academics are not familiar with quality control procedures. Some of the lecturers brought up the point that they were not made aware of these documents, which include all the information regarding QA, when they first began working for the organisation. the novice lecturer also stated that she does not know what ELOs are. More campaigns should be launched by Quality Units in different institutions to inform academic personnel about the institution's current quality requirements. Providing lecturers with the required paperwork and an induction would be good. Additionally, by doing this, lecturers will no longer rely on outside documents to help them write their LO; instead, they will rely on the internal documents which contains the ELO because as stated in Chapter 2, there should be a direct link in LO's and ELO's.

The study indicated that a top-down approach was prevalent, therefore quality should not be only under the control of the Quality Units. Instead of waiting for the Quality Unit, departments ought to be encouraged to create their own quality practices guide pertaining to guaranteeing and improving the quality of teaching in their particular fields.

In Chapter 4, one of the lecturers discussed how the workload and class size had caused the quality of exams for undergrads to decline and become less comparable to those for her master's and honours degrees. In order to address this, the institution must re-evaluate academic workloads, determine how the present workloads affect teaching quality, and come up with strategies for assigning academics to reasonable workloads. Additionally, tutors can help lecturers; however, quality controls should be in place to guarantee that tutors are marked consistently. Additionally, lecturers should follow suitable protocols for marking assignments and grading scripts in collaboration with tutors. For example, they should mark five scripts and then moderate the marking of all graded assessments. Reasonable workloads have the potential to improve teacher quality.

Formative or summative graded assessments have to be post- and pre-moderated. Moderation should not be done by lecturers only to comply with the quality unit. Academic staff members should put their practices into practice with the intention of improving them, not just following the rules. Moreover, quality should be prioritised in institutional policy papers, national policy documents, and quality unit policies, and these entities should monitor whether expectations are being met. With these in place, lecturers will feel compelled to follow the policies of the governing bodies.

Lastly, lecturers who do not have teaching qualifications should not only be encouraged but there should be a framework in place that makes teaching qualifications compulsory. Infact, the institution should when hiring include this as a requirement to enhance their quality of teaching.

5.4. Further studies

Further investigation may involve reproducing the study in an alternative setting it could be a different university, another faculty or department within the university which is being

investigated, an institution in a different province or country as well as private higher institutions.

This study excluded head of departments, head of schools and students in favor of concentrating solely on the opinions and behaviors of lecturers. The experiences of academics and students using quality assurance techniques in teaching are infrequently explored in the literature (Kahsay, 2012). Subsequent investigations may encompass the ways in which various stakeholders, such as employers and students, perceive quality within South African universities. To evaluate what the lecturer is stating with reality, observations from classrooms should be a part of future research. The researcher have to look into the course outlines and contrast them with institutional and national policy documents, observe the teaching strategies that are done in class and contrast them with what the lecturers are saying.

5.5. Limitations

Because there were only three participants in the research who were members of the same faculty, it is not feasible to generalize the results to represent the entirety of lecturer knowledge or the entirety of university-implemented quality assurance procedures.

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Žalėnienė, I., & Pereira, P. (2021). Higher education for sustainability: A global perspective. *Geography and Sustainability*, 2(2), 99-106. (where u talk about HEI and employability)

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical clearance certificate

	
<u>SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)</u>	
<u>CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</u>	<u>PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2023ECE32M</u>
<u>PROJECT TITLE</u>	An Investigation Of Quality Assurance In Teaching At Higher Learning Institutions In Johannesburg South Africa
<u>INVESTIGATOR</u>	<u>Khanyisa Dlodlo</u>
<u>SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR</u>	Wits School of Education
<u>DATE CONSIDERED</u>	10 July 2023
<u>DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE</u>	Approved <u>unconditionally</u>
<u>RISK LEVEL</u>	Low risk
<u>EXPIRY DATE</u>	<u>Date of submission of the Research Report</u>
<u>ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE</u>	<u>CHAIRPERSON</u> 
29 August 2023	Dr. Batseba Mofokeng
cc: Dr Mpho Mosabala	
<u>DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR</u>	
To be completed in duplicate and ONE COPY returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.	
I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.	
 Signature	Date <u>29</u> / <u>08</u> / <u>2023</u>
27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Pvt Bag 3, WITS, 2050 T +27 11 717 3007 www.wits.ac.za/education	
IYUNIVESITHI YASEWITWATERSRAND YUNIVESITHI YA WITWATERSRAND	

