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THE STATUS OF INCLUSIVITY AND QUALITY OF ONLINE LEARNING AT BOU: STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS

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THE AIM

- ✓ To explore status of inclusivity in relation to online learning.
- ✓ Explore students' experiences and perceptions on online.
- ✓ To use traditional distance education experiences to inform online designs.

The Motivation

- BOU is first of its kind in Botswana
- Has committed to increasing online provision address the deficiencies of traditional delivery mode
- As a result BOU project on developing QA Standards for Blended Learning (inclined to online delivery)
- Gap identified : inclusivity was not satisfactorily addressed in drafted QA standards

Diversified Inclusivity Proponents

- ✓ Link diversity with quality: inclusive excellence (Clayton-Pedersen and Musil, 2005)
- ✓ Concentrate on developing appropriate online content and not just enhancing support (Katsifli, 2017)
- ✓ Call for recognition of the uniqueness of all students' characteristics.
- ✓ Focus on critical success factors affecting quality of online learning (Freson, 2007): student/lecturer; infrastructure; instructional and technical.
- ✓ Liard (2010) opined that the impact of diversity is under-estimated and he developed a model

Liard's Diversified Inclusivity Model

Policies, procedures and strategies to promote inclusion

Learning designs to diverse students characteristics

Support strategies to promote diversity and inclusion

Infrastructure and Resource Provision

Learning and Development Programs



PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF BOU

- All the areas identified by Liard need more work
- Effective Learning designs should address diverse students characteristics
- Current online learning is mainly used for support purposes.
- Hence the need to focus on appropriate designs that are inclusive.

PROPOSED METHODS

Based on the Preliminary Evaluation:

- Delve deep into understanding students' experiences and perceptions on online learning.
- Explore staff understanding of diversity and how to design for it.
- Assess what is available at the University.
- To come up with appropriate interventions to continually improve on inclusive designs.



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