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Rethinking of Quality Assessment Practices Post-Covid-19 Era

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Abstract: Background: When World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic this transformed the social, economic and cultural habits to suit the context. Despite the denting effect of the pandemic people had to continue living while efforts were made from various sectors to curb the spread of the deadly virus. During the pandemic era, academics devised new way of ensuring quality assessment for student learning takes place despite the conditions. **Purpose:** The purpose of this paper is to assess the structural, cultural and agential dynamics that could hinders or enable effective and quality assessment in the School of Nursing and the University of Namibia, Windhoek Campus during the COVID-19 era. **Method:** The social realist theory was used as an analytical tool to assess the constraining and enabling mechanism to quality assessment during the COVID-19 era. This use of technology to transform assessment for and of student learning became a new norm, despite the quality assurance structure, culture and agents having been used to traditional way of assessment. **Results:** Despite the constrains that came as result of COVID-19 disruptions, the paper found that there are benefits in technology-assisted assessment. Some of the benefits are such as time saving, keep records, easy to use and improves assessment practices. **Conclusion:** The pandemic has uncovered new ways of administering assessment despite the non-inclusivity gage. Effort should be made to rethink of structures that regulate assessment at national, institutional and departmental level. Both students and academics need enabling intervention to ensure that no one should be left out due to use of technology in assessing students.

Keywords: Technology-Assisted Assessment, Formative Assessment, Summative Assessment, Online Platforms.

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INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization declared Corona virus (COVID-19) a global health threat on GIVE DAY. This declaration was centered around curbing the spread of this deadly disease. During this period academics were forced to devise new way of ensuring teaching and learning as well as assessment for student learning and of student learning carries on despite the conditions. This paper discusses how quality assessment was carried out during the COVID-19 era against all odds. Assessment is a vital tool for evaluating student's achievement through learning in higher education and it is also used to certify student's achievements (Rawlusk, 2018). Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning; therefore, educators have the obligation to contextualize assessment procedures in their contexts (Biggs, 1999). Assessment has been defined as the process of evaluation of student progress on the content that they have been taught. The assessment tasks are used to judge students if they have achieved the intended outcomes of the specific discipline. Assessments in higher education context are focused on judgment of student knowledge, competence gained by students within a particular discipline. Overall assessment is regarded as a key indicator which points out whether the student has achieved programme proposed outcomes. Furthermore, assessment can divulge information on the effectiveness of the teaching and

learning strategies and guide educators to modify their teaching strategies to obtain quality outcomes (NCHE, 2009). It also reflects the quality of curriculum and teaching as well as learning activities.

Objectives

The paper is based on the following objectives:

- To establish contextual structures, culture and agents that shape assessment at School of Nursing.
- To use technology-assisted assessment to ensure an inclusivity summative and formative assessment practices.
- To recommend interventions that enhances quality assessment during the COVID-19 era.

Problem Statement

The social realist theory's domains enable analysis to understand a social setting by analysing the domains separately without conflating them to avoid the fallacy of conflation, which makes it difficult to find out if agency is being exercised. It is important to take note of the interrelationships and interplay between these domains. Therefore, this paper seeks to assess the structural, cultural and agential dynamics that could hinders or enable effective and quality assessment in the School of Nursing and the University of Namibia, Windhoek Campus during the COVID-19 era.

METHODOLOGY

This paper used the Social Realist Theory of Margret Archer as an analytical tool to assess the constrains and enabling mechanism to quality assessment during COVID-19 lockdowns. The role of social realist theory's domains of structures, culture and agency is engaged in relation to student assessment during the focal period.

Structure

Archer (1996) defines structure as the world out there with physical and human material interests and roles, which may be unequally distributed in a social realm. The structures are such as policies, regulations, physical and human material mechanisms. The changes in structure contribute to changes in the culture (beliefs, norms, attitude, values or views) and agency (people or actors). The structural domains do not work in isolations but are interlinked and interrelated with the culture (parts) and agents (people).

The assessment process at the University of Namibia (UNAM) is guided by the institutional Assessment Policy and general information and regulations outlined in the prospectus. Consequently, the assessment harmonizes with international recognitions, national legitimacy and credibility of academic programs as well as the external bodies such as Nursing and Midwifery Council of Namibia, Ministry of Health and Social Services, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and National Qualifications Authority (NQA). The Internal body is the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) is responsible for the assessment in UNAM.