Appendix B: Permission letter



Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Khanyisa Dlodlo and I am a registered Masters student at the school of education at the University of the Witwatersrand. You are invited to participate in this research.

I am conducting a research on quality assurance practices in teaching in higher learning institutions in Johannesburg South Africa. I am convinced that this study will give higher education professionals a chance to think critically about teaching, specifically with regard to teaching quality and the application of quality processes to guarantee and improve quality. The findings of this study will advance knowledge of how academics in higher education conceptualise and practise excellence.

If you decide to participate in the study, you must agree to a 45-minute semi-structured individual interview that will be held at your workplace or by Microsoft employees as soon as is convenient for you. Please let me know if you are available between August 1 and August 31, 2023. The session will be recorded with your consent.

Please be aware that you will be asked to sign a permission form indicating your desire to take part in the study during our interview. Your comments will be kept private, and identifying information (such names and organisations) won't be shared. All data from the study that is published or written will respect the privacy of each individual. The dissertation will communicate the findings.

You choose whether or not to participate. Withdrawing from the study or refusing to take part will have no negative effects on you. The information gleaned from the interview will only be applied to this master's study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,
Khanyisa Dlodlo
Tel: 0685035002
Email: 2350440@students.wits.ac.za

Dr Mpho Mosabala

Email: mpho.mosabala1@wits.ac.za

Dear Sir/ Madam

Appendix C: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

University of Witwatersrand School of Education

Masters Research Project
Khanyisa Dlodlo (Researcher)

Dr Mpho Mosabala (Main Supervisor)

CONSENT

I..... (full names of participant) I
hereby attest that I am aware of the details of this private interview and the scope of this
study. I give my permission to take part in this investigation. I am aware that, should the need
arise, I may leave the project at any time.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

.....

DATE

.....

Appendix D: General information profile form

Gender.....

Age.....

Race.....

Position.....

Faculty.....

Department.....

Discipline.....

Number of years in the institution.....

Highest qualification.....

Appendix E: Interview Schedule for Academics Semi-structured individual interviews

- Do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes?
- What (document) informs such aims and learning outcomes?
- Are you aware of the exit level outcomes (ELOs) (Qualification outcomes) related to this course? How do these LOs contribute to the ELOs? What document do you use to get such ELOs?
- Have you made any changes in the learning outcomes of your courses recently? What informed such changes?
- Which assessments do you give to students for your courses?
- What informs the choice of such assessments?
- What quality measures do you put in place for the assessments mentioned above?
- What measures are in place in cases where Tutors help with the marking?
- What informs the questions that you put in your assessment tasks?
- What weighting do you have for all these assessments?
- What informs the choice of such weighting?
- What teaching strategies do you use when teaching your courses?
- What informs such teaching strategies?
- What quality measures do you use to ensure your strategies are of good standard? How often?
- Is there anything else that you would like to tell me regarding quality assurance measures you put in place for your teaching and assessment of your modules?

