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Experiential learning for health sciences education students: An open distance Learning (ODL) context

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Purpose: To explore and describe the experiences of student currently registered for Health Sciences Education course in the Bachelor of Curationis (BCUR) programme offered studying in an ODL university. The students had attended the teaching practice workshop, a component of nursing education programme.

Method and design: A qualitative, exploratory and descriptive, design was conducted following interpretivism. The students were purposively selected and included according to their willingness to participate in the study. Data were collected through written narratives and analysed using Collaiz's method.

Results: The majority of the students (60%) indicated that the workshop period of five days is too short compromising face to face learning and makes teaching and learning to take place under duress. They also expressed fear of the unknown and anxiety as they had never taught before. Others felt it was real experience situation, where they practiced peer assessment and had an opportunity of socializing with fellow students.

Conclusions: The implications of the findings of this study for nursing education in general is that there is a need for pedagogical changes in the preparation of future nurse educators. Nurse educators need to adopt and develop of innovative teaching methodologies that are in line with teaching in ODEL context such as video recordings, podcast and interactive broadcast through smart board and scopia etc

Biography

Dr. Masango is holding a D Phil Nursing Education (2002), M Cur Nursing Education (1998), B Cur Hons Nursing Education (1993), Diploma in nursing administration (1995), BCUR Education and Community Health Nursing (1991), Certificate in Clinical HIV/AIDS management for nurses (2008).

Dr Masango is currently working as a senior lecturer in the Department of Health Studies at the University of South Africa (UNISA). She has previously worked as a professional nurse at Ngwelezane hospital in KwaZulu Natal Province (1982-1985), as a lecturer and senior lecturer at the University of Zulu Land (1995- 2007), Provincial coordinator for the University Research Cooperation (2007-2009) and Campus manager at Net Care Education (2009-2010). She is and has been involved in the supervision of post-graduate students (M&D) some of which have completed their theses and dissertations.

Dr Masango has published quite extensively in accredited journals both nationally and internationally. And has a very strong interest in nursing education, philosophy of education, research and TB/HIV/AIDS.

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