GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

by

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SUPERVISOR: PROF GH VAN RENSBURG

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DECLARATION

I declare that **GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

01 December 2022

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GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

There is evidence that a higher percentage of registered nurses' workforce with a bachelor's degree has been associated with better patient outcomes including lower hospital mortality. In this regard, the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2009 passed a resolution urging its member states to scale up nursing education to a bachelor's level. In 2010, the Institute for Medicine recommended that 80% of the registered nurse workforce should be trained at the bachelor's degree level by 2020. Registered nurses upgrading their qualifications enter university as mature and part-time students. Studies have shown that mature and part-time students in universities have higher attrition than their full-time peers. They are less likely to access extra support and personal development opportunities available at university, have a history of campus isolation and have fewer opportunities to engage on campus. The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time Bachelor of Science students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support.

An exploratory descriptive qualitative design was used. In phase I, the researcher utilised focus group discussions to explore needs and perceived support with 100 part-time BScN students in the four Kenyan universities. In phase II, part-time Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) support needs, and enablers and barriers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students, were explored through individual interviews of ten educators of part-time BScN students.

Data were analysed using Tesch's protocol of qualitative data analysis. Data were coded by two researchers who agreed on the final codes. Four themes emerged from phase I data: resource needs, psychological needs, curriculum redesign needs, and policy needs.

Four themes emerged from phase II data: learning needs, resources need, adult students' needs and psychosocial needs. The findings of the two phases were integrated to form five themes: support as resources provision, support for learning needs, support through curriculum review, support through policy formulation and need for psychosocial support. The findings of phases I and II informed the development of guidelines and their associated recommendations for implementation were developed and validated by experts. The guidelines propose evidence-based recommendations for universities offering part-time BScN programmes, nurse educators teaching part-time BScN students, university education regulators, and regulators of nursing education and practice.

Key concepts

Clinical learning; guidelines; nursing education; nurse educator; nursing students; part-time students; qualitative research; students support; teaching and learning; theoretical learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my family, friends and Almighty God.

A special gratitude to my parents, Patrick and Jane, as well as sisters and brothers, nieces and nephews.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BScN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
CNA	Canadian Nurses Association
KEMU	Kenya Methodist University
LMICs	Low- and middle-income countries
UK	United Kingdom
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Student support by educators has been cited as an important element in retaining students (Cameron, Roxburgh, Taylor & Lauder 2011:1378). It has also been shown to improve student academic success and performance (Glozah & Pevalin 2014:451; Mattanah, Brooks, Brand, Quimby & Ayers 2012:33; Milney, Creedy & West 2016:391; Tladi 2013:69). Student support is multifaceted and includes tutorial, financial, academic, personal tutoring, guidance and counselling services, social, and cultural support (Cameron et al 2011:1375; Mattanah et al 2012:34; Milney et al 2016:391; Tladi 2013:69). Glozah and Pevalin (2014:452) state that social support is multidimensional and comprises both material and psychological resources that individuals acquire through their interpersonal relationships.

Attrition in nursing education is of concern to educators, policy makers and governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries where nurses are few. It is estimated that over a quarter of nursing students fail to complete their programme of study (Gratrix & Barrett 2017:7). Studies investigating student retention in nursing and midwifery programmes have revealed that support is key for student retention (Cameron et al 2011:1378; Milney et al 2016:391). Support is vital for nursing students who face simultaneous challenges of learning and working. Nurse educators have the potential to enhance student support, which in turn enhances students' experience in higher education (Watts 2011:214). To ensure that part-time nursing students are offered opportunities to the mandatory academic and professional knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to maximise achievement and retention, student support should be actively and deliberately embraced (Watts 2011:214). Furthermore, experiencing support in nurse education is important in enabling students to learn how to offer quality care.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Studies conducted in developed countries have shown that a bachelor's level RN training is an association between RNs level of training and patient outcomes (Aiken, Cerón, Simonetti, Lake, Galiano, Garbarini, Soto, Bravo & Smith 2018:322; Harrison, Aiken, Sloane, Carthon, Merchant, Berg & McHugh 2019:1087). Prompted by the compelling evidence, the Institute of Medicine, in 2001, recommended that 80% of the RN workforce be bachelor prepared or higher by the year 2020 (Harrison et al 2019:1087). Similarly, in 2001, the World Health Assembly (WHA) passed resolution WHA54.12, validating the World Health Organization's (WHO's) commitment to the scaling up of health professionals. This resolution specifically urged member states to give urgent attention to ways of improving nursing and midwifery in their respective countries (WHO 2000:8). The WHO (2009:10) developed Global standards for the initial education of professional nurses and midwives. In this document, the WHO (2009:10) recommended that the initial education of nurses and midwives be the first-degree level of education, noting that this level of education has been successfully provided in many countries.

As of 2020, there were 109,659 RNs in Kenya, which constitutes 57.7% of the health workforce in the country (Okoroafor, Kwesiga, Ogato, Gura, Gondi, Jumba, Ogumbo, Monyoncho, Wamae, Wanyee, Angir, Almudhwahi, Chagina, Nabyonga-Orem, Ahmat, Zurn & Asamani 2022:2). In 2012, the Kenyan Nursing Health Workforce Report (Ministry of Health 2012:34), indicated that bachelor's degree-prepared nurses were 3% of registered nurses in Kenya. The Nursing Council of Kenya in partnership with Kenyan universities developed a part-time Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) programme to scale up nurses' and midwives' training to be in line with the implementation of the resolutions of WHA54.12 (WHO 2009:10). This programme is offered for two and a half years and on part-time basis thus allowing nurses to upgrade whilst still retaining employment and income. The programme is designed to build on previous learning of the nurses during their diploma training and their working experience. Therefore, it targets nurses who hold a diploma in nursing or midwifery, and who have worked for at least two years in a clinical setting. The mode of delivery is either by students attending classes two days a week or three hours in the evenings on weekdays or all day on weekends. Irrespective of the mode of study being offered by various institutions, part-time BScN students have limited contact with their educators and spend lesser time in the university.

The integration of a part-time BScN programme into Kenyan universities started a new era where universities now have to provide support to a large number of mature-aged students. The full-time BScN programme targets younger students mostly below 19 years of age and who have just left secondary school, in contrast to nurses attending part-time BScN programmes, who are working nurses and mature-aged students above age 24 (Khiat 2017:44). In the United Kingdom (UK) students who are older than 21 are regarded as mature-aged (Wood & Cattel 2014:48), while in USA it is students older than 23 years (Gilardi & Guglielmetti 2011:33). In Kenya, there is no age specific description of mature-aged students. However, students who are attending college for a second time are considered mature-aged students. Therefore, part-time BScN students in Kenya are mature-aged students since they are attending college for a second time having worked for at least two years after completion of their nursing diploma training.

1.2.1 Part-time students in higher education

Part-time students have had a history of campus isolation, fewer opportunities to engage on campus, and much higher attrition rates than their full-time peers (Hunt & Loxley 2021:458; Lee 2017:4). They tend to socialise less on campus (Hunt & Loxley 2021:458) and have a higher risk for premature withdrawal from their studies than their full-time peers (Lee 2017:4). Similarly, they tend to be full-time employees and they need to maintain their employment while studying (Hunt & Loxley 2021:458).

The lives of students in higher education involve an overlap of the four domains of life, namely, work, family, self and social life (Markle 2015:270; Mounsey, Vandehey & Diekhoff 2013:380). Therefore, they experience challenges in balancing their work responsibilities and student roles (Markle 2015:270). Research evidence from a university in Ireland among full-time students illustrates that part-time employment harms students' course performance, the overall experience of college and grades achieved (Remenick & Bergman 2021:36; Rochford, Connolly & Drennan 2009:601). Students working more than 16 hours a week had lower academic outcomes than those that worked less than 16 hours a week. These concerns have been documented in research in the USA (Remenick 2019:115), Europe (Hovdhaugen 2015:645), and in Asia (Yanbarisova 2015:471). Moreover, in Sub-Saharan Africa, similar findings have been reported where full-time employment is associated with poor academic outcomes (Chikoko 2010:32).

Closer home, in Kenya, part-time nursing students attending universities work full-time, which translates to at least 40 hours a week. They have families to support, making it difficult for them to forfeit employment to pursue full-time studies (Lee 2017:4). The challenges these students face are not minor but major, and it requires consistent support at the individual level at home and from their mentors for better educational outcomes. Due to this overlap of their life roles, they tend to experience four types of inter-role conflict; school-family, school-work, family-school, and work-school (Markle 2015:270). In school-family conflict, school demands make it difficult to meet family demands. In school-work conflict, school demands make it difficult to meet work demands. In family-school conflict, family demands make it difficult to meet school demands. While in work-school conflict, work demands make it difficult to meet school demands (Markle 2015:270). These conflicting life roles and commitments experienced by working students have been reported by other authors (Brooks 2013:444; Frith & Wilson 2014:2; Gilardi & Guglielmetti 2011:36; Stevenson & Clegg 2013:25). Research conducted by Frith and Wilson (2014) in the UK shows that childcare, full-time employment, and health issues are some of the life commitments that conflict with learning for mature students.

Mature and part-time students have diverse learning motives and identities, which might create challenges for universities in supporting and retaining them (Tones, Fraser, Elder & White 2009:506). Studies have shown that part-time students have lower overall satisfaction with their academic experience (Moro-Egido & Panades 2010:365) and have higher chances of dropping out of the university at the end of the first year (Gilardi & Guglielmetti 2011:45). As a result of their unique challenges posed by their life circumstances, part-time mature students may require a different kind of support during their education journey compared to the traditional younger students. These challenges include work demands, childcare demands, and caring for their families (Frith & Wilson 2014:2). Despite the challenges experienced by mature and part-time students, they are more likely to complete nursing and midwifery programmes if accorded the necessary support (Cameron et al 2011:1378).

1.2.2 Support for students in higher education

Support experienced by student nurses is pivotal to ensure they successfully complete their theoretical and clinical requirements of the course (Braine & Parnell 2011:904). Tait (2014:8) classified student support in open and distance learning into three interrelated

and interdependent functional areas, namely, cognitive, affective and systemic. Cognitive support entails supporting learning through the provision of course materials and resources. Affective support encompasses the provision of an environment that enhances self-esteem and creates a sense of belonging. Systemic support involves establishing student-friendly administrative processes and information management processes (Tait 2014:8; Tladi 2013:69). These support elements are also needed by students in higher education, whether studying full-time or part-time. However, these aspects of support are provided by institutions of higher learning.

Student support is multifaceted and includes tutorial, pastoral, financial, academic, personal tutoring, guidance and counselling services, social support, and cultural support (Braine & Parnell 2011:905; Cameron et al 2011:1375; Mattanah et al 2012:34; Milney et al 2016:391; Tait 2014:8; Tladi 2013:69). Personal tutor role has been described as one way of offering academic and pastoral support (Braine & Parnell 2011:905; Cameron et al 2011:1375). Academic support entails practical support to address the academic needs of part-time BScN students (Milney et al 2016:391). They include monitoring progress, helping with study skills, academic writing, exam techniques, personal development planning and tutorial support. A personal tutor can give additional support in information searching and synthesis (Braine & Parnell 2011:905; Cameron et al 2011:1377; Gazza & Hunker 2014:1128). Academic support also entails students' contact and support from their educators towards their academic success and completion of their course of study (Gazza & Hunker 2014:1127; Tladi 2013:70). Pastoral support entails listening and providing advice on personal matters, and helping identify solutions to various problem. It also involves being a critical friend, facilitating and nurturing personal growth, and providing access to support agencies or referring the student to the support agencies (Braine & Parnell 2011:905; Cahill, Bowyer & Murray 2014:399).

Social support is a multidimensional construct comprising psychological and material resources available to part-time BScN students through their interpersonal relationships. Social support enhances a student's ability to cope with the stress of life and studies. Therefore, social support plays a role in enhancing part-time students' academic success (Glozah & Pevalin 2014:452). Social support is largely provided by family, friends and peers (Cameron et al 2011:1378). However, students' interactions with peers and their educators at institutions of higher education, provide some form of social support in an institution of learning (Mattanah et al 2012:23). Family has been cited as an important

unit in enabling part-time BScN students to complete their studies. Spouses, parents and siblings enable nursing students to remain in their programme of study by providing practical support with household chores and childcare and encouragement (Alshebou 2019:34; Cameron et al 2011:1378; Lin 2016:120). This decreases the demands on the nurse student, hence allowing the student to concentrate on their studies. Mature students more frequently seek support from peers, parents and spouses or significant others, than their educators (Reeve, Shumaker, Yearwood, Crowell & Riley 2013:422).

Support for part-time BScN students' needs to also address the financial demands that these students experience. These financial demands occur as a result of students' academic costs, literacy costs, travel costs and living costs (Milney et al 2016:391). In Kenya, some part-time students do not utilise university accommodation. Those travelling for more than 50 kilometres to the university will also have to incur accommodation costs during their class days. Financial hardship has a significant impact on students' ability to continue in their programme of study. Most researchers recommend support in form of scholarships (Milney et al 2016:391). The financial demands of part-time BScN students are compounded by the fact that most of these students are parents with children. Hence, they experience anxiety due to financial commitments and their desire to complete their study programme (Frith & Wilson 2014:7).

Various students' support needs have been identified in the literature. They include academic support, social support, financial support, pastoral support and cultural support. Students in higher education are different, and consequently, their support needs are different. This study seeks to explore the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

1.3   RESEARCH PROBLEM

Studies have shown that mature and part-time students in universities have higher attrition than younger traditional students (Frith & Wilson 2014:2; O'Brien, Keogh & Neenan 2009:635; Stevenson & Clegg 2013:18). This has been attributed to conflicting life commitments and roles, such as childcare and full-time employment (Frith & Wilson 2014:2). Part-time students do not have university accommodation; hence they spend limited time on campus. Therefore, they are less likely to access extra support and personal development opportunities available at university (Gilardi & Guglielmetti

2011:44; Frith & Wilson 2014:8). Consequently, they are more at risk of attrition due to the limited support that they receive from their universities. In recent years, mature students have been joining universities to advance their education or to start a new career path (Lee 2017:2; Van Rhijn, Lero, Dawczyk, Guzman, Pericak, Fritz, Close & Osborne 2015:4). Nursing education institutions worldwide have seen an increase in enrolment of mature and part-time students as part of the widening access programme or for the advancement of their careers (O'Brien et al 2009:636). Unfortunately, corresponding resources and support structures in universities have not accompanied this widening of access and mature students are expected to fit into structures that already exist, structures that were formulated with eighteen-year-olds in mind (O'Brien et al 2009:635). Studies have shown that part-time students have lower overall satisfaction with their academic experience (Moro-Egido & Panades 2010:365) and have higher chances of dropping out of the university at the end of the first year (Gilardi & Guglielmetti 2011:45; Tait 2014:11).

Attrition in nurse education is an issue of concern in many parts of the developed world (Pryjmachuk, Easton & Littlewood 2009:149). Attrition of nursing students in the UK has been reported to vary from 20% to 28.9% (Banks, Kane, Rae & Atkinson 2012:309). Similar trends have been observed in Australia where attrition of nursing students has been reported to be anywhere between 10% to 40% (Middleton, Fernandez, Cutler, Jans, Antoniou, Trostian & Riley 2021:2). In the USA, attrition of nursing students is close to 50% (Benington, Hussey & Long 2020:186; Kubec 2017:61;). Some South African universities have reported an attrition rate of 54% in a 4-year Bachelor of Nursing programme (Roos, Fichardt, MacKenzie & Raubenheimer 2016:2). Some studies have indicated an attrition rate of 10-40% among pre-registration nursing students in African countries (Appiagyei, Kiriinya, Gross, Wambua, Oywer, Kamenju, Higgins, Riley & Rogers 2014:3; Mthimunye & Daniels 2020:201). There are minimal studies describing attrition among mature nursing students in African countries.

The BScN programme in Kenya was initially offered as a full-time four-year programme, admitting both mature students and younger students. Part-time BScN was introduced in the year 2002 to scale up the number of nurses holding a bachelor's degree. Kenyan universities still use systems that were designed for full-time BScN programmes to teach part-time BScN programmes. To meet the needs of part-time BScN students, there is a need to understand their support needs within the university system. There is no data

available on the attrition of part-time BScN students in general. Also, minimal literature exists on the needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya. Therefore, understanding the available support, enablers and barriers is important as it will guide the development of guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, which is currently lacking.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities for the successful completion of their studies?

1.4.1 Research purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support strategies.

1.4.2 Research objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- Explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students.
- Describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.
- Develop and validate guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Since starting the part-time BScN programme in Kenya, research on the needs and perceived support of students, the challenges they face and opportunities that exist for improvement have not been explored in Kenya. Of concern, this type of research is equally scant in sub-Saharan Africa. To achieve Universal Health Care, Kenya and other low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) must increase their health workers and ensure that they are adequately trained. Yet, there is mounting evidence from the limited

research that exists, including grey literature that the majority of nurses, especially those who are mature, often drop out of universities. While the main cause of this has not been explored scientifically in Kenya and SSA, literature from high-income countries attests that lack of support at the individual and institutional levels could be a factor (Glozah & Pevalin 2014:451; Mattanah et al 2012:33; Tait 2014:11; Tladi 2013:69). In an attempt to begin to close this massive gap that has persisted for decades, this research is the first of its kind in Kenya that will explore this topic qualitatively.