Appendix F: Analysis of interviews

Theme	Subtheme	Example
Knowledge of assessment	Formative assessment Lecturers used practical, questions and answers, quizzes, and essays to assess students.	Interviewer Uh, what kind of assessments do you give to students for your courses? 0:11:5.80 --> 0:11:8.860 Olunje Tricky question because it is always formal and informal. formative the moment you ask questions you are already part of formative of you think of it before maybe you give it the end of the lecture or before t So yes, being a practical subject, they are practical for undergrads and also Anika so with us, I mean myself personally as well. I believe in a continuous asses Especially now that we've implemented this whole blended teaching and lea assessment approach, there's number of assessment. But I mean, they range essays, the different practical assignments, presentations and all of that. ... I thing we continuously do different formative assessments and then as well a towards the end. Ben I don't know what you mean by assessments kind of assessments, but there assessments, some they have summatives, some are formative and at the en the university to have summative assessments and during the course of the students receive formative assessments and some of them are not really form in a way, because when you give a test you're giving a test after a period of months, two months of teaching. Ben One of them is practical assessments where after teaching, we don't teach p the learners understanding of content through practical activities
	Alignment with learning outcomes Some lecturers Assessments are informed by learning outcomes to ensure that their assessments are relevant to the course content and directly measure the skills and knowledge	Interviewer So what informs the choice of such assessment? What do you look at in ord 0:12:17.190 --> 0:12:27.250 Olunje So so it depends on the outcomes or you what I will be focusing on, I want And it depends on the level as well. The undergrad, honours, masters. The skills that I may want them to develop, whether it's cognitive skills or. 0:12:46.580 --> 0:12:54.990 Olunje Ohh what are the other ones . it depends only a number of things, So what i Pedagogical What informs is what I would think this is the kind of assessm critical thinking schools. or that to develop manipulative schools or that to c on the aim or my outcomes, what is it that I want them to develop. Anika But I mean, they range from having your projects, your essays, the different and all of that. And then is what we try to build into these assessments is ag

	specified in the objectives	and practical concept. So we ensure that our students basically leave here by angles and then also with the assessments. I mean, we do a regular if you are ensure that those are aligned with the learning objectives and the content and Interviewer OK, and what informs the choice of assessments that you give to your learners? 0:24:42.200 --> 0:24:43.280 Ben Umm. A number of factors. One of them is still them learning outcomes. What they to have achieved by the end of my teaching period of over the topic of over the could be coming from their questions. When I'm teaching and I realize that my there's an area which remains hazy, they will still pose questions that helps them to work and clarify.
	Marking and moderating - moderation of formative and summative assessment. Summative assessments are moderated externally. However not all of them are moderated. Formative assessments are never moderated.	Interviewer And what quality measures do you put in place for the assessment that you use? Olunje Our end of semester of our summative assessments they also will go through Moderation it well, as external moderation, but to you for Formative assessments moderation with internal or external. Anika Yeah, the exam is with the external moderator, your June exam, December exam. Anika I set my exam, then I'll get it internally moderated by one of my colleagues. And then after that we send it out for external moderation as well. So sometimes within the same type of discipline, well then externally moderate it. Interviewer So not all assessments go through this moderation process? Ben When they are high stakes, yes, for the high stake's ones like exams.