Culture

According to Archer (1995), cultural mechanism emerges from ideas, beliefs, theories, values, ideologies and concepts which comes from the discourses used in a particular setting. Culture can be constituted in policies, institutional documents or espoused in discourses in the context. Culture can constrain or enable quality assessment in a high education context.

The National Qualification Framework fosters culture transparency through learning outcomes and assessment. It is through culture whereby an educator develops norms and values to conform within assessment criteria as stipulated at national level, such as the National Qualification Authority. At institutional level the assessment policy provides direction in the use of the appropriate assessments procedure, criteria and methods. It also highlights the types of assessment that can be carried out to determine student achievement on anticipated outcomes. In the cultural context, the traditional way of assessment has been decolonized and transformed into digital assessment during the COVID-19 outbreak. All students are being taught remotely and

assessment also being carried remotely via Moodle platform. However, UNAM has experienced many challenges related to the use of technology and network coverage. Both students and educators have the same experiences but some students were not having access to digital technology devices as a result of their socio-economic background. The problem of students not being able to access digital technology devices could have been avoided if inclusivity in assessing students was considered during the implementation of remote teaching.

Agency

Agency is about human interactions that may change or transform things or keep it statics or the way it is. Agents are people who operate within a particular structural and cultural system. Social interaction of agents in a high education context can bring about structural or cultural changes (i.e. morphogenesis) or may keep things unchanged (i.e. morphostasis). Emergency personal powers and properties are exercised as people interact with parts (structure and culture) (Archer, 2003).

Agency in the assessments include students, and lecturer, Head of Department (HOD), Faculty and school dean and quality assurance department such as CEQUAM, and NCHE and NQA. Students are considered passive recipients in assessment because they are at the receiving end of the finished product. Lecturers, Deans and HOD are responsible for development and implementation of assessment (UNAM, 2015). In addition, the implementation of eLearning is also facing problems such as performance, cost, and technology access, availability of resources for students particularly in informal settlements amid social inequalities (Zabadi & Dammas, 2016).

Students have to comply with the assessment as stipulated in the assessment policy. However, sometimes the quality of assessment has been compromised. Because of online assessment, students were not prepared and trained to be assessed online, but they were assessed during remote teaching. The challenged of online cheating was observed, and the students were cheating because there were no effective measures in place to prevent cheating during assessment. This happened because no training was provided to eradicate cheating during assessment. Therefore, this paper advocates for effective preventative measures to be implemented in order to reduce cheating because it is compromising the quality of teaching and graduate attributes. Therefore, appropriate training for online assessment should be provided to lecturers by the university. Students could be assessed using case studies that would trigger the student's mind to think critically rather than giving them short questions whereby the student would look for answers in the notes, books and from online sources.

Each of the social realist domains, separately, has the potential to enable or constrain achieving quality assessment. Because once the parts (people and culture) are conflated, it is impossible to distinguish if the agency is being exercised. The three domains should be viewed as separate domains of reality, each with properties and powers (Shalyefu, 2017). Once you understand the separate contribution of the three domains to a social setting then try to understand their interplay between them (Mogashana, 2015). Despite separate analyses of these domains, it is important to note that the interrelation when they interact.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This paper conceptualise assessment in high education context, assessment theories and principles of assessment in higher education. It describes how assessment theory were used, during COVID-19, by educators to assess student performance. Furthermore, the paper discusses the principles of assessment that educators used during the assessment period. It deliberates on the impact of technology enhanced assessments. Finally, the paper concludes with management of assessment in relation to quality assurance.

Before deliberating on the content of assessment, the purpose of assessment in the School of Nursing (SON) is discussed. Furthermore, assessments serve as a provision of feedback to all external stakeholders. This feedback indicates whether the student has achieved the appropriate level in a particular curriculum against the academic standard set by UNAM, NQA and NCHE. It further facilitates learning environment among students through timely feedback. Assessment is used as an indicator to determine whether the student has achieved programme proposed outcomes. It also provides information on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategies, and can guide educators to modify teaching strategies to obtain quality outcomes (NCHE, 2009). In addition to this Brown (2017) has identified another purpose of assessment to certify students for graduation and characterize student performance in an orderly manner. It provides informed decisions to an educator on assessment strategies and ability to conceptualize it. The assessment methods, choices, conditions and strategies context are guided by assessment policy and general information and regulation in the prospectus which serve as guidelines to educators and students. At UNAM, students can be assessed through formative, diagnostic and summative approaches.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is assessment whereby the student's progress is assessed, and outcome is used

to offer feedback to students during the course. This allows students to improve on their weakness in a specific module. It is regarded as a continuous process, a process oriented and criterion referenced assessment (Brown, 2017). The main goal is to monitor student learning progress and provide ongoing feedback. The feedback can be used by an educator to improve on their teaching strategies and students to improve on their learning (Ellery, 2008). Formative assessment is only communicating student abilities to internal parties, those who are involved in student learning such as the student, lecturers, academic developer and quality assurance department (McAlpine, 2002).