The results of the study identified gaps as it pertains to the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. Findings from this research provide information that can be useful to academics, policymakers and future students. The findings also provide a platform for the development of tools that can inform larger national studies.

1.6   DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

This section describes the definition of key terms used in the study. Dictionary definitions are provided, and contextual definitions are provided as well.

1.6.1 Student support

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2017a, sv "student") defines a student as a person engaged in or dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in a particular subject area. It also defines support as an act of helping a person to hold firm or provide assistance or backing. From these definitions, student support can be defined as an act of helping or provision of assistance or backing to a person engaged in or dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2017b, sv "student support"). The help or assistance required by the students varies from one student to another and depends on an individual student's needs.

There is no consistent definition of student support in the literature, and definitions are based on the specific focus of support. Tladi (2013:69) classified student support into three interrelated and interdependent functional areas; cognitive, systemic and effective. Cameron et al (2011:1378) state that students support is frequently cited as an important element in student retention, but what is meant by support is rarely explicit. Similarly, Mattanah et al (2012:34) while studying the impact of a social support intervention on

college students' academic performance, failed to define social support. In this study, student support refers to any assistance offered to part-time BScN students by their educators, family members, spouses, employers, colleagues and friends, to help them complete their studies.

1.6.2 Part-time BScN student

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2017a, sv "student") defines a student as a person engaged in or dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in a particular subject area. It also defines a part-time student means a person engaged in or dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge for part of the time or for less than the customary time (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2017c, sv "part-time student"). A bachelor's degree is the degree awarded on successful completion of a (university) undergraduate course (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2017d, sv "bachelor's degree").

In this study, the part-time BScN programme is a bachelor's programme that admits nurses who hold a diploma in nursing or midwifery and have at least two years of work experience in a clinical setting. The mode of delivery is either by students attending classes two days a week or three hours in the evenings on weekdays or all day on weekends. Therefore, a part-time BScN student refers to a working nurse undertaking a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree for two and a half years and on a part-time basis; while attending classes on two days a week or three hours in the evenings on weekdays or all day on weekends.

1.6.3 Guidelines

The term 'guidelines' refer to information intended to advise people on how something should be done or what something should be (*Cambridge Dictionary* 2017a, sv "guidelines"). Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) (2017, sv "guidelines") defines guidelines as systematically developed statements to assist practitioner and client decisions about appropriate care, and their goal is to improve the quality of care. In this study, guidelines refer to systematically developed statements regarding support of part-time BScN students, that were derived from this study. When implemented, these guidelines will enhance the support provided to part-time BScN students.

1.6.4 Enabler and disabler

*Cambridge Diction*ary (2017b, sv "enabler") defines an enabler as something or someone that makes it possible for a particular thing to happen or be done. Similarly, it defines a disabler as to cause someone to have an illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for them to do the things that other people do (*Cambridge Dictionary* 2017c, sv "disabler"). In this study, enablers refer to systems, skills, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to supporting part-time BScN students, while disablers refer to systems, skills, attitudes and behaviour that make the learning of part-time BScN students difficult.

1.6.5 Needs

Cambridge Dictionary (2017d, sv "needs") defines needs as things that one must have for a satisfactory life. In this study, needs refer to what part-time BScN students require from their universities, educators, employers, family members, spouses, colleagues and friends to enhance their academic achievement. Academic achievement refers to one's ability to complete the part-time BScN programme within the two-and-a-half-year period.

1.7 FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The foundation of the study will be discussed in terms of philosophical paradigm and theoretical framework.

1.7.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a framework containing assumptions, ways of thinking and methodology that are commonly accepted by members of the scientific community (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 2017:96). Kafle (2011:193) defines paradigm as logically related assumptions or concepts that guide research. He further states that paradigm consists of metaphysics, methodology, quality and ethics (Kafle 2011:193). There are two paradigms in research; the positivist (quantitative) paradigm and the naturalistic (qualitative) paradigm (Polit & Beck 2021:14). A naturalistic paradigm was used for the study. This paradigm assumes that there are multiple realities, and reality is subjective to the person experiencing it and it is constructed by individuals. Therefore, the researcher needs to interact with those being researched and data emerges from the interaction (Polit & Beck 2021:15).

The naturalistic paradigm assumes that knowledge is relative, unique, contextual and inductive (Taylor, Richardson-Tench, Kermode & Roberts 2014:322). There are multiple approaches to qualitative research designs. They include ethnography, phenomenology, ethology, and grounded theory, among others (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 2017:112; Polit & Beck 2021:263). Phenomenology is the study of lived experiences. Martin Heidegger defined lived phenomenology as the study of what it is like as we find ourselves being in relation with others (Kafle 2011:182; Vagle 2014:20). Phenomenologists assume that critical truths about reality are grounded in people's lived experiences. The phenomenological approach is most appropriate when the phenomenon is poorly defined (Polit & Beck 2021:267; Vagle 2014:22). This makes the phenomenological approach appropriate for this study since the concept of support among part-time BScN students has been poorly defined in the literature. The phenomenological method is the process of learning and constructing the meaning of human experience through intensive dialogue with the persons who are living the experience (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 2017:112). To understand the support needs of part-time BScN students (human experience), the researcher conducted focus group discussions (intensive dialogue) with the part-time BScN students in Kenya (persons who are living the experience).

There are two distinct methods in phenomenology; descriptive phenomenology and interpretive phenomenology (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014:7; Polit & Beck 2021:268). Descriptive phenomenology requires the researcher to carefully describe the experiences of the participants, just as the participants see them. Interpretive phenomenology, on other hand, requires interpreting and understanding the lived experience, rather than just describing it (Polit & Beck 2021:268; VanScoy & Evenstad 2015:340). The goal of interpretive phenomenology is to enter another person's world and discover the wisdom and understanding found in their world (Polit & Beck 2021:268). The study utilised interpretive phenomenology to understand what constitutes support to part-time BScN students. The researcher entered into the world of part-time BScN students through focus group discussions and interviews. The data generated enabled the discovery of an understanding of support from their perspective. This discovery guided the development of guidelines to enhance support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. In contrast, descriptive phenomenology requires the researcher to describe what part-time BScN students in Kenya consider to be support, and the factors that enable or disable support accorded to them (Polit & Beck 2021:268; VanScoy & Evenstad 2015:340).

1.7.2 Philosophical assumptions of the study

Assumptions are principles that are accepted as being true based on logic or reason (Polit & Beck 2018:547). Philosophical assumptions respond to the metaphysics of research, which constitutes ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodological assumptions (Kafle 2011:193; Polit & Beck 2018:15). Epistemology refers to the generation of knowledge, and how it is judged to be true (Taylor et al 2014:320). In other words, the process through which a researcher can claim to have generated new knowledge (Kafle 2011:194), or the relationship between the researcher and participants (Polit & Beck 2018:15). Ontology is concerned with reality; the meaning of life (Kafle 2011:193; Taylor et al 2014:320). Axiology refers to the involvement of the researcher's values and opinions in the process of generating knowledge (Kafle 2011:194). These assumptions will guide the study as follows:

1.7.2.1 Ontology

The researcher assumed that there are multiple realities regarding the nature of support required by part-time BScN students. Each student has unique needs and hence the kind of support they need is different from another student. Therefore, the researcher needed to uncover these multiple realities of support to part-time BScN students by exploring the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students. The study also sought to describe enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.

1.7.2.2 Epistemology

The study assumed that the researcher is part of the creation of new knowledge through the data collection process and data analysis. The researcher's interaction with the part-time BScN students during focus group discussions and with their educators through individual interviews generated new knowledge on the support of part-time BScN students in Kenya.

1.7.2.3   Axiology

The study assumed that the previous experience of the researcher would influence the findings. The researcher is an educator of part-time BScN students at a Kenyan university. Therefore, her previous experience and interactions with part-time BScN students may influence her perspective on the support needs of part-time BScN students. To prevent this kind of influence, the researcher engaged a second researcher while conducting focus group discussions with her part-time BScN students. A second researcher was also engaged when the researcher conducted individual interviews with her colleagues. Furthermore, data were collected from four different universities and data triangulation will be done to ensure the final findings were grounded in data.

1.7.2.4   Methodological assumptions

Qualitative methodology seeks to develop new knowledge by in-depth questioning of persons living the phenomenon of interest (Polit & Beck 2018:321). The researcher assumed that, to understand support needs of part-time BScN students, she needed to question the part-time BScN students themselves. Educators of part-time BScN students were also questioned in order to generate rich data that will contribute to developing new knowledge.

1.7.3   Theoretical foundation

The theoretical grounding for this study is based on the What Works? Model of building student belonging, engagement, retention and success in higher education. This is a model that was developed in the UK as a result of 'The What Works? Student Retention and Success programme (What Works?)' (Thomas 2012:17). According to the model, for students in higher education to succeed, they need to be engaged and feel that they belong. Building student belonging and engagement requires students to be engaged in the academic sphere; social sphere and service sphere (Thomas 2012:17). Consequently, the students need to develop the capacity to engage, and the staff also need to develop their capacity to engage the students, and the institution needs to develop a culture that promotes students' engagement (Thomas 2012:17).

This model suggests that student engagement and belonging are developed through a combination of academic, social and service provision and can be cultivated on three levels (Thomas & Hansen 2014:3). Student support can also be provided through these

three levels; academic support, social support, financial support, and peer support (Tait 2014:8). Initiatives in student engagement and belonging can focus on either of these aspects; building student capacity to succeed, building staff capacity to support success or strengthening institutional management and co-ordination of initiatives (Thomas & Hansen 2014:3). Within each of these three levels, the initiative might be further focused on one of the three spheres of influence, academic, professional services, or social (Thomas & Hansen 2014:3). This model links ingot student support in that, each level of student engagement provides an opportunity to implement activities that will support part-time students leaning. For instance, at an academic level, academic support can be instituted to ensure the successful completion of part-time students in higher education.

1.8   OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

This section describes the research design and the research process that were utilised in this study. The figure below summarises the research process of the study.
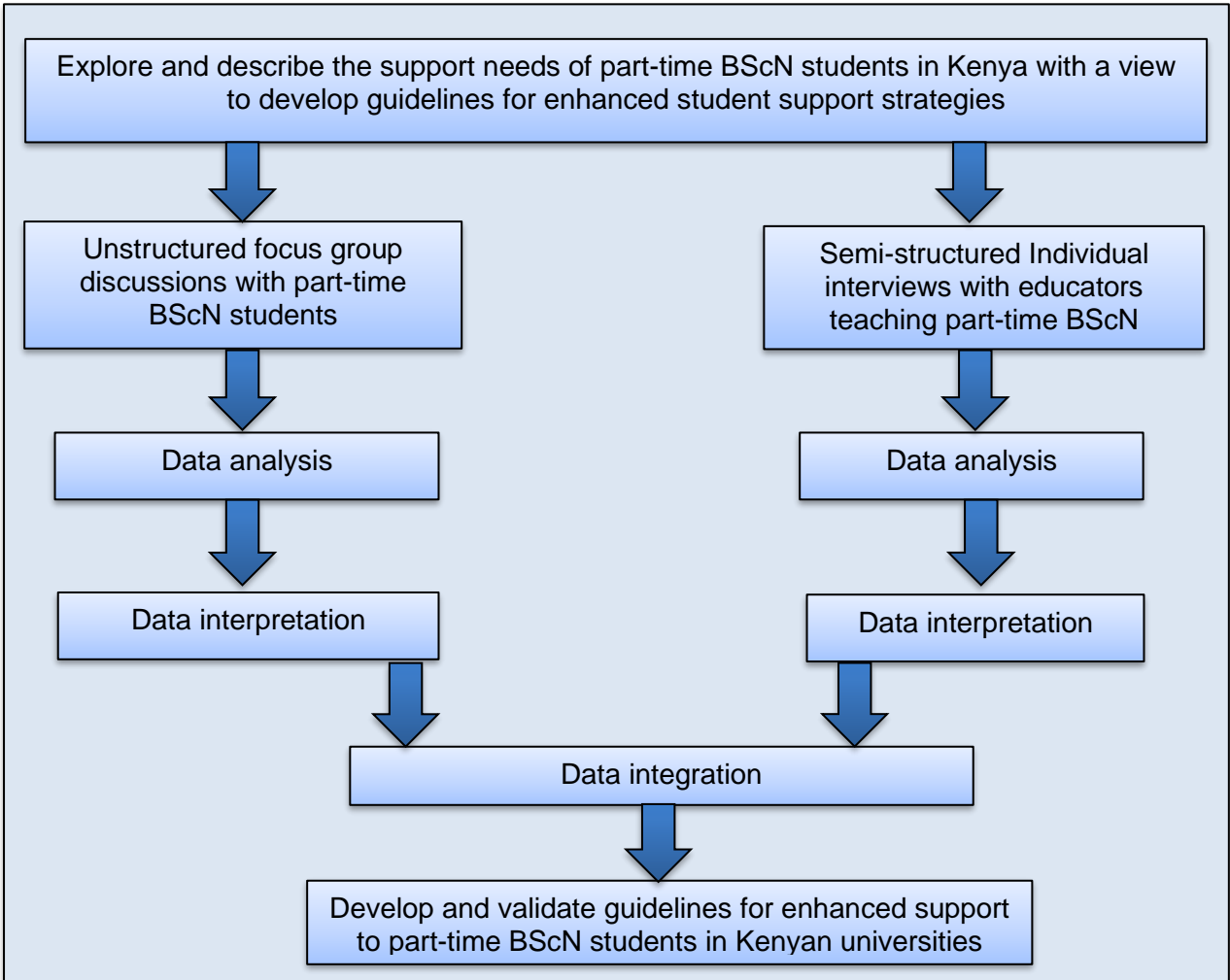
Figure 1.1: Summary of the research process

1.8.1 Design

A qualitative descriptive phenomenology design was used in this study, where data collection and data analysis occurred concurrently (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 2017:101). The study sought to explore and describe the perceived support needed by part-time BScN students in Kenya, describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya, and develop guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. Since the study was investigating subjective experiences; a qualitative approach was best suited for this study.

1.8.2 Study setting, study population and sampling methods

The study setting was four universities in Kenya that offer part-time BScN programmes: two public universities and two private universities. The public universities are the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University, while the private universities are Aga Khan University and Kenya Methodist University. The study population was part-time BScN students and their educators. The four universities have a target population of 400 part-time BScN students and 40 part-time BScN educators.

Purposeful sampling was used to sample part-time BScN students and their educators. Study information leaflets were circulated to part-time BScN students and their educators through their respective nursing departments in their universities. The researcher also visited the universities on various days and attended classes to recruit students who are willing to participate in the study. A total of 100 part-time BScN students and ten BScN educators participated in the study.

1.8.3 Data collection methods and procedures

Data collection took place in two phases. Phase one involved unstructured focus group discussions with part-time BScN students in all four universities (refer to Figure 1.1). The second phase of the study involved semi-structured individual interviews with BScN educators from the four universities. The focus group discussions were audio-taped for accuracy and validity and then transcribed for analysis purposes. The discussions were carried out in the students' natural settings in their respective universities. Initial data

coding was done to provide the researcher with concepts that needed to be probed in subsequent discussions.

Semi-structured interviews with part-time BScN educators were conducted later using an interview guide that was formulated using key findings from the focus group discussions. The interviews were conducted in the respective educator's office, and they were also audio-recorded. Individual interviews continued until data saturation was reached. All interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in English.

1.8.4 Rigour of the study

The rigour of the study was achieved through the criterion of dependability, confirmability, credibility, transferability and authenticity. (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2018:146). To ensure rigour through all stages of the research process, dependability, credibility, and confirmability were applied (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). To achieve dependability, an audit trail was kept (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Credibility was maintained by triangulation, where two data collection methods were used. All discussions and interviews were audio-recorded, and field notes were used to provide a deeper interpretation of the interviews by recording the participants' non-verbal behaviour (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). To maintain confirmability, the researcher used participant excerpts to demonstrate that the findings are derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121).

1.8.5 Data analysis

Focus group discussions and individual interviews were transcribed verbatim. The verbatim transcripts were counter-checked with the audio recordings to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the data. Based on the two sets of data a process of inductive and deductive reasoning will be used to develop the guidelines (see Figure 1.1). The guidelines were reviewed by experts in the fields of nursing and nursing education and recommendations for implementing the guidelines were made.

1.8.6   Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of South Africa, the Department of Health Studies' Research Ethics Committee (Annexure A). Permission to conduct research was requested and obtained from the Aga Khan University Ethics Committee (Annexures B1 and B2). Authorisation to undertake research was granted from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation in Kenya (Annexure C). Ethical approval was also requested and obtained from Ethics Committees of the following universities: the University of Nairobi, Kenya Methodist University, and Kenyatta University, where data will be collected (Annexures E1, E2, F1, F2, G1 and G2).

The following rights of participants were observed; right to self-determination, right to privacy, right to anonymity and confidentiality, and right to protection from discomfort and harm (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 2017:258). The right to self-determination was protected by allowing the participants to willingly decide whether to participate in the study or not. The participants voluntarily signed an informed consent form and were reminded that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any given time.