	Transparent marking criteria Some lecturers use rubric for clear communication of expectations which contribute to a fair assessment process.	Olunje but in my case what I do is to try and for for masters the rubric that we use number of us were involved in developing the rubric, so that was the kind of The answers are objective, so in terms of where the answers are correct or not moderation. Interviewer Do you allow tutors to help with marking assessments? Ben Yes. I would set the rubric or memorandum then let them mark 0:28:25.710 --> 0:28:26.50 Interviewer OK. What measures are in place in cases where tutors help with marking? 0:28:36.320 --> 0:28:43.270 Ben The measures a start off with them the lecturer coming up with they're the first thing. The lecturer is the one who sets the tasks in the lecturer is the one thing the lecturer is supposed to coordinate them understanding of the the the they should be more or less and at the same level it is more like the it's not a moderation. They should be moderation processes which allows the the the still umm within the umm ambit of the the expectations of of the one who s
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	marking and moderation - lecturers working closely with markers Markers are often graduate students or teaching assistants with expertise in the subject matter. Markers work closely with lecturers to ensure consistency in grading, following established guidelines and criteria, this is done for summative assessment. For formative assessment however, this is not done as students get feedback and if there are inconsistencies with the marking then the lecturer depends on students to inform them.	Olunje And then all the tutors and myself, we all make the same scripts and then w one, what did you give and why? So we go through, we agreeing and actually in a very interesting process be will be learning a lot as well. So in the end, the rubric and the memo change aspects should we give Marks and what doesn't count here. And then after t happens mostly with the summative. If they mark the summative. There's just no time to do that every time, unfortunately of marking Together doing the discussion, especially for things like practicals and tutorials. it's o because it's one test per block so we can afford to do this. But the tutorials a doing that are very slim and mostly anyway they are more of the way the ar detailed enough, they should give them the benefit of the doubt and student Ben That is the first thing. The lecturer is the one who sets the tasks in the lectur Then the next thing the lecturer is supposed to coordinate them understandi the end they should be more or less and at the same level it is more like the say moderation. They should be moderation processes which allows the the but still umm within the umm ambit of the the expectations of of the one wh Ben When they are high stakes, yes, for the high stake's ones like exams. I go th I I sit down with them markers and then they go through a bit of marking, a marked to look at where they are, too generous or too strict or not even noti and then advise them on what what I am expecting. It's the one is is the one let the mark when they have marked, I go through, you know, even as they moderator one is able to tell who is too generous and who is too stingy and where you moderate the scripts again, once they've been marked. 0:31:28.60 --> 0:31:31.370 Interviewer So not all assessments go through this moderation process? It's only exams 0:31:32.700 --> 0:31:33.50 Ben Yeah. For me, it's only exams.
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	Practical considerations – time constraints Lecturers could not moderate all papers which were marked by tutors due to time constraints. Lecturers' assessments and type of assessment used are also	Interviewer And then you said that is for summative assessment that they mark. So what do they mark? You don't go through that or do you still go through that? 0:21:33.970 --> 0:21:50.550 Olunje So, so for those who go through the memo say here I'm looking for this year the mark I just if randomly check. If you, because there's no time. Also why I don't do that seriously is because students will get back their scores. I have this assurance that if your marking was not there was some incorrect marking will be fixed. Olunje But the tutorials are every week. So the chances of doing that are very slim. It's the way the answers or figures. So if a memo is detailed enough, they should be able to and students who anyway highlight those things. Ben But when you when it is, let's say in assignment, if it is an assignment, it is not but I don't do that. They, with practical with the practicalities, just sit together and once in a while, once in a while I check, but I don't spend too much time. It is a effectual task, it is easier for anyone else to mark, but when it is more of a methods task then that one it it requires a very much a stronger moderation. Olunje informs the type of assessment, but also these days, class size Also dictates the type of assessment for example. Now I hardly use essays for undergrads, because I cannot mark them. Olunje what I normally do is, and of course doesn't happen all the time because of the time to prepare questions, the MCQ which was questions yes or there are objective questions. It comes to especially methodology where we still have some kind of subjectivity. I develop a rubric
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	beginning and end of the lecture.	
Lecturers Knowledge of curriculum	alignment with academic standards Lecturers are aligned with academic standards	Interviewer So does your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes? 0:0:40.130 --> 0:0:40.380 Olunje Yes. They do. Interviewer Do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes? 0:0:20.730 --> 0:0:21.190 Anika Uh, yes. Interviewer OK, so let's start. Umm so Doc, do your course outlines have aims and learning outcomes? 0:2:31.250 --> 0:2:32.50 Ben All courses have aims and learning outcomes, which are derived from the syllabus.
	Defining Learning outcomes Some lecturers uses external documents to write their aims in their learning outcomes. And some lecturers use the syllabus book provided by the university which is also informs lecturers of exit learning outcomes. Some lecturers adopt the learning outcomes from their colleagues who were teaching	Interviewer OK. And what informs such aims and learning outcomes or new on on you is doing the course outlines and I mean the the aims and learning outcomes Olunje So I was saying, umm the current in syllabus descriptions for undergrad I was saying, so it was during that it was a collective process. where the Caps document was not CAPS at that time, but the syllabus documents from all that we came up with the syllabus description for the courses. And the description is sections where you indicate the aims of the course. And so that was the source of the aims that are have for undergrads. And then the same with the honours. The Master as I just adopted. Anika No, no, it won't be our own decision. Like I say, it will be based on what competencies we need our students to leave with. And I mean because we are in the education sector, uh it does come from, I well in terms to see what knowledge they need to leave with. Ben But okay as I told you at the very beginning. This is coming from the syllabus. The university has a syllabus for each of those courses, and then they will derive from, from the syllabus and the objectives from that syllabus. In fact, it is a meaning of them, the syllabus outlines the syllabus guidelines and then comes the objectives or stroke cause out like I mean outcomes.