The approaches to formative assessment are such as test, assignment, practical assessment, case studies and portfolios. In formative assessment, lecturers are expected to be honest and more open to students when they provide student feedback after assessment. At SON the formative assessments are scheduled as follows: 4 tests each for a year module course, but there are several forms of assessment such as 1 assignment, 2 case studies and 4 practical assessments. Formative assessment includes diagnostic assessment. According to (UNAM, 2018) the formative assessment is contributing to 60% of the final marks because students are being assessed continuously through the year in the form tests, assignments, portfolio and practical examination. Students are given 2 assessments in a semester per subject if the subject is a year module but they can be given 4 tests in a semester if the subject is a semester course. Despite this assessment schedule of UNAM and educators are not limited to conduct more assessment, this decision is determined by outcomes of the assessment and competence that educators would like to assess.

Diagnostic assessment is the assessment which is conducted during curriculum planning in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, understanding, problems and skills before the initiation of the modules. The weaknesses and strengths that have been identified in particular modules would help educators and academic developers to review the course. This assessment would help lecturers to determine the type of tools to be used when they are designed as course outline and syllabus prescribed. Quality assurance is crucial in assessment because it safeguards that assessment has been conducted according to protocol of a particular institution.

The diagnostic assessment is used to verify if the entire content was acquired, ensure that levels are allocated according to Bloom's taxonomy, and outcome if it is aligned with the course outline. Furthermore, diagnostic assessment is used to determine if assessment marks are allocated according to the level of Bloom's taxonomy. During formative assessment, an educator might spend a lot of hours marking tests and

assignments by providing written feedback (Dunn, 2004).

Despite this feedback, students often are not paying attention to those comments. However, all formative and summative assessments are compulsory and are graded. Students must prioritize their efforts to obtain good marks on graded assessment. Quite often it is realized that students do not actually pay attention to short question and ungraded activities such as quizzes. All formative assessments compulsory, whether graded or ungraded, in order to help students to gain skills and competence on specific units because students are tending to prioritize their efforts on graded assessments. The diploma course is being offered at the entry level of Bloom's taxonomy. The complexity of the course content is fairly low; students are mostly required to memorize, understand and apply information. For the enhancement of quality purpose in nursing education the students need to be assessed on each unit. This could be in the form of a test, quiz, case presentation and problem solving. This enables educators to evaluate the quality of curriculum in teaching and learning and learning outcome against marks obtained by students during assessment. If students have obtained high grades in the activity, then it is a good indicator that the teaching strategies that is used aligns with learning outcome and assessment. It indicates quality in teaching and learning of that specific content.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is assessment of learning which is aimed at evaluating students after a period of learning. The purposes of summative assessments are involved in selection and certification of students at the end of the academic year (Brown, 2017). Student achievement is being summed up in this assessment in the approaches such as tests and examinations. Nevertheless, students do not get feedback after this assessment. Summative assessment is a product-oriented and norms referenced assessment (Ellery, 2008). Examination is done at the end of the unit and students are awarded with grades or marks. Those marks and grades are being moderated by moderators before marks being released to a student. Summative assessment is practiced less often compared to formative and it is more useful to external stakeholders when they are evaluating the outcomes and quality of the course offered at certain institutions because it communicates a summary of students' ability to external parties (McAlpine, 2002).

In order for students to be admitted to the summative examination need to have 60% of the continuous year mark which is obtained through formative assessment. However, students are expected to obtain 40% in the examination assessment that is being written at the end of year or semester. It is being written for at least 1 to 3 hours and the final pass mark should be 50% on average. However practical sessions

are used for both formative and summative assessment and students are expected to obtain 50% in each assessment. Assessments are regarded as part of teaching strategies and students can be taught through teacher-centered approach and student-centered approach (UNAM, 2018). Quality of assessment is guaranteed by moderators, in the internal and external areas to enhance quality in nursing education.