The right to privacy was protected by ensuring that the participants' names were not recorded during the focus group discussions and individual interviews. They were assured that the consent forms were to be stored under lock and key and that their identity was not revealed in the report and subsequent publications. The participants' responses were given a pseudonym and the pseudonyms were used in the report, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The right to confidentiality was protected by ensuring that the participants' responses were reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, local research mentor (who was a co-coder of the data), and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. The anonymous data will be used only for study dissemination such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. Individual participants will not be identifiable in such reports.

The right to protection from discomfort and harm was observed by allowing the participants to withdraw from the study at any time. Counsellors were available in the

respective universities to provide counselling to the participants during the study. However, no participants required counselling nor reported any emotional distress.

1.9   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study was Kenyan public and private universities that offer part-time BScN programmes. This means that the findings of this study can only be generalised to part-time BScN students and universities that offer part-time BScN programmes in Kenya.

1.10   STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The structure of the dissertation is based on chapters, with Chapter 1 being the orientation to the study; Chapter 2 being the theoretical foundation of the study; Chapter 3 being the research design and research methodology; Chapter 4 being data analysis, presentation and description of focus group discussions research findings; Chapter 5 being data analysis, presentation and description of individual interviews research findings; Chapter 6 being data integration and literature control; Chapter 7 being a discussion on the development and validation of guidelines for enhanced part-time BSCN student support in Kenyan universities; Chapter 8 being conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study.

1.11   SUMMARY

This chapter provides an introduction to the study, background information regarding the study, study aim and objectives, definition of key terms, the purpose of the study, summary of research design, sampling technique, data collection methods and procedures, ethical considerations, and scope of the study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Various theories have been used to examine student academic success, theories of student development, theories of student engagement and theories of student retention. The purpose of theory in any scientific field is to provide a framework within which to explain connections among the phenomena under study. Theories that were closely related to this study have been identified as the 'What Works?' Model of student retention and success; Bean's causal model of student attrition; and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams & Bagley 2014:181; Strayhorn 2010:178; Thomas & Hansen 2014:2). The 'What Works?' model was utilised as the theoretical framework for this study since it relates to a system, cognitive and emotional aspects of student support. The model was used to guide data collection, guide data analysis and structure the presentation of the findings of the study. This chapter discusses the theoretical foundation of the study.

2.2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support strategies. The ultimate goal of student support is to ensure students' academic success (Glozah & Pevalin 2014:451; Mattanah et al 2012:23; Tladi 2013:69). Various forms of student support have been identified in the literature; academic support, social support, tutorial support, financial support, educator support, guidance and counselling services (Bettinger, Boatman & Long 2013:103; Frith & Wilson 2014:2; Mattanah et al 2012:23; Tladi 2013:69). Several theories have been used to study student experiences in higher education, including the 'What Works?' Model of student retention and success (Thomas & Hansen 2014:2; Thomas, Hill, O'Mahony, & Yorke 2017:12), Bean's causal model of student attrition (Bean & Metzner 1985:491) and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (Harris et al 2014:182).

Bean's causal model of student attrition examines how students' background variables influence indicators of students' interaction with the organisation, which in turn determines attrition. According to the model, indicators of student interaction with the institution of learning include social variables, academic variables and organisational variables. These indicators influence a student's commitment to the institution and consequently determine attrition (Bean 1982:300; Bean & Metzner 1985:492). The model is suited for a quantitative study since it is looking for a cause-effect relationship. This makes it unsuitable for this study, which is qualitative and exploratory in nature.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model looks at the development or existence of an individual within the context of the systems of relationship that make up the individual's environment (Hertler, Figueredo, Peñaherrera-Aguirre, Fernandes & Woodley of Menie 2018:331). It proposes that multiple environments and people within those environments influence human development. These environments are named microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Harris et al 2014:182; Stanger 2011:169; Strayhorn 2010:179). This model is unsuitable for the study as it explores certain aspects of a student's life that are beyond the control of an academic institution. For example, the microsystem environment includes families, neighbourhoods, churches, etc., which are beyond the control of an academic institution.

The 'What Works?' model puts student engagement and belonging at the heart of improving student retention and success. The model proposes that student engagement and belonging are achieved through the effort of three players within an institution of higher education: student, staff and institution. It identifies three spheres that exist in an institution of higher learning; the academic sphere, the social sphere and the service sphere (Thomas 2012:17; Thomas et al 2017:13). The model states that for the students to achieve engagement and belonging, the students themselves need to build the capacity to engage with the institution; the staff need to build the capacity to engage with the students, and the institution needs to manage and coordinate the engagement process. The model advocates for institutions of higher learning to develop student support strategies that in turn enhance student engagement within the three spheres of higher education institutions (Thomas 2012:17; Thomas & Hansen 2014:3, Thomas et al 2017:13). This model was utilised for the study as it addresses student support from an academic institution perspective.

2.3   THE WHAT WORKS? MODEL OF STUDENT SUPPORT

The What Works? Model of student retention and success (Thomas 2012:16) was chosen as the theoretical framework of the study. The model is summarised in Figure 2.1 below.
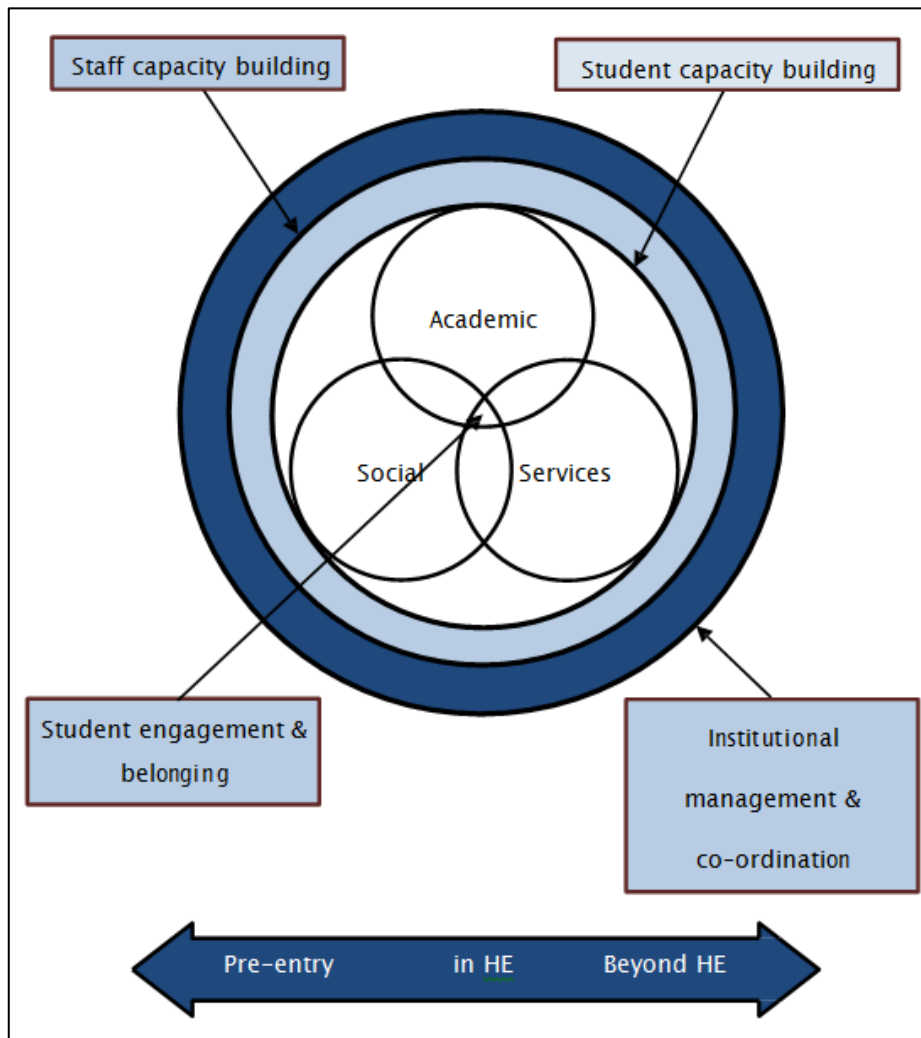
Figure 2.1: What Works? Model of student retention and success
(Thomas & Hansen 2014:3)

This model emphasises early engagement, having an explicit academic purpose, developing the student capacity to engage, and developing staff capacity to support students (Thomas 2012:16; Thomas & Hansen 2014:3). The model is conceptualised as a series of three concentric circles that encompasses three interconnected circles. The three interconnected circles inside the concentric circles represent the various spheres of an institution of higher learning: the academic sphere, social sphere and professional

services sphere. The area where the three interconnecting circles overlap represents student engagement and belonging (Thomas 2012:16; Thomas & Hansen 2014:3).

The academic sphere involves activities related to learning and teaching. These activities include staff/student relationships, curriculum contents and pedagogy, assessment and feedback, personal tutoring, peer relations and cohort identification, and a sense of belonging to a particular place within the university (Thomas 2012:31-47; Thomas et al 2017:12-13).

The social sphere involves social integration that allows students to make friends and develop cohort identity and belonging. This is achieved through; club societies and social events, peer mentoring, school, department or programme social integration, and university accommodation (Thomas 2012:48-55, Thomas et al 2017).

The services sphere involves support and professional services that cover a wide range of academic and pastoral services provided by institutions to support students to succeed. These services include pre-entry information, advice and guidance, library and learning centres, financial advice, counsellors, careers information and guidance, chaplains, disability services, writing skills, and mathematics centres (Thomas 2012:60; Thomas et al 2017:12-13).

The innermost concentric circle surrounding the interconnected circles, represent a student's capacity to engage in a higher education institution. The middle concentric circle represents the staff's capacity to engage with the students. The outer concentric circle represents the institution's commitment to nurturing a culture of belonging and creating the necessary infrastructure to promote student engagement, retention and success (Thomas 2012:16; Thomas & Hansen 2014:3). The bidirectional arrow below the circles indicates that engagement should take place before the student joins the institution of higher learning, while the student is in the institution of higher learning, and after the student leaves the institution (Thomas 2012:16; Thomas & Hansen 2014:3).

Developing students' capacity for engaging involves; making explicit the value of active participation and interaction with peers and staff, developing skills to participate, and mainstreaming opportunities for engagement in the academic sphere (Thomas 2012:64; Thomas et al 2017:12-13). Developing staff capacity to engage with students requires

staff recognition, staff support and development, and staff reward to encourage and enable them to engage students and nurture their sense of belonging (Thomas 2012:65; Thomas et al 2017:12-13). Institutional and management coordination of engagement involves; the commitment of the institutional leadership to a culture of belonging, putting in place systems to monitor student behaviour, identify students at risk of withdrawing, and creating a partnership between staff and students to understand the students' experiences of belonging, retention and success (Thomas 2012:69; Thomas et al 2017:12-13).

2.4   APPLICATION OF THE MODEL

The objectives of the study were to (i) explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students; (ii) describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya; and (iii) develop guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

To achieve these objectives, the What Works? Model of student retention and success was found suitable for this study. The model's three spheres of the academic institution were used as a basis for exploring support needed by part-time BScN students. The study objectives focused on exploring the kind of support that part-time BScN students need, to engage adequately in the academic sphere, social sphere and services sphere within their universities. This links well with the student support approach of system support, cognitive support and emotional support (Tait 2014:8).

The model's concepts of students' capacity to engage, staff's capacity to engage with the students, and the institution's culture of engagement, were utilised to determine enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. Enablers and barriers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students were explored from three perspectives: from students' perspectives, from educators' perspectives, and from the university system's perspective.

The academic sphere component was used to explore the support needed by part-time BScN students in Kenya, and to engage and succeed in the academic sphere of their university education. In this sphere, the study explored support provided to part-time BScN students by:

- educators
- mentorship by faculty and staff, learning opportunities
- learning and teaching methods
- assessment and feedback
- personal tutoring
- developing peer relations and cohort identification
- developing a sense of belonging in the university

The social sphere component was used to explore the support needed by part-time BScN students in Kenya, to engage in and succeed in the social sphere of their university education. In this sphere, the study explored support concerning the provision of induction activities, collaborative learning and teaching activities, field trips, peer mentoring programmes, and staff-organised social events. Social support was also explored from students' social networks.

The services sphere component was used to explore the support needed by part-time BScN students in Kenya, to engage in and succeed in the work and service to the community as registered nurses. In this sphere, the study explored support needed by part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities from the various professional bodies, their employers and the community. The study explored support needed by part-time BScN students from; library and learning centres, pre-entry information, advice and guidance, financial advice, counsellors, career information and guidance, chaplains, disability services and writing skills.

The student's capacity to engage was used to determine the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. Using this concept, the study explored students' enablers and barriers to; active participation, interaction with peers and university staff, and developing skills to participate.

Staff capacity to engage concept was used to determine educators' enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. Using this component, the study explored enablers and barriers to supporting part-time BScN students experienced by educators.

Institutional and management coordination of engagement and support was used to determine institutional enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. Using this component, the study explored enablers and barriers that educators encounter from their institutions while supporting part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The application of the model is summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Application of What Works? Model of student support in the study

What works? Model concepts	Objective being covered	Utilisation in the study
Academic sphere support involves activities related to learning and teaching.	To explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students.	The study explored support provided by the faculty and university staff in the area of: • Knowing faculty • Learning opportunities • Learning and teaching methods • Assessment and feedback • Personal tutoring • Peer relations and cohort identification • Sense of belonging
Social sphere support involves social integration that allows students to make friends and develop cohort identity and belonging Induction activities.	To explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students.	The study explored support concerning the provision of: • Induction activities • Collaborative learning and teaching activities • Field trips • Peer mentoring programmes • Staff organised social events
Services sphere support involves support and professional services Library and learning centres.	To explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students.	The study explored support needed from the providers of the following professional services provided by the institution: • Library and learning centres • Advice and guidance • Financial advice • Counsellors • Career information and guidance • Chaplains • Disability services • Writing skills
Developing student capacity to engage.	To describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.	The study explored enablers and barriers to: • Active participation • Interaction with peers and staff • Developing skills to participate

What works? Model concepts	Objective being covered	Utilisation in the study
Developing staff capacity to support students.	To determine the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.	From the educators, the study explored educators' ability to support part-time BScN students, which contributed to enablers and barriers to supporting part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.
Institutional and management coordination of engagement and support.	To determine the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.	The study explored enablers and barriers that educators encounter at their institutions while supporting part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

2.5   SUMMARY

Student support is essential for student academic success in higher education. Various theories and models have been used to explore students' success in higher education. The study has utilised the 'What Works?' Model of student retention and success to guide the exploration of part-time BScN students' support needs from their educators and their universities. This chapter provided a discussion of the model and how it was applied to the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter entails a description of the research method that was used in the empirical phase of this study. Research method refers to the methodological processes that were used to answer the research question, namely: What are the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities for the successful completion of their studies? Thus, this chapter presents the research design, study population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods and the processes of data analysis and synthesis of new knowledge that were used. The ethical measures applied, and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness (dependability, confirmability, credibility, transferability and authenticity) are also detailed in this chapter. The What Works? conceptual framework guided the data collection, analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support strategies. The specific objectives were to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students; to describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya, and to develop and validate guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the underlying scheme that governed the way the study was conducted. This includes the research paradigm and philosophical underpinnings of the study.

3.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a framework containing assumptions, ways of thinking and methodology that are commonly accepted by members of the scientific community (LoBiondo-Wood &

Haber 2017:96). Kafle (2011:193) defines paradigm as logically related assumptions or concepts that guide research. He further states that a paradigm consists of metaphysics, methodology, quality and ethics (Kafle 2011:193). There are two paradigms in research; the positivist (quantitative) paradigm and the naturalistic (qualitative) paradigm (Polit & Beck 2021:14). A naturalistic paradigm was used for the study, as it aligned with the aim of the study. This paradigm assumes that knowledge is relative, unique, contextual and inductive (Taylor et al 2014:322). In line with the naturalistic paradigm, the study assumed that support for part-time BScN students is individually constructed and understood differently from one part-time BScN student to another. Therefore, the researcher interviewed different groups of part-time BScN students to understand what they perceived to constitute support.

There are multiple approaches to qualitative research designs. They include the narrative approach, phenomenological approach, grounded theory approach, ethnographic approach and case study approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018:67). A narrative approach seeks to tell stories of individual experiences (Reissman 2008:13). Phenomenological approach seeks to describe the essence of a lived experience. The grounded theory approach seeks to ground a theory in the views of participants. The ethnographic approach seeks to describe and interpret shared patterns of culture. The case study approach seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of a case or cases (Creswell & Poth 2018:67). A phenomenological approach was chosen for the study since the study sought to understand what constitutes support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. By interviewing part-time BScN students (who were living the experience), the study sought to understand and describe the support constructed by the study participants.

3.2.2 Phenomenology

The phenomenology approach was appropriate for the study since the study was concerned with human existence (experiences of part-time BScN students) and the meanings (support) people ascribe to their own existence (Vagle 2014:73). Phenomenology allows a researcher to explore the lived experiences of any person, to explain the nature of their being (Vagle 2014:73). Martin Heidegger defined lived phenomenology as the study of what it is like as we find ourselves being in relation with others (Kafle 2011:182; Vagle 2014:20;). Therefore, phenomenological studies focus on how people perceive events and things, rather than describing phenomena according to

a predetermined criterion (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014:8). Phenomenologists assume that critical truths about reality are grounded in people's lived experiences. The need to understand phenomena of study (support to part-time BScN students), from those living the experience of being a part-time BScN student, qualified the use of phenomenology.