	the module before them.	
	Exit learning outcomes Some lecturers are not aware what exit learning outcomes are for their courses nor do they know which documents to use when looking for them.	Interviewer OK, so are you aware of the exit level outcomes of that qualification that the Olunje Yeah. so is the result of that. I don't think initially before we getting involved in the academic development those. Oh, that they exist. So it's possible that.. because when you get employed, you normally.. you are given the aims and objectives and the description of content no one gives you that stuff. Even the syllabus description, people are not given those syllabus booklets they think just we use.... So initially I just use text books. the high schools textbooks, high school syllabus documents and until I got involved in the development of the course prompted the prompted (because for) my PhD. I looked at it, it was a learning how to teach preservice teachers. Interviewer and when you are teaching before joining the development of course, You are not aware of exit learning outcomes or anything like that, and there was no document guiding

	outcomes should be linked with the learning outcomes.	So for the educator to plan. Learning activities and learning content the have the exit level outcomes.
	Challenges and Opportunities for Curriculum Knowledge Enhancement The institution has upgraded its infrastructure to accommodate integration of technology in teaching. The university updated the software and hardware in the institution which is also maintained by the university. The university also have courses for self-development for the lecturers to improve their skills.	Anika And then I think another point around quality assurance and that is well is v cannot teach our students how it is. Use certain technologies or integrate tec if ourselves don't have the actual hardware and software for the latest hardw an issue. So from what I understand is the university does do something wh hardware, what software and that basically infrastructure is needed. And then from understanding this we apply for that and then they get us, I r that. Anika It was actually come check it out and I saw now or so last week these guys and that. So basically what my point here is, is in addition to checking out t and that, it's also to ensure that the infrastructure like equipment that we nee in is available. 0:43:51.510 --> 0:44:5.820 Anika And then it's also maintained because again, it doesn't help if, say for exampl for example, now we teach in for ICT literacy class, we teach in Word, Pow Anika I mean just now they got they send an email for a course or workshop that t improve our blended course design and that so it's also I think it's also impo type of training and workshops and at actually increase our own competenc
	Improving learning outcomes Lecturers are adjusting their teaching strategies which then causes them to improve the learning	Interviewer And have you made any changes in the learning outcomes of your courses r 0:8:19.390 --> 0:8:25.970 Olunje Yes, and yeah, is it's more of not Changing as such or maybe Modifying. M to cater for some Current staff. Interviewer OK, So what inform that's changes or such modification? Olunje Contemporary issues, yes. things are always changing their new things. cov was a lot expected of teachers. be the Gauteng Department of Education. Is white boards. But the teachers don't know.