Assessment Theory

Luckett & Sutherland (2000) have identified assessment theory which is described as an approach towards assessing students' performance and it involves two approaches. They are norm referenced assessment (NRA) and criterion-referenced assessment (CRA).

Norm Referenced Assessment (NRA)

The Norm Referenced Assessment (NRA) is a type of assessment which is usually done at the end of the year or semester, to evaluate students' performance to report a successful rate for all modules. It is conducted by comparing student performance with other students in the same cohorts. Criteria in these assessments should be transparent, consistent and implicit (Lee, 2014). It allows the lecturer to safeguard validity and reliability in the assessment. It is indicating the average performance of students whether the student performed better or worse than the average. The student's performance is measured by a normal distribution curve (Lok *et al.*, 2016). The midpoint of the curve is indicating majority performance and the end tail curve indicating poor performance. On the contrary, Knight (2001) criticized this type of assessment, that it does not reflect the precise picture of individual students and the results are too generalized. He does not consider it suitable for improving the learning environment of individual students. Especially when a student needs to be assisted at an individual level.

However, at SON this NRA is not practical by lectures at individual level. However, results are presented to the examination committee. Consequently, examination committees and examination officers are the one who are responsible to determine Normal Reference Assessment per cohort to evaluate quality of education curriculum. This is usually picked up by the academics unless when they require the student-lecturer evaluation reports for promotion purposes.

Criterion Referenced Assessment (CRA)

Criterion Referenced assessment is a type of assessment which is done to evaluate students' performance at individual level (Lok *et al.*, 2016). It measures knowledge, skill and competence acquired by the student and personal development of individual students. This assessment is done on an ongoing and continuous basis. The student's work is evaluated against criteria and standard for a specific discipline (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000). Criterion Referenced

Assessment is also linked to teaching and learning activities and student assessment. It is based on a student's observable outcomes, instructional tasks and assessment. It focuses on all student performance on each activity performed by a student. Assessment criteria also need to be transparent and explicit to the students (Lok *et al.*, 2016)

The CRA approach enhances lifelong learning and self-monitoring skills in individual students, provided students are granted a chance to evaluate their own work. This can facilitate the student to be more successful and promote quality assessment as well as teaching and learning among students (Boud & Falchikov, 2007). Therefore, we are advocating for UNAM to use the Criterion Referenced Assessment more frequently because it focuses on student's individual performance and it could reflect quality academic achievements of each graduate.

Principle of Assessment

Luckett & Sutherland (2000) specified that the principle of assessments is including validity, reliability, transparency, authenticity, fairness, inclusivity and affordability. In this context, validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility are considered as imperative and relevant concepts at UNAM and for the modules reviewed.

Reliability refers to the consistency of the assessment instrument and marking against marking criteria of assessment outcomes and interpretation. Students must be awarded with the same marks in particular outcomes based on their response and performance against assessment criteria. All assessors must reach the same decision on the candidates' competence based on the evidence given according to the assessment guiding tool (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000). When the same assessment material is submitted to different students, the assessor and student should reach the same result. There should be a consistency in the assessment provided that assessment must be correctly marked and the result must be correctly and accurately recorded (Brown, 2017).

The principle of reliability is being addressed because all assessments are being moderated by internal and external moderators. Moderation is done for consistency and the same exam question paper is written by all students the campuses country-wide. There is consistency in teaching by different lecturers across the campus, and students are being taught the same module content, and exit outcomes are the same. Hence consistency is expected in the assessment outcomes. All question papers are submitted with a memorandum which serves as a marking guide and the markings are awarded according to the rubric.

Validity in the assessment is used to ensure that all assessment tools must measure what it is

supposed to measure according to intended outcomes of the curriculum. There should be accuracy and appropriateness in the assessment of content knowledge, epistemic knowledge, problems solving and enquiry knowledge. The assessment should not include the content that was not taught to students (Luckett & Sutherland, 2000). All assessments are being moderated to ensure quality assurance and determination of validity. Formative assessment is being moderated by an appointed internal moderator who is regarded as subject expert and summative assessment is moderated by internal and external moderators. The purpose is to guarantee that the assessment is being carried out to assess what is supposed to be assessed according to the intended outcomes in the curriculum and fit for purpose. Validity can be also used to evaluate if marks and questions are aligned according to the level of Bloom taxonomy and blueprint. It must be noted that massification of students has increased class sizes, and as a result of this an educator may look for quick and easy assessment approaches which are suitable for large classes and omit some Bloom taxonomy level in the assessments (UNAM, 2018). Hence, I am advocating for the General Nursing Department to develop a rubric system that would enable educators to conduct the marking of assessment scripts more swiftly, simultaneously and ensure it would cover all aspects of Bloom's taxonomy.