The phenomenological approach is most appropriate when the phenomenon is poorly defined (Polit & Beck 2021:267; Vagle 2014:22). The study aimed at understanding the phenomena of study (support to part-time BScN students), from those living the experience of being a part-time BScN student. The design was appropriate for this study since the study sought to understand the meaning of support (lived experience) from their perspective (part-time BScN students).

There are two distinct methods in phenomenology; descriptive phenomenology and interpretive phenomenology (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014:7; Polit & Beck 2021:268; Reiners 2012:2). Descriptive phenomenology requires the researcher to carefully describe the experiences of the participants, just as the participants see them. For the description to be accurate, descriptive phenomenology requires the researcher to set aside their preconceived ideas (bracketing). Interpretive phenomenology, on the other hand, requires interpreting and understanding the lived experience, rather than just describing it (Polit & Beck 2018:268; Reiners 2012:2; VanScoy & Evenstad 2015:340). The study utilised interpretive phenomenology to develop guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenya. Data collected from part-time BScN students and nurse educators was interpreted to develop guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

3.2.3 Philosophical underpinning of the study

The philosophical underpinnings of the study include ontological assumptions, epistemological assumptions, axiological assumptions, and methodological assumptions.

3.2.3.1 Ontological assumptions

Ontological issues relate to belief about the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell & Poth 2018:21; Denzin & Lincoln 2018:114). The researcher assumed that there are different understandings and interpretations of support needs of part-time BScN students in line with the constructivism paradigm on ontology (Denzin & Lincoln 2018:114). The researcher also assumed that each part-time BScN student has unique needs and hence the kind of support they need will be different from another student. Therefore, the researcher needed to understand support needs from the perspective of part-time BScN students, by holding focus group discussions with part-time BScN students to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students.

3.2.3.2 Epistemological assumptions

Epistemological assumptions relate to the process of thinking and the relationship between what a researcher knows and what they see (Denzin & Lincoln 2018:115). The philosophical belief is that people construct their own understanding of reality and that people construct meaning based on their interaction with the environment (Denzin & Lincoln 2018:115).

The study assumed that to answer the research question, the researcher needed to interact with the study participants. The interaction occurred through the data collection process and data analysis. The researcher held focus group discussions with part-time BScN students in four Kenyan universities and interviewed educators teaching part-time BScN students in Kenya. The data generated were analysed to provide themes that constitute support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. The themes identified were supported by participants' excerpts throughout the report.

3.2.3.3 Axiological assumptions

Axiological assumptions relate to the values that qualitative researchers bring to a study, and the need to make them known (Creswell & Poth 2018:21). The researcher is an educator of part-time BScN students in a Kenyan university. The researcher acknowledged that her previous experiences and interactions with part-time BScN

students may influence her perspective on the support needs of part-time BScN students. The researcher engaged a second researcher when collecting data in her university. Since she was known by her part-time BScN students and her colleagues, there was need to have another researcher who was not known by her part-time BScN students and colleagues. Both researchers were involved in data collection at the researcher's university. Furthermore, data were collected from four different universities and not only from the researcher's university. Data coding was done by two researchers (the researcher and her local mentor), and the codes developed were agreed on by both researchers. This was to ensure that the findings were grounded in data and not influenced by the researcher's previous experience.

3.2.3.4 *Methodological assumptions*

The methodology is the process that the researcher uses to seek out new knowledge and answer their research question (Denzin & Lincoln 2018:117). Qualitative research follows an inductive process where the researcher develops new knowledge from data rather than an existing theory (Creswell & Poth 2018:21). The researcher assumed that to understand the nature of support needed by part-time BScN students, the researcher needed to interact with those living the phenomenon of being part-time BScN students and their educators. This interaction was achieved through focus group discussions with part-time BScN students and individual interviews with educators. Focus group discussion started with a grand question, which generated debate among part-time BScN students. Further probing questions were derived from the content of the discussion. Individual interviews involved three open-ended questions that guided the flow of discussion. Probing questions derived from the analysis of focus group discussions were also used to enrich data and add depth (Polit & Beck 2018:321).

Table 3.1: Philosophical assumptions for the study

Assumptions	Definitions	Questions	Implications for the study
Ontological	Belief about the nature of reality.	What is the nature of reality?	• The study sought to answer the question 'What are the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities for successful completion of their studies? • Themes were developed that constitute support needs for part-time BScN students in Kenya.
Epistemological	What counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified?	How were the themes justified?	• Quotes from participants were used to support themes and sub-themes identified.
Axiological	The role of values in research.	How did the researcher bracket?	• The researcher acknowledged her experience as an educator for a part-time BScN programme. • Data coding was done by two researchers and codes were agreed on to ensure that they were grounded in data.
Methodological	The process of research.	What is the process of research?	• An inductive process was used to generate themes and sub-themes.

(Adapted from Creswell & Poth 2018:20)

3.3   RESEARCH SETTING, POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

In this section, the setting of the study and the population used for the study is discussed. The sampling technique, sample size and sampling procedure are also discussed.

3.3.1 Research setting

The study was conducted in two public and two private institutions in Kenya. The four institutions were chosen from three different counties of Kenya: Nairobi County, Kiambu county and Meru County. The universities chosen were those that offer part-time BScN programmes. These universities are Aga Khan University, the University of Nairobi, Kenya Methodist University, and Kenyatta University.

Aga Khan University is a private university operating in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Aga Khan University in Kenya was established in 2002 and is currently operating under a letter of interim authority, as it works towards becoming a fully chartered university. In Kenya, the university is situated in Nairobi and has several schools and institutes including the School of Nursing and Midwifery. School of Nursing and Midwifery currently offer two part-time Bachelor of Science programmes to nurses and midwives. Their programmes are Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Science in Midwifery. The school does not offer full-time BScN nursing programmes (Aga Khan University 2019).

The University of Nairobi is a public university and the oldest university in Kenya. It became an independent university in 1970 after the University of East Africa was split into Makerere University, the University of Dar es Salaam, and the University of Nairobi. It is situated in Nairobi and has 6 colleges and over 100 academic departments. The study was conducted in the School of Nursing Sciences, which is under the College of Health Sciences. Other schools under the College of Health Sciences include the School of Dental Sciences, School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy, and School of Public Health. School of Nursing Sciences offers both graduate and undergraduate programmes, which include bachelor's, master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. It offers full-time and part-time BScN programmes. A Full-time BScN programme is offered to students who join university straight from secondary school. A part-time BScN programme is offered to working nurses who want to upgrade their academic qualifications (University of Nairobi 2019).

Kenya Methodist University (KEMU) is a private university that is supported by the Methodist church. It is located in Meru County, which is a rural setting approximately 230 kilometres from Nairobi. It was established in 1997 and became a fully chartered university in 2016. The university has five schools and departments. The study was conducted in the Department of Nursing Sciences, which is under the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Department of Nursing Sciences offers graduate and undergraduate programmes, which include bachelor's and master's degrees. It offers full-time and part-time BScN programmes. A full-time BScN programme is offered to students who join university straight from secondary school. A part-time BScN programme is

offered to working nurses who want to upgrade their academic qualifications (Kenya Methodist University [KEMU] 2019).

Kenyatta University is a public university, which was established in 1985. It has 19 schools, including the School of Nursing. School of Nursing offers graduate and undergraduate programmes, which include bachelor's and master's degrees. It offers both full-time and part-time BScN programmes (Kenyatta University 2019).

3.3.2 Population and sampling

This section will discuss the study participants and how they were chosen.

3.3.2.1 Population

Qualitative studies seek to discover the meaning of a phenomenon, rather than to generalise findings to a population. Therefore, researchers tend to identify an information-rich population that they use for data collection (Creswell & Poth 2018:21; Polit & Beck 2021:199). Similarly, this study utilised a population that would provide the information needed to answer the research question. The study engaged two different populations. The part-time BScN students, who were the key participants experiencing the phenomenon under study and educators teaching part-time BScN students. Part-time BScN students were utilised to provide data on the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students. Educators were used to providing data on enablers and barriers to supporting part-time BScN students.

Part-time BScN students in Kenya are nurses who are pursuing a bachelor's degree to upgrade their academic qualifications from a diploma to a bachelor's degree. They are registered nurses, having attained a diploma in nursing from a middle-level college in Kenya, and are working in either a hospital setting or a non-hospital setting. For a diploma-holding nurse to upgrade to a bachelor's degree, the Nursing Council of Kenya requires one to have been registered as a nurse and have worked for two years after graduating with a diploma certificate. Therefore, part-time BScN students in Kenya are working nurses and are also considered mature students.

Part-time BScN programme in Kenya is offered for two and a half years, in the form of five semesters. The researcher chose to use part-time BScN students in semester 2 to semester 5, excluding those in semester 1. This was to ensure that the target population understood the semester cycle, which included classes, clinical experiences and examinations. The total number of part-time BScN students who met the inclusion criteria in the four universities was 316. The total number of educators teaching part-time BScN students in the four universities was 51.

3.3.2.2   Sampling techniques and sampling procedure

Qualitative studies utilise non-probability sampling techniques, which are suited for selecting people who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon of the study and are to talk at length with the researchers (Creswell & Poth 2018:21; Polit & Beck 2021:199). Non-probability sampling techniques include convenience, also called volunteer, quota, snowballing, purposive and theoretical sampling (Polit & Beck 2021:200; Taylor et al 2014:205). Sampling for the study was done in three stages. Stage one involved sampling of universities that offer the part-time BScN program, stage two involved sampling the part-time BScN students' semester of study, and stage three involved sampling of part-time BScN students and their educators.

Stage one sampling utilised purposive sampling to choose Kenyan universities that offer part-time BScN programmes. There are a total of three private universities and five public universities offering part-time BScN programmes in Kenya. Out of these eight universities, four universities were purposively sampled for the study. This was to ensure that the participants were knowledgeable and able to provide extensive information about the phenomenon of the study (Polit & Beck 2021:200).

In the second stage of sampling, purposive sampling was used to sample part-time students' semesters of study. The researcher chose part-time BScN students in their 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th semesters of study. The reason these semesters were chosen was to ensure that the population chosen had lived through the experience of an academic semester, which includes theoretical teaching, clinical teaching and the examination process (Polit & Beck 2021:199). Consequently, this group of part-time students would be able to articulate their support needs in every cycle of an academic semester.

After the researcher obtained ethical approvals and permission to conduct the study in the chosen universities, the researcher proceeded to the third stage of sampling. Purposive sampling was used to sample part-time BScN students and educators. Information regarding the study was circulated to part-time BScN students and their educators through their respective nursing departments in their universities. The heads of departments informed the educators about the study, and they organised for the researcher to meet the educators and talk to them about the study. After meeting the educators, the researcher wrote down the names and phone numbers of those willing to participate in the study for a follow-up meeting. Thereafter, the researcher called each educator and explained the purpose of the study and the mode of data collection (Annexure J). Each educator was requested to provide an appointment date for an individual interview, and these were carried out at the educators' place of work.

The heads of departments provided the researcher with the names and phone numbers of student representatives for the various classes of part-time BScN students in their universities. The researcher contacted the students' representatives and organised visits to the sampled universities to discuss the study with part-time BScN students. The researcher met part-time BScN students during their after-class hours and their lunch breaks. The purpose of the study and the mode of data collection was explained to part-time BScN students (Annexure H). The students were informed that focus group discussions would last up to one hour, and would take place during the students' after-class hours. That meant that those interested in the study had to be willing to use their personal time for the study. The researcher recruited those who were willing to participate in the study by writing down their names and their phone numbers. A WhatsApp group was created for each semester's students' group, and the WhatsApp group was used to agree on the day and time of the focus group discussion. After recruitment, the participants were given informed consent forms to sign. The inclusion criteria were those who consented to the study by signing the consent forms, while those who did not consent were excluded from the study. Those who decline to participate stated a change of personal plans and lack of time as their reason for declining participation.
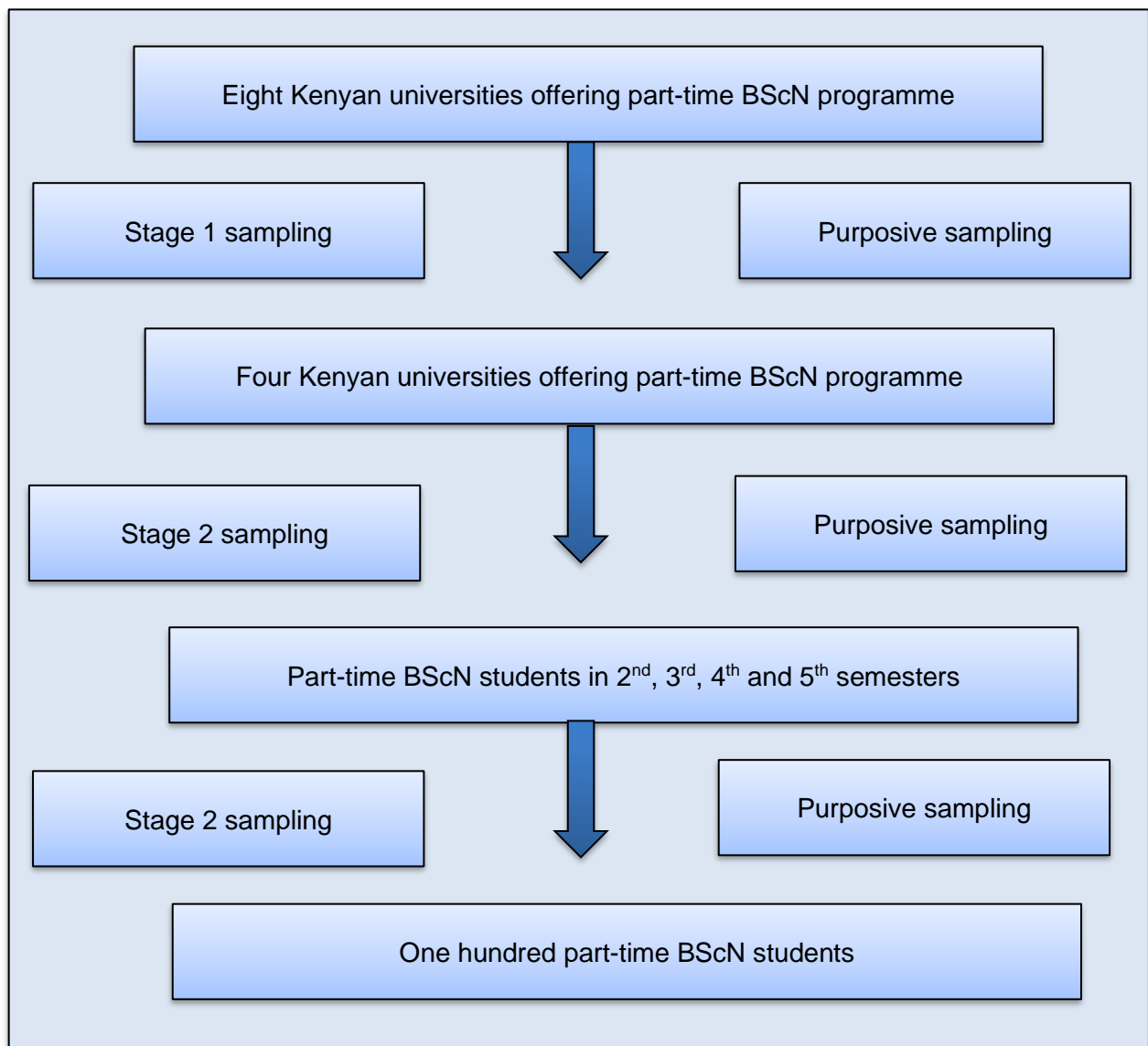
Figure 3.1: Diagrammatic representation of the sampling process

3.3.2.3 *Sample size*

Sampling in qualitative research is guided by the principle of data saturation and the sample size is determined by information needs (Polit & Beck 2021:201). Data saturation involves sampling until no new information is obtained (Saunders, Sim, Kingstone, Baker, Waterfield, Bartlam, Burroughs & Jinks 2018:1895). However, the quality of data influences data saturation and consequently, the sample size (Polit & Beck 2018:201). Initial coding of each focus group discussion was conducted before subsequent focus group discussions. Initial open codes were identified, and more open codes were identified with each subsequent focus group discussion. This process was repeated until there were no new codes identified.

The number of part-time BScN students who volunteered to participate was 156 and the number of those who participated in focus group discussion was 100. A total of 10 focus group discussions were conducted, with each focus group comprising 8 to 12 part-time BScN students. Twelve educators initially agreed to participate in the study. However, two educators did not provide the researcher with an appointment date for the interviews. Hence, the sample size for educators was 10 educators.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In phenomenology, data is collected from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon of the study using in-depth and multiple interviews (Creswell & Poth 2018:79; Kafle 2011:194; Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014:10; Polit & Beck 2018:203; Vagle 2014:55). Phenomenological researchers have used a variety of interview strategies and techniques. Interview strategies that are dialogic, open and conversational are most preferred data collection techniques (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014:10; Vagle 2014:78). The study utilised two different in-depth interview techniques; focus group discussion for part-time BScN students and semi-structured individual interviews with educators teaching part-time BScN students.