	outcomes of their courses. Current issues such as Covid 19, type of students etc are some of the reasons the academics modified the Learning outcomes	Now you are asked to go and do something to help them to know about using your learners ... your current students don't know, so they're always changing digital changes for example and many other changes that are happening that evolve when it comes to our courses and what should be done. Interviewer And have you made any changes into the learning outcomes of your course? Anika Umm yeah. It's not to say, OK, you set the course and then it's not set in stone for the next Topics change. What's relevant also changes. I mean to look at like for example, the we gotta post grad DIPLOMA also the bigger topics now that we also want our students to leave with is going to be five years ago it might not have been a big topic at that point, but now to address their own teaching and learning. We're gonna bring in, from next year, a solid You see, so it's it's a thing of saying like it's this whole thing of doing these courses to make sure, like they're align to the current education sector trends the school curriculum Ben Yes, yes, yes, yes I have changed it. If you look at umm that our the way that we have been in previously face to face a face to face University) and then when COVID came ICT and as part of my teaching as part of my teaching it is it has to be written outcomes is the ability of the undergraduates who use ICT in the variety of Interviewer And then, uh, like like you said now COVID formed such a changes. Is there changes when you are making changes to your learning outcomes? Ben I I don't see many others except for context response responsiveness to content learner themselves. Where are they coming from? Like you are looking at various learners that we are receiving these days are becoming more and more of. U and many of them I have got difficulties in learning, so we have learners from and when you are teaching you don't just teach anyhow.
Lecturers Knowledge of teaching strategies	Adapting to technological advancement - use of ICT. Lecturers uses ICT's to help students learn more about teaching using ICT. This is to enhance their student teaching skills. After teaching	Olunje For example, my my my methodology course, undergrad methodology course Yeah, there is section where I really I created this space for focusing on getting ICT integration is actually practicing using interactive whiteboards, something years. Olunje How to use interactive whiteboards so in that case the assessment that I gave in actual presentation. To demonstrate that they can use the interactive white wanted them to develop Anika Use certain technologies or integrate technologies into my classrooms. Ben

	them, they then assess them on ICT use	So those are two of them that have used and the other one could be just shared. I'll just been in class and I share a video and then we look at that video and highlighted, what did they say and what does this mean and etcetera, etcetera. So it depends on what we are covering at that time, but I have used lecture notes.
	Flipped Classroom Some lecturers let the students led the class by presenting	Anika And then also like with the Postgrad students, they come in where they'll do a case-based type of like for example right? I told you they had to develop or design a certain learning management system so they would do that. Then they'll also write like response papers, and then they get a chance to do presentations and Umm I'm just trying to think what the undergrads as well. I mean, they get to do presentations and then also different types of online submissions and that as well. Ben I do that (lecturing, Q and A) for about two to three weeks and then after that we have covered this in high school, but they may not have covered it to the same level. So I ask them to go and read in, and do presentations so it has more student participation. So those are two of them that have used and the other one could be just shared. I'll just been in class and I share a video and then we look at that video and highlighted, what did they say and what does this mean and etc
	question and answer and assessment of learning Lecturers uses question and answer strategy to have knowledge of what the students know. The lecturers go to the extent of giving students a pretest, quizzes, feedback sessions	Interviewer What teaching strategies do you use when teaching your courses and what is your strategy? Olunje The TSPCK framework, so it definitely I want to know what they're bringing in for a pretest. Just to have an idea on different aspects. So because I want to start with bringing in, even from one lesson to another, I have this strategy where I have a pretest. Olunje The TSPCK framework, so it definitely I want to know what they're bringing in for a pretest. Just to have an idea on different aspects. So because I want to start with bringing in, even from one lesson to another, I have this strategy where I have a pretest. Anika So yeah, that that's an example I was using in terms of saying as part of this but the reason also that I do a concept check is to check their understanding with umm.. I'm going to say blended approach and I sometimes just don't correct student myself. We don't really read until we have an assignment to something. checks are there more to Push my students to actually keep up with work even Anika So on uLwazi itself, we'll post a question depending again on the content that we covered and then we pose a question and then they have to basically respond with three questions and then in addition to that, they also have to respond to one response to the question. And then that's all they get graded. Based on the question, and based on their responses to their colleagues, response to the question. Ben Mainly giving lectures the lecture approach which is umm linked to question and answer. My students do not know much and I need to put them into the right gear and want them to get to.