Fairness means assessment should be fair to the students and must be based on the content that students are being taught in a specific discipline. The principle of assessment is applicable in both summative and formative assessment. Student's needs and characteristics must be considered to ensure equality and equity are observed. Students' diversity and needs must be taken into consideration during assessment. People living with disability need to be given extra time depending on their nature of disability. They should be provided with easily accessible venues for example a ramp for wheelchair-bound students) and materials which are appropriate, such as blind students get their assessment translated into Braille. Students need to be informed about the assessment process, understand the process, and be able to participate in the assessment process without any intruder. They are being informed through assessment policy, general rules and regulation of UNAM and in disciplinary guidelines. Students are also entitled to challenge assessment results and request for reassessment. For example, they can appeal for a test and examination for remarking if the student feels that they were marked unfairly. All students must be assessed equally and no discrimination should be applied. All students are being assessed equally irrespective of their diversity and assessment is conducted based on the UNAM assessment policy. Students are given information regarding assessment procedure, for example they are informed about marks to be obtained in the continuous assessment for them to

be qualified to be admitted in examination, when supplementary and special examination is allowed.

Flexible assessment refers to the process whereby assessment is dynamic and students are granted autonomy to participate in their own learning. This happens by giving them choices to reflect on their learning needs and making informed choices regarding assessment of acquired skills in the specific discipline (Wanner *et al.*, 2021). The flexibility in this context is applicable in summative and formative assessment because students are allowed to be re-assessment. This provision is given in case they missed assessment due to illness and events of deaths of close relatives and other serious unforeseen circumstances. They are informed by the Assessment Policy and general information of UNAM.

Summative assessment is practiced less often compared to formative and it is more useful to external stakeholders when they evaluate the outcomes of the course offered at a certain institution. This is happening with the reason that it communicates a summary of student ability to external parties (McAlpine, 2002). For the student to be admitted to the summative examination they need to have 60% of the continuous year mark which is being obtained throughout the year. Students are expected obtain 40% in the examination which is summative assessment to be written at the end of the modules and it will be written at least 1 to 3 hours and the final mark should be 50%. All students are entitled to receive feedback after assessment. The year mark is announced before examination according to UNAM calendar and the date is determined by calendar and time table committee (UNAM, 2018). Examination is done at the end of the unit and students are awarded with a mark after being evaluated.

Technology Enhanced Assessment (TEA)

Online teaching and learning and assessment have existed in higher education on part time mode only. However, the COVID-19 outbreak has introduced online teaching and assessment on a full-time mode. Traditional teaching and learning correspondingly assessments were replaced by online teaching and learning as well as assessment.

Online assessments can be conducted as formative and summative assessments, immediate feedback is being given on summative assessment only. For formative assessment students are being assessed in the form of test, assignment and project whilst summative assessment students are being assessed in the form of examination. In both summative and formative assessment students are being assessed on cognitive and affective domains (Lok *et al.*, 2016; & Jaleel & Khanum, 2020).

Online assessment uses all criteria and principle of assessment which is being used during

traditional assessment. All UNAM staff are trained by the Centre for Open, Distance and eLearning (CODEL) department on how to conduct online assessment. All assessments, teaching and learning are taking place on the e-learning platform Moodle. However, all challenges that have been experienced during manual assessment and they are the identical to challenges experienced during online assessment. Students are cheating through online assessment. This is evidenced by high marks obtained during assessment and students are reported to write tests in groups, despite their mechanisms in place that are initiated by CODEL. So as to prevent academic dishonesty during online assessment. When educators set up online assessment, the question behavior must be shuffled within the question so that students are not writing the same question simultaneously. Each attempt is built on the last, and on the layout of the question, every question is on a new page to avoid screenshots of questions. Navigation method is sequential to prevent students from going back to previous questions. Nevertheless, educators were skeptical with marks obtained from online assessment because students were obtaining higher marks compared to traditional assessment. Despite this, it reflects the quality of teaching in the specific subject.