3.4.1 Focus group discussion

The researcher received permission to collect data from the university administration of the four chosen universities. After permission was given, the researcher worked with the nursing departments of the respective universities to recruit participants. The nursing departments, through prior arrangements with the researcher, provided the venues for focus group discussion. A pre-test of the focus group discussion was conducted using a group of full-time BScN students. The pre-test assisted in determining whether the grand tour question was correctly formulated as well as whether the conditions for the focus group discussion (venue, audio-recorder, interviewer skills) were suitable. After the pre-test, the grand tour question was refined to; 'what kind of support do you need from the university as a part-time BScN student, to succeed in your studies?' (Annexure I). The initial venue provided by the nursing department proved unsuitable and hence the venue was changed to a library discussion room. The initial venue was a classroom that was next to another classroom that students were using for discussion. As a result, the

recorder recorded too much noise from the nearby students. This necessitated a change of venue to a library discussion room that had sound proofing.

Ten focus group discussions were conducted with part-time BScN students, comprising 8 to 12 students, and each lasted approximately an hour. The discussion started with a grand question 'what kind of support do you need from the university as a part-time BScN student, to succeed in your studies? The researcher facilitated group discussions and a research assistant was engaged to take notes during the discussion. The notes were used to provide non-verbal cues that occurred during the focus group discussion. Each focus group discussion was carried out in the students' natural settings i.e., in the library of their institution of study. The focus group discussions were audio-taped and then transcribed verbatim. Initial coding was done before conducting a subsequent focus group discussion. This process continued with every focus group discussion until data saturation was achieved (Cleary, Horsfall & Hayter 2014:474; Creswell & Poth 2018:79; Polit & Beck 2021:203).

Salient field issues in conducting in-depth interviews in phenomenology are building rapport and encouraging openness and frankness (Creswell & Poth 2018:79; Polit & Beck 2021:203). The researcher established rapport with the participants during the recruitment phase. This was achieved through the multiple visits and discussions held with part-time BScN students as the researcher sought to enrol the participants in the study. To achieve openness and frankness, the participants signed a confidentiality-binding agreement that stated that they were cautioned against discussing the content of the discussion after the focus group discussion. They were also assigned a number and they were to refer to each other by the numbers instead of their name. The researcher also laid ground rules before the focus group discussion, which required each participant to respect other participants' opinions and to let others speak their minds.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

Individual interviews were conducted with the educators of working part-time BScN students, using a semi-structured interview guide (Annexure K). Educators were interviewed for approximately 45 minutes in their offices. The interviews were carried out at the respective educators' offices, and they were audio-recorded. The interviews explored what constituted support to part-time BScN students from the educators'

perspective. The interviews were conducted in English. After one interview, the interview was transcribed verbatim and initial codes were identified, before the subsequent interview. This process continued until there were no new codes identified (Cleary et al 2014:474; Creswell & Poth 2018:79; Polit & Beck 2021:203). Ten individual interviews with educators of part-time BScN students were conducted.

3.4.3 Data analysis

There are no universal rules for analysing qualitative data (Polit & Beck 2021:277). However, there is a general process that is involved in qualitative data analysis. The process entails preparing and organising data for analysis; immersing oneself in the data, reducing data into themes through coding; and representing the data (Creswell & Poth 2018:183). Data analysis in qualitative research is both reductionist and constructionist. Reductionism involves converting large amounts of data into smaller manageable segments. Constructionism involves putting segments together to develop meaningful patterns (Polit & Beck 2021:280). In phenomenological research, data collection and data analysis take place concurrently.

3.4.3.1 *Focus group discussion*

Analysis of data derived from focus group discussion followed Tesch's protocol of qualitative data analysis as described by Creswell and Poth (2018:183); preparing and organising data for analysis; reducing data into themes through coding; and representing the data.

In the preparation stage, each focus group discussion was transcribed and counter-checked with the audio files to check for completeness. The transcript was entered into NVIVO to aid categorisation. Two researchers, who held several meetings to agree on code names and themes, carried out data coding. The transcripts were printed out and read several times to familiarise me with and immerse me in the data. Data were analysed using Tesch's protocol of qualitative data analysis (Creswell & Poth 2018:183). Memos were written on emerging ideas and filed separately (Creswell & Poth 2018:183; Polit & Beck 2021:278). The data were broken into smaller segments using a highlighting pen, and each segment was assigned a name. These names were the initial open codes. The codes were later combined into broader categories that formed themes (Creswell & Poth

2018:184; Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013:402). This process is represented in Creswell and Poth's (2018:186) data analysis spiral in Figure 3.2 below.

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│    ┌─────────────────────────────┐   │
│    │ Managing and organising data │   │
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│    │   Pre-testing coding scheme │   │
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│ │ Describing and classifying codes  │ │
│ │         into themes               │ │
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│ │ Describing and assessing          │ │
│ │        interpretations            │ │
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│      │   Account of findings    │     │
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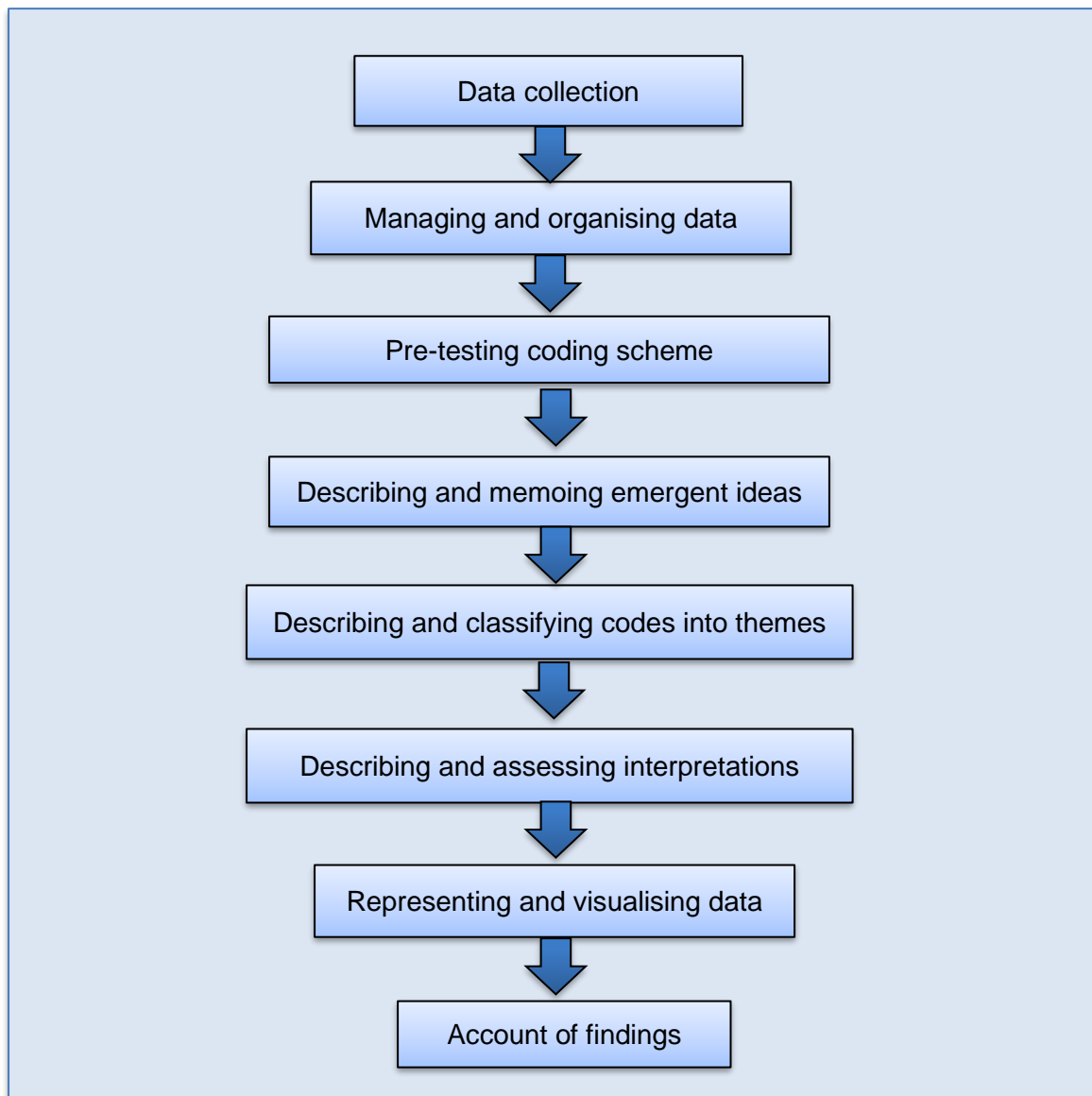
Figure 3.2: Schematic presentation of data analysis (Tesch's protocol)

(Creswell & Poth 2018:186)

3.4.3.2   Interviews

Analysis of data derived from individual interviews followed Tesch's protocol of qualitative data analysis as described by Creswell and Poth (2018:183); data collection; preparing and organising data for analysis; defining unit of analysis; developing categories and coding scheme; pre-testing coding scheme; reducing data into themes through coding; making inferences from the themes; and representing the data (Creswell & Poth 2018:183).

In the preparation stage, each interview was transcribed and counter-checked with the audio files to check for completeness. The transcript was entered into NVIVO to aid categorisation. Two researchers, who held several meetings to agree on code names and themes, carried out data coding. The transcripts were printed out and read them severally to familiarise me with and immerse myself in the data. Memos were written on emerging ideas and files separately (Creswell & Poth 2018:183; Polit & Beck 2021:278). The data was broken into smaller segments using a highlighting pen, and each segment was assigned a name. These names were the initial open codes. The codes were later combined into broader categories that formed themes (Creswell & Poth 2018:184; Vaismoradi et al 2013:402).

3.5   RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

Rigour in qualitative research is comparable to validity in quantitative research (Creswell & Poth 2018:256). Rigour in qualitative research refers to a strict way of carrying out research, where each step of the project is carried out with scrupulous attention to detail so that the results of the study can be trusted (Polit & Beck 2021:294). Trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to the degree to which the results can be trusted. The term rigour and trustworthiness are used interchangeably in qualitative research (Taylor et al 2014:400). Lincoln and Guba identified what is considered the gold standard for judging rigour in qualitative research. These standards were later augmented by Guba and Lincoln, and they include a criterion of dependability, confirmability, credibility, transferability and authenticity (Polit & Beck 2021:294; Taylor et al 2014).

3.5.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant's views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck 2021:295). It establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from participants' data (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). There are four strategies to ensure credibility, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation and member check. (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121).

Credibility in this study was ensured by; audiotaping all focus group discussions and individual interviews; taking field notes; data triangulation; inter-coder reliability checks between the two researchers involved in data coding; data saturation; and pilot study (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2021:297). The prolonged engagement was achieved through engagement with the participants, familiarising them with the context and building trust with participants (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). The researcher spent at least a month in each university during the recruitment of part-time BScN students and their educators. This allowed the researcher to build trust with the participants and became conversant with the context. Data collection was carried out in the participants' universities, which contributed to prolonged engagement (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). The accuracy of all transcripts was confirmed by comparing the transcripts with the audio files.

Triangulation in the study was achieved through data triangulation, investor triangulation and method triangulation (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Data triangulation in this study was achieved using multiple study sites, using different groups of part-time BScN students and targeting part-time BScN students in different semesters (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Investor triangulation was achieved by having two different researchers code the data. Inter-coder reliability checks between the two researchers involved in data coding were done after coding each data set (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe & Neville 2014:546; Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Method triangulation was achieved by using multiple data collection methods (Carter et al 2014:546). Focus group discussions and individual interviews were used to enhance the richness and quality of data. The individual interview guides were pre-tested before data collection (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121).

3.5.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of findings over time (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Dependability involves participants' evaluations of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study to ensure that they are supported by the data received from the participants (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2021:296). The study enhanced dependability by involving some participants in the validation of the guidelines. Five educators that were study participants were involved in the validation of the guidelines. They confirmed that the guidelines developed emanated from the data

(Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). The audit trail was done through meticulous record-keeping and documentation of a clear decision trail (Polit & Beck 2021:297). The study report describes the steps taken from the start of the project to the development and validation of guidelines, which constitutes an audit trail (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121).

3.5.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of the research study can be confirmed by other researchers. It is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the researcher's imagination but are derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2021:296). Confirmability is considered to have been achieved when there is congruence between two or more independent researchers' interpretations of the data (Polit & Beck 2021:296). In this study, confirmability was demonstrated by having two researchers conduct data analysis. Inter-coder reliability checks were conducted where the two coders held several meetings to agree on the codes identified and confirm the emergent themes (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). Confirmability was also enhanced through documentation of the research process, data analysis process to development and validation of guidelines (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2021:297).

3.5.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to findings that are to the extent to which qualitative findings can be applied to other settings (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121; Polit & Beck 2021:296). Qualitative research findings cannot be generalised to other settings, but the findings can be applied to other settings. Therefore, the researcher should aim to provide sufficient descriptive data that the readers can use to evaluate the applicability of the results to other settings (Polit & Beck 2021:296).

Transferability in the study was achieved through thick descriptions of the behaviours, emotions and experiences of part-time BScN students (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). To ensure thick descriptions, comprehensive field notes were taken; data saturation was achieved; there was a detailed description of the setting of the study; provision of sufficient descriptive data of the findings; and provision of participants' excerpts to support the identified themes and sub-themes (Creswell & Poth 2018:254; Polit & Beck

2021:297). The guideline development and the subsequent validation process were described in detail. Participants' verbatim were used to support the guidelines and evidence was used to provide recommendations for practice (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121).

3.5.5 Authenticity

Authenticity refers to the ability and extent to which the researcher expresses the emotions and feelings of the participant's experiences in a faithful manner (Polit & Beck 2021:296). In this study, authenticity was achieved by; the use of data triangulation; audiotaping focus group discussions and individual interviews; taking field notes during data collection; providing rich descriptions of the results and participants' excerpts; and bracketing by the researcher (Polit & Beck 2021:297).

3.5.6 Bracketing and reflexivity

Phenomenological researchers have used the term reduction when discussing validity in phenomenological studies. Phenomenological reduction is also referred to as bracketing (Vagle 2014:54). This requires one to disregard his or her own past understandings and knowledge of the phenomenon under study, to analyse the raw data from a fresh and unbiased perspective. This does not mean removing all past knowledge, but rather putting it aside and rendering it non-influential to the new knowledge (Creswell & Poth 2018:314; Polit & Beck 2021:188; Vagle 2014:67). The researcher practised bracketing by maintaining a reflective journal as a way of acknowledging her experience with the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Poth 2018:314).

Reflexivity is the process of critical self-reflection about oneself as a researcher and acknowledging one's biases, preferences and preconceptions (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). It also requires the researcher to reflect on his/her relationship with the participants, and how it affects the participant's answers to questions (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). The researcher is a nurse educator teaching part-time BScN students. In her role as a nurse educator, she also carries out various pastoral support duties for part-time BScN students. She is a faculty advisor to several allocated students. Having taught a diploma in nursing programmes before teaching at the university, the researcher came across some of her previous students in the process of data collection.

The researcher was cognisant of her role as an educator and the likelihood of power imbalance between her and part-time BScN students. The participants were assured that the researcher was carrying out the study as a doctoral student and not as their educator. They were urged to view the researcher as a student and not an educator. The researcher assured the participants of the confidentiality of the information provided. The presence of a note-taker during focus group discussions created a more relaxed environment as she was perceived as a neutral participant. The researcher recognised that as an educator, she could influence the way participants answered questions by providing unintentional verbal cues or asking leading questions. To counter this, the researcher started the focus group discussion with a broad grand tour question and used broad questions to probe. Participants were given the freedom to discuss among themselves and interject with each other conversations in a respectful way. The researcher interjected the discussion when posing a probing question or when clarifying a statement.

3.6   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Three ethical principles guide the conduct of research studies. They are beneficence, respect for human dignity and justice (Polit & Beck 2021:79). Ethical issues that were addressed in the study include getting approvals from the institutions of study, seeking informed consent from the participants, and ensuring that no harm was inflicted on the participants.

3.6.1 Ethical approvals

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of South Africa, Department of Health Studies' Research Ethics Committee [HSHDC/620/2017] (Annexure A); the Aga Khan University Ethics Committee [Ref: 2017/REC-48(v1)] (Annexure B2), and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation in Kenya [Ref: NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028] (Annexures C and D). Ethical approval was also granted from the University of Nairobi [Ref: KHN-ERC/A/361] (Annexure E2), where data was collected. Permission to collect data was granted by Kenya Methodist University (Annexure F2) and Kenyatta University [Ref: KU/DVCR/RCR/VOL.3/239] (Annexure G2).

3.6.2 Respect for human dignity

Respect for human dignity includes the right to self-determination and the right to full disclosure (Polit & Beck 2021:80). Right to self-determination is also referred to as autonomy. Autonomy and the right to full disclosure are intertwined. Research participants require full disclosure of the study's purpose to make an autonomous decision.

Respect for human dignity was achieved in the study by; disclosing the study purpose, objectives and data collection methods to participants; and allowing participants to make an independent choice to participate (Polit & Beck 2021:80). Full disclosure was made regarding the nature of their participation, potential benefits for participating in the study, risks associated with participating in the study, maintenance of confidentiality, security of the data and ethical approval of the study (Polit & Beck 2021:83). Part-time BScN students and their educators signed a consent form before focus group discussions and individual interviews. Participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage (Polit & Beck 2021:80).