	Lecturing and discussion these two strategies are used to provide a platform for lecturers to deliver key concepts. integration of discussions within lectures fosters interaction and critical thinking. The lecturers use this teaching strategy together with the Q and A strategy.	Olunje So I always start my lectures with that is content lectures with today's question and discussion at the beginning. And then we discussed those and then we jump to the next one. three things informs my choice of strategies, the knowledge that they are bring common misconceptions about the content that I am teaching and then my level is difficult to understand and also how does this topic link with others. so that is the undergrand. so for concepts that I know are very difficult to understand. I want to know and for some, it would be more of questions and discussions the way I want to know their views. so content matters, It's misconceptions, the difficulty or the ease of understanding. All those things influence the team strategies that I use. So I use a whole lot of visuals, that is for undergrads Anika I wanna give you example one of the other ones that I did like started doing uLwazi itself, we'll post a question depending again on the content that we covered and then we pose a question and then they have to basically respond to it. Ben I don't know why, but if if for example, I'm teaching cell biology, and ummm at the beginning of that course, my students I assume that my students do not have much cell biology, so I start off mainly giving lectures. the lecture approach which is to give an answer. Because I assume that my students do not know much and I need to be looking at the depth of level that I want them to get to
	measuring teaching strategies -Student feedback and survey Some lecturers do student and peer review to evaluate their teaching strategies. While others have stopped due to students not responding to the questionnaire/ survey	Interviewer And then how do you know or what quality measures do you use to ensure good standard?And how often do you check? 0:40:28.20 --> 0:40:33.490 Olunje Yeah, I didn't do it this year. I don't know, I don't have any measures. previously what I would do is.. when I was regretting, it midway through the course I always have Questions to say what I should stop doing? What should they start doing? Hoping that from those responses I know if what I'm doing is making sense. And of course, in masters, for example, that's the purpose of the mid-course evaluation. weekly submissions that students don't do anyway. So, they are sabotaging my way off Assessing if my strategies are working. So that one for, for example, at masters is not working it all. Olunje the same at undergrad because of ulwazi of having ulwazi. I used it to to create some quizzes. Posting questions on discussions just to know at all levels, If it's not for Marks, no one bothers to do it. So so I don't have any measures now that can work, because I can't mark everything. But if you cannot mark it or not just marking, if you don't allocate marks, for example. That was the only way of assessing if the strategies were working by assessing the quality of the responses. Interviewer So you mentioned that you allow students to evaluate your teaching. How often do you do that?

		0:34:17.700 --> 0:34:20.980 Anika So I do I do it at the end of each block Right. Myself personally, I'll also set up a system that actually has something where the students have to evaluate you, right? So that they can evaluate everything. Uh, I think it's done per block as well, but what I'll do is for my students to evaluate me. Especially because it's the first semester course, second semester course right? So I'll take for example a full semester course being from January to June. Then when I get messages to evaluate me through the universities one at the end of the first semester, second semester Course they'll do it like in November, December, right. So at the end of the semester, but personally what I also do is at the end of the block I'll also do a student evaluation it is that the things are going, and then I also have a discussion with my students about it especially towards the end of the block where we just having like a discussion about how they enjoy? What methods did you feel that you learn the most with? Anika If there's negative feedback, and especially if they agree on like, OK, know, like this then and OK, let's take a step away from that. Interviewer And do you allow student evaluation maybe like at the end of the course or do you allow umm student evaluation? 0:42:29.630 --> 0:42:29.760 Ben Yes. I ask my students to evaluate and many of them, ignore. Every course I'm expecting to it is actually university expectations that all the students have to do to the devaluation at the end of the teaching. So I try to ask my students to evaluate me through the teaching and learning experiences that they've gone through and then I'll have a discussion. However, I've heard some that come individually and acknowledge umm well, but those are not official..umm they're not official remarks.
	Classroom Observation and Peer Review Some Lecturers would like for peer evaluation to be a standard way of evaluating each other's for them to grow in their profession and skills. academics	Olunje Student evaluation yes. peer evaluation is also very good. just to say come and give me feedback. I want for example, to try this in my class or this is what I'm trying in my class from the perspective of my teaching. it's nice. I learned alot when I was inviting colleagues to come and and give me feedback. I remember one year I invited four of them and then at the end I actually could not do it. they talked about. And then it was more of analysis to say so. What themes are coming through of things that I may be doing well and things that I need to learn a lot from, but it's not easy to to get someone to come and sit in your class. Olunje Olunje it (peer evaluation)would be a great Quality assurance. What is wrong with this? Why are we afraid of bringing people into our class to talk about talking of our good stuff and our bad stuff. Why not put it out there? for me (that is) the greatest way of quality assurance.

