

Quality assurance effectiveness: perceptions of students and lecturers on the quality assurance mechanisms employed in the PGDE programme at Zimbabwe Open University

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Abstract

At the time there was no meaningful economic growth in Zimbabwe most of the graduate youth found themselves joining the teaching profession. Consequently, at Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), there was a sharp rise in the student enrolment in the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). The notable rise in student teacher enrolment in the PGDE programme was also attributable to the demand made by employer of teachers that all teaching staff should have a teaching qualification. At ZOU the sharp rise in the numbers of students studying the PGDE programme presented some problems in the effort to quality assure the programme. The study was conducted to determine lecturers' and student views on the ways in which the quality assurance mechanisms were viewed as effective and not effective. Lecturers and PGDE students were purposively and conveniently sampled to take part in a case study which was conducted in the Midlands Region of ZOU. Questionnaires and a focus group discussion were used to generate data. The study established that several mechanisms were in place to quality assure the PGDE programme. Nonetheless while some of the mechanisms were opined as being effective in providing ways for further improvement, contact tutorial time was viewed as inadequate and Teaching Practice examining as lacking the external aspect by sister universities. The study recommended extension of tutorial time and external examining of the Teaching Practice component of the PGDE programme, inter alia.