3.6.3 Justice

The ethical principle of justice includes participants' right to fair treatment and their right to privacy (Polit & Beck 2021:81). Right to privacy in the study involved ensuring participants' anonymity. The study ensured participants' anonymity was maintained, by ensuring that the participants did not state their names during the interview. The study also ensured that there were no participants' identifiers during the analysis and presentation of the findings. All part-time BScN students who participated in the focus group discussions signed a confidentiality binding form (Annexure L), where they committed to refrain from discussing the content of the focus group discussion outside the venue of the study (Polit & Beck 2021:81). The research assistant who took notes during focus group discussions also signed a confidentiality binding form.

Right to fair treatment involves the equitable distribution of benefits and risks of research through the selection of participants who are likely to benefit most from the research study and experience minimal risks. Participants' right to withdraw from the study was honoured

(Polit & Beck 2021:81). Part-time BScN students received travel reimbursement and were provided with snacks and drinks during focus group discussions.

3.6.4 Beneficence

The principle of beneficence requires that research studies should minimise harm and maximise benefits. The principle includes the right to freedom from harm and discomfort, and the right to protection from exploitation (Polit & Beck 2021:79). The study posed minimal harm to the participants, as it was a low-risk study and there were no interventions involved. In anticipation of psychological risk to study participants, university counsellors were informed of the study and requested to anticipate referral from the study. However, no participant required the use of this service (Polit & Beck 2021:80).

The participants were protected from any form of exploitation, by ensuring that the data collection process did not interfere with the participant's schedule. Part-time BScN students were interviewed during their free time, ensuring that the study did not interfere with their school schedule or work schedule. Similarly, the part-time BScN students' educators were interviewed at a time that was convenient to them, and at a venue that was convenient to them (Polit & Beck 2021:80).

3.6.5 Scientific integrity

To ensure the scientific integrity of the study, the study was approved by four scientific and ethical review committees. The study received ethical approval from the UNISA Research Ethics Committee (Annexure A), Aga Khan University Research Ethics Committee (Annexure B2), KNH-UoN Ethics and Research Committee (Annexure E2), Kenya Methodist University (Annexure F2), Kenyatta University (Annexure G2) and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (Annexure C). A research permit to allow the researcher to conduct the study was issued by NACOSTI (Annexure D).

The researcher involved a research assistant as the co-facilitator during the interviews and focus group discussions. The role of the co-facilitator was to take field notes during the interviews and focus group discussions. The consent form included permission for the presence of the co-facilitator during the interview and focus group discussions. The

research assistant was trained on the purpose of the study, the ethics of the project, maintaining confidentiality, and their role in the focus group discussions with part-time BScN students and the individual interviews with educators of part-time BScN students.

3.6.6 Compensation

The part-time BScN students were reimbursed for their travel costs to the venue of the focus group discussions. This is because focus group discussions were conducted while they were off-duty and not attending classes. Therefore, they had to come to the university in their private time. Refreshments were served as a courtesy after the focus group discussions, but this was not communicated to the participants before the day of the data collection. No travel or lunch reimbursement was provided to the educators who participated in the study.

3.6.7 Risks

There were limited risks to this study since there were no interventions involved. However, there was a possibility of psychological risk to the participants, where participants were concerned that negative comments about the university may affect them or their studies. The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Prior arrangements were made with student counsellors in the respective universities for the referral of participants who felt the need to discuss their fears with someone. However, no participant needed this service.

The educators may also experience psychological risk and might feel that they are being criticised for not rendering good student support. The educators were also assured that the student's responses are not an indication of the support they are providing to the students. They will also be assured of confidentiality and anonymity in their interviews.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the research design and philosophical underpinning of the study, research setting and research populations. The implementation of the study was also explained through sampling strategies, data collection and data analysis strategies, the rigour of the study, ethical considerations and scientific integrity of the study. The different phases of the study were explained including how they influenced each subsequent phase.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the themes and sub-themes that emerged from focus group discussions. The data is presented as per the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study were, to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students, to describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya and to develop and validate guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

4.2   DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The audio files of focus group discussions were uploaded into a computer that was specifically acquired for the study purpose. The audio files were then transcribed verbatim and counterchecked for accuracy. The audio files and transcripts were password protected and stored in separate folders. The transcribed files were printed for coding by two researchers. The researcher requested a colleague who has experience in qualitative research to assist in coding. For each transcript, the researcher and the co-coder held several meetings to compare and agree on the codes developed.

Data analysis was achieved through an inductive process (Graneheim, Lindgren & Lundman 2017:30). Each transcript was copied and pasted on a new word document, and the document was formatted to include double-line spacing, increasing the right margin to two inches and allocating line numbers (Annexure Q). The document was then printed. Each printed transcript was analysed line by line and open coding was done by allocating a word from the data that represented the essence of that data (Annexure P). A list of all the codes was made and similar codes and redundant codes were removed (Annexure T). A total of 23 codes remained. The identified codes were then compared to the original data to ensure that they match.

These codes were analysed and grouped to produce 15 sub-codes. These were further analysed for relationships to identify overarching codes. This process resulted in 4 themes and 9 sub-themes. The final themes were placed within the data to ensure they were exhaustive and that they reflected the purpose of the study.

Participants' quotes within each theme were collected and examined for ideas that make up the theme and sub-themes. They were examined for how they interact with each other, checking for sequence or order where the information belongs. They were also examined for any relationship with the overarching themes. This process was repeated with all the transcripts. Where new themes emerged, the new themes were compared with the themes from other transcripts and ideas were adjusted.

4.3   RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1 Sample characteristics

Ten focus group discussions were held using a total of 100 part-time BScN students, 28 from public universities and 72 from private universities. Out of these, 22 were males and 88 were females. Their age ranged from 24 to 46 years of age, and their years of nursing practice ranged from three years to 20 years.

4.3.2 Overview of research findings

The study sought to understand the nature of support and perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. The analysis of focus group discussions revealed four themes and eight sub-themes indicative of the perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.

Table 4.1   Summary of themes and sub-themes indicative of the nature of and perceived needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

Themes	Sub-themes
1 Resource needs	1.1 Human resource needs
	1.2 Financial support needs
	1.3 Infrastructural support needs
2 Psychosocial needs	2.1 Social support
	2.2 Employer/workplace support
3 Curriculum redesign needs	3.1 Curriculum content and review
4 Policy needs	4.1 Training institutional regulations
	4.2 Students' regulations

4.4   THEME 1: RESOURCE NEEDS

This theme has four sub-themes, namely, human resource needs, financial support needs and infrastructural support needs. The findings indicated that part-time BScN students require multiple resources for them to succeed. Resources are directly or indirectly targeted towards part-time BScN students. Direct resources are resources that part-time BScN students require for them to succeed in the part-time BScN programme. Indirect resources are the resources that training institutions need to put in place for the part-time BScN programme to be a success.

4.4.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Human resource needs

The study revealed that the educator-student ratio needed to be optimum learning and success of part-time BScN students. It was evident that there was low staffing of educators, which resulted in minimal interaction between part-time BScN students and their educators, a lack of mentorship for part-time BScN students and an increased educators' workload. This is evident from the excerpt below.

> "I recommend the student-lecturer ratio to be broad since you don't need to be told but you will see that lecturers are overwhelmed. Sometimes you see they are overwhelmed by the work." KT_FGD2_09.

Due to the shortage of full-time nursing educators, the universities engaged part-time educators. In some universities, there were reported challenges with the use of part-time

nurse educators. When part-time nurse educators get paid by their universities, they withheld students' grades as a ransom to force the universities to pay them.

"There are other factors that affect us as students; you find the university doesn't pay lecturers in time, so a certain lecturer feels like they need to resign from the university, so they go away with our assignments just because they were not paid." KM_FGD1_01.

Human resource needs to be extended beyond the classroom to clinical experience settings. There were concerns that part-time BScN received little supervision and support while in clinical experience settings. These clinical experience settings were described as lacking qualified nursing educators and clinical instructors and supervisors to contribute to students' learning. As described by this participant, nurse educators only went to the clinical setting to assess the students.

"… when our lecturers are supposed to come and assess us, you only see them towards the end of the time. Maybe they can change the strategy and we start seeing them more. If at all the hospital does not have clinical instructors, then our lecturers can play the role of clinical instructors for us ..." KT_FGD1_03.

Nurse educators and clinical instructors are required to assess learning and demonstrate nursing procedures to part-time BScN students. In the absence of clinical instructors, nurse educators needed to play the role of clinical instructors and not just assess the part-time BScN students. Moreover, the identified clinical sites were described as basic lacking resources that are required in the training of the students on hands-on skills.

"… So, and the way they were talking about the resources, there are no resources in the areas, the hospitals they have identified. So, for us to learn more, we will need those resources. I think I was just summarising." KT_FGD1_08.

"The only problem with clinical placement is the resources they are allocating us when we are in those clinical areas. You are going to a government hospital where the resources are limited, you are paying a lot of money reason being most of that money should be put into those clinical areas…. But when you go there, there aren't those resources, you are told to improvise. So, you know if you want to get

a vein you have to get a tourniquet and then when you go there you are told to use a glove, so it's really contrary to what we are learning." NB_FGD2_04.

Because of the lack of clinical supervision and resources in clinical experience settings, part-time BScN students avoided going to clinical settings and only went on the day of clinical assessment.

"Most of us we have experience and have experience and then when we go there in fact, we are not even interested in learning, you are interested to do an assessment and go away so they should waive such kind of assessments." KM_FGD3_03.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Financial support needs

Financial support was emphasised by all part-time students. Participants indicated that the part-time BScN programme was expensive, and students tended to strain financially to undertake the programme. Part-time BScN students reported that they found it challenging to meet their course cost, which includes the school fees, accommodation and transport costs, thus making it hard for them to complete and graduate on time. The participants who described the situation in the excerpts below best illustrate this.

"... the school fees which is too high, something should be done at least it becomes something favourable for us. So, if they can actually lower the school fees a bit ..." KM_FGD2_ 06.

"My recommendation would be the review of the school fees payment, it's a bit alarming actually for most of us." KH_FGD1_10.

"I'm just emphasising on what my colleague has said about the school fees, actually it has caused repercussions, it has caused many of the students to drop out. Somebody is expecting to get those fees on a later date but now the deadline has come, so you have to drop out. So, it's a big, big challenge." KT_FGD2_04.

There was concern concerning services that part-time BScN students paid for and did not receive them. Students paid for medical services and extracurricular activities, yet they

did not receive any medical care while on campus. Similarly, no extracurricular activities were available to the part-time BScN students.

> "We pay for a medical fee; we've never gotten even a Panadol. We don't know where the clinic is for the university. If we pay for extracurricular activities, can we get proper information and where to access those services? If we pay for medical, can we know what sort of services we can get and from whom can we get these services?" KM_FGD2_11.

The school fee charged for the part-time BScN programme is higher than the regular BScN programme. The government institutions providing education loans for university students (Higher Education Loans Board) apply a different set of rules for part-time BScN students compared to regular BScN students. The participant below demonstrates this.

> "Yes, we are eligible but you must be employed on a permanent basis. Because you must have your pay slip signed and certified by your employer. So for those that are working maybe in the missions and maybe locum basis, they cannot have access because once you clock age 25 you must have a pay slip. I am an example, I applied for one, and yes, I got KES. 100,000 but I had to run to the employer to and from, for them to sign my pay slips and you know it will be based on the amount on the pay slip." KT_FGD1_07.

Some universities provided financial support to part-time BScN students through scholarships. However, part-time BScN students raised concerns about the criteria used in deciding who and how much an individual receives. The scholarship selection process was perceived to be faulty and the criteria for qualification of scholarship was thought to be intrusive and liable to manipulation. The participant below demonstrates this.

> "Okay, there are giving the scholarships but these scholarships you can never understand the criteria that are really used to give the scholarships. I would recommend that if there is a scholarship, and we are 12 of us, why can't it be given equally to all of us now that all of us have needs." KH_FGD2_11.

There was a paradox in financial support. Part-time BScN students in private universities were told to have a written financial commitment to the university, on how they planned to pay their school fees. They were also told that any financial support provided to them

was to be determined by the student's needs and the student's effort in paying their school fees. However, some did not honour their financial commitments and still got financial support. Furthermore, some honoured their financial commitments and still did not get financial support. The excerpt below best illustrates this paradox of financial support to part-time BScN students.

"To be honest I didn't even pay a dime of what I had promised and yet I got money and I'm sure someone else somewhere did meet the criteria and didn't get the money. So, we are asking for transparency." KH_FGD3_02.

"When you are requesting for a scholarship, they actually said you need to just put down all the problems you think you have. And from past experiences what I know from even the other classes, most of the allocations will be done according to how much…they actually…they weigh, they go by the weight of the problems, that's what I've been told before. So, you just list, so they will go … there's no way you will list 2 problems and I list 20, they will assume that I have more problems, probably you don't have." NB_FGD1_07.

Part-time BScN students stated that the scholarships were based on the financial needs of the students. Therefore, part-time BScN students were expected to spell out their financial needs in the scholarship application form. This required them to provide their pay slips, bank statements and their spouse's financial documents. This requirement was perceived to be intrusive and liable to manipulation.

"… So, I think that the information that is being sort by the financial department is a bit intrusive into our personal lives. Even though we are needy and require that scholarship. I would prefer a better approach like a personal engagement, maybe a confidential personal engagement with someone in the administration …" KH_FGD2_08.

Some universities used stringent measures to get part-time BScN students to pay their school fees. They ensured that students could not access the online learning management platform, and neither would they sit for exams without clearing the school. These measures made it difficult for part-time BScN students with pending school fee balances to concentrate on their studies. Part-time BScN students requested to be provided with a flexible payment model, where they are allowed to attend classes and

take exams and then come up with a payment plan with the university. This model of school fee payment was being used by some private universities. However, the universities that used this model withheld part-time BScN students' certificates upon graduation to ensure that students paid any outstanding school fee balance.

"... we are all willing but down the line, we get challenges of meeting the fees. If this deadline could be actually prolonged a little bit, just to favour their students because we are all willing to pursue this degree course, that would help us a lot. Because we have seen our colleagues dropping, calling off just because of these challenges of school fees." KT_FGD3_10.

"I understand before we graduate you have to clear with the finance so you can't graduate without clearing, you can't do an exam before you clear your fee balance for that trimester or the previous one." KM_FGD1_10.

"I think another thing, they should allow us to do exams even if you have the three … you are paying the three-quarter of the school fees because sometimes we are human beings, we have other challenges. Maybe you need the transport to come to do exams, so without accepting us to do exams until we pay in full is a bit challenging." NB_FGD2_08.

"Mine I would like to thank the University for letting us read even if we have arrears and do our exams all through until we do our final exams. … they need to find a way of releasing our final certificate because there can be an opportunity between that time you have arrears and the time you clear and that opportunity would make you gain more finances to make you clear your fees arrears to be able to get your certificate." KH_FGD1_01.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 1.3: Infrastructural support needs

Infrastructural support was identified as key to the success of part-time BScN students. Various infrastructure needs were identified, such as online teaching and learning platform, internet connectivity and access gadgets, equipped venues for teaching and learning, accommodation facilities, library facilities, and demonstration equipment.

All universities utilised various forms of online learning management systems (LMS) in teaching part-time BScN programmes. These systems are designed to enable part-time

BScN students to access learning resources, submit their assignments, engage with their educators and with each other, and use the system to raise any concerns they had about the courses to their educators. The LMS also provided opportunities for students to engage with their educators via the discussion forum, online chats or by asking questions.

> "… most of us we are working students, during the trimester period most of the time we are at work, and we go back home to do the studies online and submit our assignments online. Which are sent by our lecturers online." NB_FGD1_05.

In some instances, the LMS were dysfunctional and made it difficult for the part-time BScN students to access their learning material on time. In other instances, the LMS experienced downtime, and it took time for the universities to get the platforms functioning again. This created concerns and anxiety for the part-time BScN students, due to delayed assignment submission and missed online lectures.

Part-time BScN students reported that they felt ignored by their educators. Most of the questions they posed to their educators went without being answered in the entire trimester. Educators rarely got involved in an online discussion, which would have been helpful to help them clarify issues and address any inaccurate responses. Part-time BScN students reported that most online discussions with their educators did not take place as educators tended to cancel the discussion at the last minute.

> "The structure of the university they've tried putting the online portal, but I can say generally there are not a lot of considerations for us as the part-time students because that effort to be there for us is not noticeable. From the lecturers being present, from the assignment being sent in good time and also our consideration from moving from far and spacing the exam time." KM_FGD3_04.

> "… we should communicate online. So, you find that you ask something online but the tutor takes a lot of time to answer and also sometimes they don't answer. So, we are not communicating in any way and maybe the student is in need of some information or clarification." KT_FGD3_06.

Infrastructural resources also involved internet connectivity and access gadgets and learning management systems. Part-time BScN students reported that they were provided with internet connectivity while on campus but not when out of campus. Students

were required to have a laptop to access learning management systems. Some universities provided students without laptops with tablets to allow them to access the learning management system.

> "… And you find that during the day there are some people who have internet during the day the place of work when they go home, they are out of internet network." KH_FGD_10.

> "… And again, even accessing the learning materials was actually a problem because when you do not have the internet what will you do and you do not have the laptop to actually access. So, it's again a challenge if the university can make an arrangement of maybe producing the hardcopy for the sake of them that cannot afford to have laptops in their places." KM_FGD1_07.