	view peer evaluation as something that can benefit them. however, they feel that their peers might not know what exactly to look out for. it is also a struggle to find a colleague willing to sit in classes. This show that lecturers would like to improve their teaching strategies. They also fear being judged by their colleagues so they can't go to them as ask for the help	Olunje I don't know what can be done to just create a safe space That will allow us vulnerable. Maybe if we were trained doctors, we would be thoroughly trained. but us I just you call someone to come in when I'm not even sure that what I'm doing the issue is. So if we were all trained like teachers, for example, and we know we are supposed to should be plan at least some basics that should be the same. I'm sure the space would allow us to freely invite others into our classrooms to the deep end. So even sharing my course outline, I'm not even sure because I don't know what And so. Now it's saying look at my course outline and do these aims make sense? Do they align with the exit outcomes? Now you feel like they will say what's wrong with this person. Anika We spoke about the student feedback right also at the peer feedback. What happens is that with the university itself, you get pure part of the university evaluations, right? And then what happens is somebody's senior to you, May not necessary my lecturer or associate professor or something will actually come into like a class into my class, see what it is that I'm teaching, and then provide me with feedback. Interviewer How do you know that this teaching strategy is proper and I'm I'm doing the teaching strategy? 0:28:28.400 --> 0:28:32.160 Interviewer What quality measures do you use, if any? 0:28:37.240 --> 0:28:41.860 Anika We spoke about the student feedback right also at the peer feedback. What happens is that with the university itself, you get pure part of the university evaluations, right? And then what happens is somebody's senior to you, May not necessary my lecturer or associate professor or something will actually come into like a class into my class, see what it is that I'm teaching, and then provide me with feedback. For me, what I'll do is I'll get my basically, I think the keyword is feedback. And I'll get feedback across 3 levels. So the one is from the external moderators, peers in it as well, and the one which I think is the main one for me personally
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	measuring teaching strategies-assessment of learning outcomes lecturers use informal assessments to measure teaching strategies.	Olunje the same at undergrad because of ulwazi of having ulwazi. I used it to to create some quizzes. Posting questions on discussions just to at all levels, If it's not for Marks, no one bothers to do it. So so I don't have any measures now that can work, because I can't mark ev But if you cannot mark it or not just marking, if you don't allocate marks, fo That was the only way of assessing if the strategies were working by assess Anika but the reason also that I do a concept check is to check their understanding with umm..
Attribution theory	internally motivated lecturers are self-motivated to improve their quality of teaching.	Interviewer Do you allow student evaluation and if so, how often? Olunje I do. And as a self-study scholar, I thrive on that. So I love doing it. Because whether it's, it's a positive or negative, I always use it to reflect on

Appendix G: Transcribed interviews

The links below are for the transcribed data from the interviews with the participants.

Ben interview themed

https://witscloud-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/2350440_students_wits_ac_za/Ed5bljLsRnpPla0uPjYJ7fMBPSVTm22UaKQ91cdUz_nvlg?e=MQ2JdW

Olunje interview themed

https://witscloud-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/2350440_students_wits_ac_za/ERw3yz2BOzBlgmUFy9HG8O0BAei77Qq5HoYqv-VSF0JCKA?e=sqjEub

Anika interview themed

https://witscloud-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/2350440_students_wits_ac_za/EXyihg3j0z1Koztc0JpzkWIBluRHIRbq4Xbx8XgBpdMvIg?e=bYY9Wb