Some students are ready to embrace technology because they show a positive attitude towards technology integration in teaching and learning. Apart from technology teaching, students can also be assessed online in the form of tests, assignments, group work and examinations. Online assessments are being carried out according to principles of assessment such as validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility. All assessments are being moderated to ensure quality assurance and determination of validity. Formative assessment is being moderated by an appointed internal moderator who is a subjective expert and summative assessment is moderated by internal and external moderators. The purpose is to guarantee that the assessment is carried out to assess what is supposed to be assessed according to the intended outcomes in the curriculum. It can also conclude if marks and questions are aligned according to the level of Bloom's taxonomy and blue print.

However, the psychomotor domain is not being assessed online due to the nature of its practicality. Hence students are being assessed face to face in OSCE form in skill laboratories and at clinical areas. Although students are being assessed in a traditional mode, there are challenges that are being experienced during this assessment. These challenges are lack of infrastructure, human and material resources. For students to pass the practical components they are expected to obtain 50% and their practical book must be completed for them to be admitted to the examination. The aim of both assessments is to evaluate quality of curriculum and outcomes as reflected by graduate

attributes. Assessment result is facilitating quality among nurses as it is stipulated by autonomy, professionalism and graduate employability status of the nurse graduate and student. It fosters nurse's educator to develop quality simulation skills if there are sufficient resources for technology. On the contrary OSCE can expose educators and students to COVID-19. Hence, uncertain if UNAM and the external regulation body for quality assurance are able to develop other strategies whereby psychomotor skills could be assessed online.

Quality Assurance and Management of Assessment

Quality Assurance is the process of checking the quality of the process and outcomes of curriculum in nursing education. Quality assurance is aimed to comply, control, accountable and enhance education quality and outcomes of the product (Harvey, 2006). Constructive alignment in the assessment is enhancing quality in assessment and determines the relationship between expected outcome, teaching and learning strategies and assessment. The expected outcome is relating to knowledge, skills and attitude. The teaching and learning strategies are based on the teaching activities conducted by an educator and carried out by students to facilitate and promote a learning environment among students. Assessment is based on how students would be evaluated to determine if they have achieved the intended outcomes of the programmer (Biggs, 1999).

However, some assessment may not be aligned between intended outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment. In order to ensure quality assurance and determination of validity at UNAM all assessments are being moderated. CEQUAM is the internal body and is responsible for coordinating quality assurance in the assessment. Moderation is carried out to determine the consistency in the assessment document. All question papers are submitted with a memorandum which serves as marking guide and the markings are awarded according to the rubric.

At SON Quality assurance in assessment is regulated by implicit Quality Assurance policy such as CEQUAM and CPDTLI. The explicitly Quality Assurance Policy is facilitated by NQA, HPCNA and NCHE. The aim of internal quality assurance to guarantee that assessment has met high desired standards criteria and is well robust of both internal and external quality assurances. Therefore, all examination question papers for summative are being compiled by a lecturer who taught that specific discipline and they are being moderated internally and externally by subject experts and formative assessment are being moderated internally. The lecturers are evaluated by the students, supervisor and peer reviewer on their teaching. The feedback is usually given to improve teaching and

learning which is reflected in both formative and summative assessment.

CONCLUSION

We have deliberated on assessment of and for learning in order to evaluate student competence, achievement and certification toward intended outcomes. Assessment strategies need to be constructively aligned with curriculum intended outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment. In this paper, we have discussed the assessment concepts, assessment theories and principle of assessment in higher education. We described how assessment theory can be used by educator to assess student performance. We discussed the principle of assessment that educators need to adhere to during the assessment period. We have deliberated in the impact of technology enhanced assessments. We disclose the role of structure, agency and culture in relation to assessment and reflect the role in assessment as an educator. Finally, concluded with management of assessment in relation to quality assurance.

Based on the discourses in the paper, it is fair to conclude that the pandemic has uncovered new ways of assessing students as a contingency measure. Despite the assessment administered during COVID-19, subscribing more to equality as opposed to equity to make it more inclusive to students with special needs, more effort should be made to advocate for more inclusive gage. Effort should be made to rethink of structures that regulate assessment at national, institutional and departmental level in order to make kit responsive to situational contexts. Both students and academics need enabling intervention to ensure that no one should be left out due to use of technology in assessing students.

Conflict of Interest

Authors have no conflict of interest in publishing this paper

Authors' Contributions

KS wrote a reflexive portfolio of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education, under the mentorship of LMJ. All authors contributed to and finalised the paper.

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