Because of the requirement to buy a laptop and the cost of internet connectivity, the part-time BScN programme was perceived to be expensive compared to the remuneration of nurses. This retaliates and supports the need for financial support among part-time BScN students.

Part-time BScN students expressed their satisfaction with the venues used for teaching and learning.

> "And also, the issue of having a clean environment, that the washrooms are clean, the classrooms are adequate and…well, most of them. And there's fresh air coming in. So, you don't take that for granted because some other places you would be really surprised …" KH_FGD1_02.

Public universities provided accommodation for their part-time BScN students when the students came to campus for face-to-face sessions. However, not all part-time BScN students are required to be accommodated on campus. They felt that they were being forced to take in-campus accommodation for the monetary gain of the university. They also perceived the accommodation as demeaning, since they were required to share a room.

> "Okay for accommodation, what I can say, in fact, the university is even frustrating us, they are forcing us to stay inside, deducting our money direct from school fees

of which for us most of us because we have families, we don't like staying inside."
KT_FGD2_03.

"… where they are accommodating us, you see you are in a room where you are
being placed like four guys and you are grownups, so you are even forced to sleep
in a double-decker. So, we are being treated like the small ones who just came the
other day. So, I think for them maybe they should give us some privacy. I think that
does not bring a very good picture." KM_FGD2_08.

On the other hand, BScN students in private universities reported that they would
appreciate it if their respective universities made arrangements for their subsidised
accommodation. They reported that some came from far, over 200 kilometres away, and
must find accommodation near the university on the days they are attending class. This
was reported as an extra cost and this student lamented the absence of accommodation:

"I also wanted to talk about accommodation, I think it would go a long way in helping
our colleagues whenever they come to school." KH_FGD2_06.

Part-time BScN students reported varied views regarding library services. Data revealed
that students were orientated on how to access online library resources. However, some
reported that they were well supported in accessing library services, and some were
having trouble accessing library services. There were concerns regarding library charges
levied among those who delayed returning the books on time. This student acknowledged
the support:

"I think for the library the support is immense and the way you are saying about the
charges, I think we were taught that if you feel you are going to extend the stay
with the book, you can still extend the stay online, you don't have to be charged."
KH_FGD3_05.

However, other students complained about access to the library and outdated books:

"… So, it is a book you want to get from the library but you can't access it because
it is always saying the system is under maintenance and something of that sort.
So, like for me, this is my second year and I think I have not accessed the library."
KM_FGD2_07.

"I have been to the library once and my interest was to know what the newest arrivals are. Apparently, what I found were ancient books that were there so I felt, no I would rather just go to the net …" NB_FGD_04.

Data revealed that technological hitch has been affecting the part-time BScN student in accessing their study materials and sending their course work on time. It was noted that the student's portal recording the fee payments mostly had a discrepancy between paid and what was reflected. This makes students have difficulties in acquiring exam cards and may lead to failure to sit for the exam.

"… On the same with the digital campus, like this semester, we had a lot of problems with getting past papers. You have an exam, you try to access the past papers, you call here, they say there's a problem with the system and the exams are just there." KM_FGD2_07.

"... I can add on the issue of the portal like mine has issues even now. Even before we started the exams, before even we get the notes, I came here, I told them about the portal, I was told to wait for about 72 hours they will correct it. But again, on coming again, they told me that it's my phone which needs to be upgraded maybe." KT_FGD2_05.

4.5 THEME 2: PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

This theme includes social support and employer/workplace support.

4.5.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Social support

Sociological support in support needed by part-time BScN students in handling their multiple roles and competing responsibilities. This involves support provided by the family to part-time BScN students. Data revealed that the majority of the part-time BScN students had multiple roles and competing responsibilities that tended to affect their learning. This student explained how they needed to keep all their balls in the air:

"... I think even the other roles affect our studies. Like for example you may be ready for exams and then at the same time maybe there are some issues at home

maybe with your kids, with your family and you have to take care of all of them. …
I actually have no time to read for that exam. So, I think even those other roles
affect our studies." KH_FGD1_11.

These responsibilities ranging from family, employment and personal responsibilities
consumed the students' emotional, economic and social strength. As a result, part-time
BScN students reported that they felt disoriented and exhausted to an extent that they
failed to graduate on time. This is best described by the participant below:

"… Because at times you end up being frustrated, you have some social problems
at home, you need to attend to them, at the same time you need to be in class. So,
it delays your learning and then at the end of the day some might even lose hope
and just discontinue with the classes, and they might even not think of coming
back." KT_FGD1_05.

4.5.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Employer/workplace support

Part-time BScN students are working nurses. Therefore, they required support from their
employers and workplaces to succeed in their studies. The employer is required to offer
modalities which can support the student to attend the course training. This is through
offering flexible working time schedules to accommodate a student's successful
completion of his/her studies. It emerged that most part-time BScN students lacked
support from their employers and their colleagues. This part-time BScN student reported
the consequences of coming to school:

"Support from the employer is very minimum. Actually, to some extent, if you are
missing a job most of the time, they'll even put you on a contract basis."
KM_FGD2_06.

Support from the employer also included support from colleagues. There were situations
where part-time BScN students' colleagues, were a hindrance to their ability to attend
classes. This participant noted with disgust:

"… You know at times it is not the issue of supportive employers, even we have a
challenge with our workmates because some are not happy when we are coming

to take the studies. So, at times you may be forced to do some nasty things for you to come to school." NB_FGD2_02.

4.6   THEME 3: CURRICULUM REDESIGN NEEDS

This theme has one sub-theme that includes curriculum content and review.

4.6.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Curriculum content and review

Data revealed that the curriculum used to train part-time BScN students was redundant. The curriculum failed to acknowledge prior learning and there was a repetition of content that was covered in diploma training. This redundancy was evident in both theoretical content and clinical objectives. Clinical nursing assessments were also similar to those carried out in diploma nursing training. Because of this repetition, the curriculum was perceived to be bulky with content that was no longer relevant to part-time BScN nurses. The participants noted with despair:

> "These things we did them in Diploma, in Certificate level, but we are taken through the same, same things. So, if they can waive some things from the curriculum, I think it can be much, much better than this repetition we are doing …" KH_FDG3_4.

> "… I think there are some things in the curriculum that are not relevant to the nurses. So, I think they should maybe experts should sit down and then come up with only things that are a bit relevant to the…" KT_FGD2_08.

This situation created an impression that the part-time BScN programme is not different from diploma training. As a result, other nurses working with part-time BScN students do not see the need to join the course.

> "We get to see that most of our colleagues, nurses who have not yet joined the course, they actually don't want to join because they don't see any difference in us who have been in the course." KM_FGD1_11.

Part-time BScN students' opinions were divided regarding support in clinical learning. Some did not see the need for clinical experience at this level, since the clinical objectives and clinical experiences were similar to what they covered in diploma training.

> "… for me what I can say everybody has a license, he or she passed through KMTC, they did the same thing, we are repeating the same thing, so we don't … I think there is no need for clinical placements." KT_FGD1_08.

> "Okay when it comes to clinical rotations, there are some basic things that we did back in diploma training, that we are forced to repeat. So, if they can do away with some assessments that we did that repeat themselves, nothing changes, it's the same procedure. … And you find us again struggle with the same assessment in BScN …" KM_FGD1_09.

Other part-time BScN students felt that clinical experience was important. They reported that they are likely to be out of touch with skills in certain areas that they do not practice in, hence the need for clinical experience.

> "I really support clinical placements. … some skills you have forgotten, so if you could be having those skills, it will assist you." NB_FGD3_04.

The clinical environment was not conducive to part-time BScN students' learning. The resources allocated for their clinical learning were inadequate and the hospitals used for clinical experience lacked basic supplies to facilitate part-time BScN students' learning. Clinical placement settings required qualified tutors and clinical mentors who can contribute to assessing and demonstrating procedures to the part-time BScN students. Moreover, the identified clinical placement sites were described as lacking the resources required for the training of the students on hands-on nursing skills.

> "The only problem with clinical placement is the resources they are allocating us when we are in those clinical areas. We are going to a government hospital where the resources are limited. We are paying a lot of money, reason being that most of that money should be put to those clinical areas … But when you go there, there isn't those resources, you are told to improvise …" KT_FGD2_04.

"… the problem is that there is no clinical instructor. So, there is nobody who is guiding you on what specific things you should be doing and probably those are some of the areas that you have not worked in for a long time. So, I think it would be better to have a clinical instructor." KH_FGD2_06.

As a result, some part-time students felt that there was a need to revise the clinical learning outcomes and the way clinical learning was structured.

"… my recommendation will be on the clinical experience. They should make them more realistic than the way they have been for these years for us to reap fruits from them and that will be the only way for us to learn." KM_FGD3_07.

4.7 THEME 4: POLICY NEEDS

This theme has two sub-themes that include training institutional regulations and students' regulations.

4.7.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Training institutional regulations

Training institutional regulations needed by part-time BScN students to navigate their learning include exam guidelines, which incorporate guidelines on missing marks, prior communication of the academic calendar and communication and feedback mechanisms.

Lack of prior communication made it difficult for the part-time students to plan ahead. They reported that they needed prior communication to help them engage in forward planning of finances and time. Prior communication is important to help them mobilise resources needed and secure release from their place of work.

"… For me, I would like to see an outline for the whole course given to students, what is expected for the first year and for the second year and the last half of the third year. What I have in mind is that we will be coming back here in April, but between January and April we don't know what they have aligned for us in terms of placements. That communication if it is forthcoming well in advance some of the students will be able even to probably make arrangements where money is involved and also time. To me, that is what probably I would wish to see." KT_FGD1_04.

Missing grades was a reported issue by part-time BScN students. This was compounded by the fact that there was no clear process for tracing missing grades. The students moved from one department to another and from one lecturer to another, trying to find out what happened to their grades. Eventually, part-time BScN students were forced to repeat a unit to acquire a grade. Repeating the units was also laden with its challenges. The students were not sure when the unit will be offered again, and they had to pay for the unit. This resulted in financial liability to the part-time BScN students because of poor record keeping by the university.

"The issues of exams and missing marks is not really clear because you even wonder as a student, you've done your CATs, you've attended all the classes, you've done your exam, you've signed. So, at the end of the day, you end up with questions now where did my exam go out of all of us here, how did just yours missed? So, it's the process that we really don't understand, at the end of the day the only option is there is just to sit again for that exam which you don't know even when it will be done, you don't know where you'll get money for that paper because you had not planned for it. So, it's really an issue that needs to be looked at a very clear way." KM_FGD1_05.

One participant described how the system was not supportive as they were tossed from pillar to post:

"Completely no, if there's no support because even sometimes you have a small issue and you jump from one person to the other, "No, I can't handle this, go to this person, go to this person." And the end of it you are rotating just around the department without knowing exactly who is supposed to handle the issue. And then when you have a problem with unsubmitted assignments, missing marks, most of the lecturers will be like, "You go follow up with that one, go follow up with that one," at the end of it all you're not getting any assistance." NB_FGD2_04.

Part-time BScN students felt that there was a miscommunication between the various university departments and themselves. The participants reported that there was a gap in the way communication of school fees and grades were being handled. A case in point is when the students' online portal showed different grades than what they were getting

from their educators. Similarly, the school fee deadlines were communicated at the last minute before the end-of-semester exams.

> "I think there is miscommunication between the lecturers and the digital campus because you find that the marks don't tally. The lecturer will say she didn't put those marks, but your portal is showing something different. I think there is a miscommunication, or I don't know." KM_FGD3_02.

> "… they don't update us how much fee we are supposed to pay, they just wait until the last minute, that's when they tell us how much we are supposed to pay and the clearance take too long." KT_FGD2_03.

4.7.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Students' regulations

Data revealed that part-time BScN students appreciated clear student guidelines. The guidelines were critical in enabling them to navigate the requirements of the universities. Where students' guidelines were available, the students reported that they felt supported by their university. The lack of guidelines, led to a lack of accountability by the university staff.

There were no clear guidelines on what should be done when there are missing grades. The students were left to follow up on their missing grades. They were tossed between educators and the examination office with minimal assistance. Eventually, they opted to repeat the unit so that they can have a grade. This had a cost implication, as they had to register for the unit and pay the required fee before they are allowed to take an examination. This lack of clear guidelines on what should be done when there are missing grades led to a lack of accountability and poor record-keeping by the university staff with dire consequences for the students.

> "… at times when a student has a missing mark, it's total confusion. Because you will be forced to go from one department to the other without knowing who the responsible person is. The lecturer doesn't know the process to follow either, so you are just confused. So, you get to see some of the students don't graduate, they are forced to repeat the same unit." KT_FGD1_11.

Part-time BScN students also reported a lack of orientation when they joined the university. Therefore, there was no smooth transition for them as they struggled to find their way around and to get the services they needed as explained by one participant:

"… but there's no nursing orientation. So, you find that you have come to the school you don't even know about the classes, you don't know anything. … when you go to the office, they send you to someone else and you go round and round ..." KM_FGD3_01.

Part-time BScN students were not represented in the students' governance. Consequently, the university leadership was not addressing issues that were specific to them. They recommended having part-time BScN students represented in the students' leadership.

"There is a parliament for the school where we have student leaders. … we are not represented in the school parliament, so our issues, nobody is aware of them. Yet, we cannot go all of us to take our concerns to the school administration. So, I am recommending that next time when they are conducting elections or when they are planning how many seats we need to have in the student leadership, they consider us." NB_FGD1_01.

The study revealed that there were guidelines on the submission of assignments. However, the timing of these assignments was reported to be problematic. The participants stated that it would be easier if they got all the assignments at the beginning of the semester instead of getting them towards the end of the semester as one participant suggested.

"… they should give us assignment on time. You find that after you start the semester, one month goes completely without doing anything. Then, when you are remaining with two months, now assignment piles, in every unit. We do six units every semester. Now you get assignments all through. By the time you are finishing assignments, you are only remaining with a two-week period of studying. So, if possible they can send us assignments at the beginning of new semester, it will give us a one-month period of doing the assignments then two months of studying." KM_FGD2_06.

It is evident from the data that part-time BScN students needed more time to meet their assignment deadlines since they had other competing roles. This participant poignantly articulated the many balls they had to keep in the air as she pleaded for support:

> "I would consider support to be in terms of timelines for assignments and all those assignments, terms papers, research work we should be given more time, in the same regard that we are working, we are parents, and we have other social roles that we need to fulfil to have a balanced life." KH_FGD1_06.

4.8 ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BSCN STUDENTS

Enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students were discussed concerning the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. The model emphasises three spheres of student support and engagement in higher education: the academic sphere, the social sphere, and the service sphere. In each sphere of support, the model emphasises an institution's capacity to offer support, the staff's capacity to offer support and students' capacity to engage to receive support. In line with the conceptual framework, enablers and barriers were classified as institutional-related, program-related, students-related financial-related and staff-related. The data revealed various factors that acted as enablers and barriers to the support of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. These factors are further discussed below.

4.8.1 Enablers of part-time BScN students' support

Data revealed several factors that acted as enablers to the support of part-time BScN students. Enablers are discussed in line with the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. They are classified as institutional-related enablers, program-related enablers, and student-related enablers. Institutional-related enablers include the use of technology to access the library and other learning resources, adult-friendly regulations, a conducive physical environment and a flexible fee payment plan. Programme-related enablers include clinical learning at one's place of work and the use of blended learning strategies. Students-related enablers include proper planning and employer support.

4.8.1.1 Institutional-related enablers

The use of technology in part-time BScN training was reported to be an enabler for student support. The course was offered in a blended learning format that incorporated face-to-face sessions and online learning. Participants reported that the use of technology allowed part-time BScN students to access learning resources and vital resources for research work with ease. Technology allowed the information technology (IT) department to support students remotely in troubleshooting some hitches experienced during online learning.

> "… When we are off campus, we have a facility called virtual private network the VPN, personally I've been able to utilise it and I've been able to access resources from the library particularly the clinical key and other databases for research and other course work that have been dedicated to you. Also, the IT support staff, the young guys who are here are always on hand to assist us to troubleshoot some of the difficulties that we encounter while engaging with the web-based learning." KH_FGD2_08

With participants working most of their time, they stated that they were able to meet course requirements through the use of technology. They were able to receive tutorials, work on their assignments and other coursework, and send it back to their lecturers through an online portal.

> "And since we are … most of us we are working students, during the semester period most of the time we are at work and we go back home do the studies online and submit our assignments online, which are sent by our lecturers online at the same time." KM_FGD3_03

The very nature of the programme was wholly dependent on technology. There were minimal face-to-face classes within the semesters, yet learning was made possible through the use of an online platform. Additionally, internet access within the learning institutions was a great enabler. It allowed students to access coursework and download learning resources without incurring more expenses. Technology was noted to help the students in meeting the course work submission deadlines than having to submit hard copies.

"What I also think that is support from the university is the internet services because we can access throughout the day while we are at campus, it is helping all the way in accessing material for our studies." KH_FGD2_07

"… the last semester we had deadlines. So at least when you hand in the soft copy, you have made the deadline, so you have time to bring the hard copy. Like for me I come from far so I can't like to bring the hard copy but at least the teacher sees that I made an effort by posting the soft copy before the deadline was done." KH_FGD1_03

Participants emphasised the need for universities to adopt regulations that are friendly to adult students. Some universities were noted to have a high GPA requirement for one to pass, while others had policies that made it difficult for pregnant part-time BSN students to complete their studies. On the contrary, some universities had policies that were appropriate for adult students, where students received support from educators and other students. This made the learning environment comfortable for the student to complete their studies as planned as one participant explained.

