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Redefining Strategies for Lifelong Learning Interventions

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Abstract

South African universities employ a variety of intervention programs to mitigate learning barriers students may be experiencing throughout their university life. Students' cultural, educational, and socio-economic variables are some of those identified by research that may have unfavorable impact on their transition and integration into the university learning and teaching environment. The Durban University of Technology introduced programs such as General education modules, First Year Student Experiences, Residence Tutorials, and Academic advising to promote students' success and smoother assimilation of newcomers. The institution subscribes to the vision of the Department of Education *that all learners can learn*, thereby being inclusive and opening doors to learners from humble beginnings. The 2022 second and third-year students experienced a unique environment due to the national lockdown regulations that were introduced as a result of COVID-19. The 2020/2021 cohort had to attend online classes and all other intervention programs were offered online. The aim of the study was to assess the effect of intervention programs on students' short-term and long-term learning goals in order to achieve life-long learning. In order to measure how students coped during their transition phase and the impact the intervention programs had on their learning and adjustment to the university environment, questionnaires were distributed among the second and third-year students and trailed by focus group discussions. The outcome of the study on the employed intervention programs recommended for: a continuous review of the programs; possible re-envisioning based on data collected and inferences on students' responses; reflection on the implications of these programs on teaching, learning, and increasing the quality of student success and life-long learning.

Keywords: Redefining learning interventions, first year, life-long learning, student voice