"Well let me add on the issues of the school laws, we actually have laws that work, and they are lenient, and they are student-friendly. I'm referring to a case where one of us almost got expelled because of the GPA issue and we followed the set procedure for appealing and it actually worked. I thought it would not work but clearly laws do work". KM_FGD2_02

"Other universities we see that when somebody conceives, they are normally discontinued from the program, but here we receive much support, you are never discontinued, you are allowed to continue with the programme and you are supported, holistic support from the lecturers and the fellow students." KH_FGD2_04

In line with the provision of adult-friendly policies, the universities also provided adult-friendly facilities to support the needs of the adult learner. This included a lactation room and a prayer room.

"Yes, to add on the resources, of late we are having a breastfeeding room which is a very good thing. Apart from breastfeeding, you can go express your milk and also

there is a fridge to keep the breast milk. That is a very good resource, especially to us who are mothers at the same time students." KH_FGD1_05

"In addition to that, recently there is a prayer room to cater for our spiritual part. So, I think that goes a long way." KM_FGD3_06

Adult-friendly communication policies were seen as enablers of students' support. There were instances where students were encouraged to communicate with their educators using the most convenient communication method. This seamless communication provided a sense of linkage between the students, their educators and the institution.

"… in addition to that we also have … we can send an email in case we cannot be able to come to school which is very good because you'll be settled where you are unlike other universities, they don't have that channel of communication with their lecturers". KT_FGD2_03

4.8.1.2 *Programme-related enablers*

The blended-learning design of the programme was seen as the main reason why the students opted to pursue a bachelor's degree. The design enabled them to both engage in their studies and continue working. This was the main programme-related enabler for the part-time BScN students. Participants stated that it would have been impossible for them to pursue the course, if the course was designed as full-time, with only face-to-face teaching sessions.

"… But if you have this access of the internet … because our learning is based mostly on online. All our assessments are online; all our assignments are online." KH_FGD3_03

Participants stated that undertaking clinical learning at their place of work enabled them to pursue a part-time BScN programme. This eliminated the need to travel to specific hospitals for clinical experience, which resulted in time and financial constraints. It was argued that being in a familiar environment and having the support of one's workmates removed the anxiety that was associated with being in an unfamiliar environment. It also provided an opportunity for part-time BScN students to choose mentors who would support them through the training.

"… I am doing my clinical hours at the place where I work. So, the departments I'm going in, I have friends who are willing to teach me. … So, I'm enjoying, I'm finding clinical hours under a familiar environment and people I work with more beneficial than going to the main hospital where most of the time we got stranded in the morning as the report was being taken. So, for me the unsupervised are working better than the supervised." KM_FGD2_02

4.8.1.3   Students-related enablers

Participants indicated that personal planning was key for the successful completion of the BScN part-time course. Personal planning started before one joined the course and continued throughout the course. They emphasised that personal planning involved planning with the employer and the family. Planning with the employer was vital to ensure that one obtained time off to sit for exams and attend classes as the participants explained.

"I think it all comes down to planning like **name withheld** said, we are adults, and we plan. So, you knew you are coming to school. … I think it's all down to planning and being very strategic with yourself, that's my opinion." KT_FGD1_05

"So, you are given those two mandatory days that you want to go to school and then if you have an exam week, you are supposed to present the timetable one month prior so that it is … you present a copy to the HR and to your departmental head so that they factor that in the duties." KH_FGD3_08

"… my employer is considerate, but I have to provide a one month's exam notice that I will have exams on a certain date of the following month." KM_FGD2_07

Participants with supportive employers reported that they had minimal challenges in meeting their course obligations. These obligations included class attendance, clinical experience, assessment and sitting for exams.

"Well, some of us from referral hospitals appreciate when we get support from my employers. Therefore, for us from the national referral hospital, we get some support." KM_FGD2_11

"For me personally at my institution of work I have no problem. Even right now if I call them and tell them that tomorrow I'm having an exam they'll just say, "It's okay, just go on." So, I've gotten full support and I really appreciate it. At the end of my school, I think I'll reward them with something." KH_FGD2_01

4.8.2 Barriers to part-time BScN students' support

Data revealed several factors that act as barriers to the support of part-time BScN students. Barriers are discussed in line with the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. They are classified as institutional-related barriers, programme-related barriers, student-related barriers, staff-related barriers, and financial barriers.

4.8.2.1 Institutional-related barriers

Institutional-related barriers that emerged from the data include technology hitches, lack of sufficient resources, clinical assessment sites, communication challenges, missing grades, and student strikes. Participants reported challenges with online LMS. In as much as the use of online LMS tended to make learning feasible for part-time BScN students, there were times when the LMS was unavailable. In certain cases, the site would give notice that it was under maintenance, and the situation would remain that way for over a month. This situation was a major barrier to part-time BScN students' learning. As a result, part-time BScN students could not access their learning resources, library resources, and assignments. They also could not submit their due assignments.

"So, the other challenge I wanted to bring on board is the university introduced a new online portal which actually we were the first people to have used in the month of August and by that time it was not so stable. So apart from the network, the system itself had not picked up. So occasionally you will fail to log in even if you have a network or you will log in and then it logs you out." KT_FGD2_03

"… the portal had good intent, but the implementation is the problem. Because the way it's structured, at times the portal goes offline totally then comes online. Where probably you were about to submit an assignment and it becomes a challenge. So,

the thoughtfulness of the portal was quite well but the implementation is quite a big challenge." KM_FGD4_04

Participants reported that there was a lack of sufficient resources to support their learning. A case in point was the lack of adequate LMS access gadgets for those who needed to use university computers and the lack of adequate books in the library. Computer laboratories were reported to be small and not able to handle the number of students who needed to use the facilities.

> "They are not adequate … (books) … actually because you do research the lecturer tells you she wants you to quote from 2014 coming towards currently where we are. You go to the library; the books are as old as 2008/09." KT_FGD1_06

> "Also, the computer facility is not as big, it's almost like 20 to 30 computers and the campus is quite big. So even when we are here, the younger ones than us will rush there and you can't keep fighting over the computers. So, it's also a challenge …" NB_FGD2_04

Clinical learning facilities where part-time BScN students were allocated for clinical assessments were greatly understaffed. Therefore, part-time BScN students were seen as part of the workforce to cover the nursing shortage instead of being seen as students who needed to acquire specific skills. Part-time BScN students also reported that they lacked clinical supervision and preceptors while in clinical learning sites. These clinical learning sites also lacked essential supplies to facilitate students' learning, even though part-time BScN students had to pay for clinical learning facilities to utilise them for learning. One participant expressed despair in the excerpt below:

> "… the problem is, it's just cumbersome and tiresome because they leave you there because now you've come to cover the shortage and they go missing." NB_FGD2_01

> "The only problem with clinical placement is the resources they are allocating us when we are in those clinical areas. You are going to a government hospital where the resources are limited, you are paying a lot of money reason being most of that money should even be put on those clinical areas so that if there aren't some

resources, they could just buy for our sake so that we can practice with them and we come out as better students." KT_FGD_04

Challenges with clinical learning sites were not limited to government clinical facilities. Part-time BScN students reported being stigmatised and discriminated against in a private hospital while in clinical placement. They were told they cannot attend to some of the patients even though they are licensed and qualified to do so.

"There is someone who told me that I can't work with certain patients because us people from the government we don't know how to approach patients, so I felt so left out I didn't even bother again to go and take care of those patients …" KH_FGD2_08

The study revealed that communication between the institution and part-time BScN students was wanting. This is because the students are expected to utilise LMS to communicate with their educators. However, often the LMS system was often down, and they did not receive any feedback from the educators. Lack of feedback and failing communication channels forced part-time BScN students to travel over 700 kilometres to the university to have the information they need, and to have their issues sorted out. Part-time BScN students poignantly described the communication challenges and gave examples of how they were not in sync with e-learning.

"Okay on the communication part of it, between the student and the teacher I think there's a need for enhancement on the communication. Because you find that okay, we don't come to the school literally, we should communicate online. So, you find that you ask something online, but the tutor takes a long time to answer and also sometimes they don't answer. So how are we communicating? We are not communicating in any way and maybe the student is in need of certain information or clarification. So, I think the tutors should consider the part-time students and spend a lot of time online trying to see the needs of the students and what they need maybe." KM_FGD3_06

"… So, I think if the university can have a way where we can reach to the people, to the dean also the lecturers, to the digital campus guys managing you know the notes and all that, it can be easy for us to access some things, to get across

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information, to ask for things without having necessarily to travel. So open lines of communication I think we need more of that. NB_FGD2_05

"Ideally, this is supposed to be distance learning, but you find that in case you have an issue with the assignment or with anything, you are told to come to the offices. Now if I'm coming from Mandera (1000 km away) or Wajir (700 km away), how am I supposed to come to the … like the digital office? Your teacher tells you to come to the digital office, let's say in Mandera. I think it should not be that way if it is a distance learning process so everything should be online." KM_FGD3_02

Part-time students reported that certain aspects of the training were not communicated early enough. They stated that they would like to have course outlines given to them ahead of time. Lack of prior communication made it difficult for the part-time students to plan ahead. They reported that they needed prior communication to help them engage in the planning of finances and time. Prior communication is important to help them mobilise resources needed and secure release from their place of work.

"I would like to see an outline for the whole course given to students, what is expected for the first year and for the second year and the last half of the third year. What I have in mind is that we will be coming back here in April, but between January and April we don't know what they have aligned for us in terms of placements. That communication if it is forthcoming well in advance some of the students will be able even to probably make arrangements where money is involved and also time." KT_FGD2_04

As earlier stated, part-time BScN students felt left out in student governance. Consequently, they stated that they had no channel for airing their grievances to the university administration. They felt that their concerns were not acted upon by the university administration. Ironically, when asked whether they (part-time BScN students) have participated in the student leadership activities, they stated they had not taken a keen interest in students' leadership.

"No channel of communication between the students and the administration. And also, I think there's no representative for the distance [part-time] learning students. I think if I'm not wrong, what are they … the full-time students have a student

representative committee or something. But I've never heard of the distance learning representatives anywhere." KM_FGD3_08

The study revealed learning disruptions as a barrier to part-time BScN students. Disruptions in learning were caused by strikes by regular students, necessitating the senate to close universities. In such cases, part-time BScN students felt disenfranchised since their study period tended to be prolonged. They wondered why they had to suffer because of the mistakes of others.

"… I would like a support such that if there were an interruption during the studying time, that the university would be able to reschedule the programme. Like us who are to take like two years, two and a half years or three, you find that because of the interruptions you go all the way to five years. If we get maybe a support that the university can be able to squeeze in or reschedule something in between for the part-time student, we would really appreciate." KT_FGD1_09

4.8.2.2 *Programme-related barriers*

Programme-related barriers that emerged from the data are programme design, internet access, heavy and redundant curriculum, and BScN scope of practice. The study revealed that the very nature of the programme design was a barrier to some part-time BScN students. The programme was designed as a blended learning programme with most teaching and learning activities being carried out by students on the LMS platform. This aspect posed a challenge to most students who reported a lack of time to cover all the learning activities given at any given time.

"… And considering that this is adult nursing, I think there should be some changes that should be made. For example, I might not do the assignments with reasons maybe, so I should be allowed to sit for the examination and when I'll be having time in future, do that CAT that I missed …" KM_FGD3_06

The use of blended learning to deliver the programme was a barrier since most of the part-time BScN students are not adequately utilising the technology in their studies. This was attributed to limited knowledge of the use of technology, lack of network coverage, or lack of interest in using the technology. This forced the students to make trips to areas with connectivity for them to download the study materials or send the coursework and

the assignments to their lecturers. The participants pleaded with the educators to bear in mind the challenges of internet connectivity when they are determining deadlines for students' assignments.

> "… I would urge the lecturers to discuss the deadline for submitting their course content and assigning us with the assignments and CATs. They should understand our difference in geographical distribution, to accommodate those people who are challenged based on network issues. KT_FGD1_06

Clinical experience in a part-time BScN programme is designed to be undertaken by the student at their own time and at their place of work where possible. However, clinical assessments are carried out in designated healthcare facilities that are approved by the nursing council. The way clinical assessments were designed acted as a barrier to some part-time BScN students. For part-time BScN students to have their clinical assessments done at the designated clinical sites, they had to travel to the site and cater for their accommodation during the assessment period. As a result, this increased financial strain is associated with the part-time BScN programme. The participants recommended that this is reviewed, and clinical assessments are done at their nearest approved health facility.

> "To come and stay here for a whole month for assessment. You come 600km from Turkana, Samburu and you come up to Kiambu. So, we were requesting if it is …
> if they are able to go back to that whereby you can be the three of you, you go to Nakuru, the nearest Nyeri, that one can be very convenient, and it reduces the cost." NB_FGD1_08

The study revealed that the curriculum for part-time BScN was content-heavy and redundant. There was a repetition of content covered at the diploma level and a repetition of clinical requirements. The part-time BScN students seemed convinced that they were using the same curriculum as the regular BScN students, and the only difference between the two programmes was time. The part-time BScN programme takes two and a half years, while the regular BScN programme takes four years. It is with this understanding that the participants stated that the part-time BScN programme curriculum needs review to remove the repeated content and make it relevant to the students.

"I think there are some things in the curriculum that are not relevant to the nurses. So, I think they should, maybe experts should sit down and then come up with only things that are a bit relevant to the nurses." KM_FGD2_10

"… so that at least they can try to reduce because the curriculum is very bulky. And you realise nurses go through some things that are not even relevant in their field." KT_FGD2_08

"… are we using the same curriculum these other regular students are using, the things we are learning are the things which are being done by the regulars, the difference is only the time." NB_FGD1_01

Participants reported that they were taunted by their fellow colleagues due to a lack of clear description of the scope of practice for BScN graduates. BScN graduates and diploma graduates were assigned similar roles; making it look as though there is no distinction been the two cadres. This was made worse by the fact that Kenya lacks a differentiated scope of nursing practice, that differentiates the roles between diploma-prepared and degree-prepared nurses.

"I wanted to talk about the scope of a BScN nurse in Kenya, because in other countries especially the western countries, you find that the scope of practice of BScN is very higher." KH_FGD3_03

4.8.2.3 *Staff-related barriers*

Staff-related barriers that emerged from the data include minimal contact with educators and lack of mentorship. The universities tended to cover the educators' shortage by engaging part-time educators from other institutions. However, this arrangement had its own challenges. The part-time BScN students reported that they lacked support and follow-up in courses that were taught by part-time educators. This made it difficult for them to clarify concepts taught after the lesson.

"I think the tutors should consider the distance students and spend a lot of time online trying to see the needs of the students." KM_FGD3_06

"… when you call the lecturer who taught you to clarify something, they refer you to the next one. Sometimes you're being told that your lecturer is at Meru (a different campus) and yet you are in Nairobi campus. so, we get a lot of challenges in learning …" KT_FGD2_08

Participants recommended that the faculty should engage with them more as they felt disconnected and needed mentorship:

"The other issue which I don't know whether it is workable but … the mentorship, you find that we are never visited in our places of work. So, there is no mentor who knows what is happening there, so long as you meet online, you do your assignments, you do your CATs, you come to class, you pass your exam. So, I would recommend if they can improve on that, visiting the students, meeting them maybe grouping them to see what they are happening, I would recommend that also." NB_FGD2_09

4.8.2.4   *Student-related barriers*

Student-related barriers that emerged from the data include multiple and conflicting roles, lack of social support, lack of employer support, and lack of promotion. Part-time BScN students had multiple responsibilities that ranged from family matters, employment responsibilities, caregiving responsibilities to parents and siblings, and school responsibilities. The majority of them had families with young children. They were also working in demanding and stressful jobs. As a result, they struggled to achieve a balance between their studies and other roles. They reported that their other roles affected their studies, but their studies affected other roles.

"… we should be given more time, in regard that we are working, we are parents, and we have other social roles that we need to fulfil to have a balanced life." NB_FGD2_06

"… for example, when it is exam week, my two-year-old knows mummy is reading, the bedroom is always locked. And after exams, they usually ask, "Mummy you are not reading now?" As in they had programmed themselves and they feel so bad. When I open school, they are like, "Now you've opened, you'll be locking yourself inside." So, I would say my studies are affecting the other roles because as an

adult I am able to prioritise things right. So, when it is exam week, I drop down everything else, I concentrate on my studies." KH_FGD1_01

"Students coming to post-basic BScN are people with social expectations in the community. Some of them are working, some of them are parents. But you will find that we are covering so much such that you are either forgetting all the other aspects and focusing on the degree or you are failing in all the aspects." KM_FGD3_03

To successfully fulfil their multiple roles, part-time BScN students reported that they needed support from their families and employers. Family support constituted time to study and have other family members take up the caring roles at home. It also meant family members understand that the financial support they have been receiving from part-time BScN students may no longer be available since the students are now paying school fees. Employer support constituted time to attend classes and take exams, and a flexible work schedule to accommodate a request for a day off to attend school activities. Due to a lack of employer support, students devise strategies to be released from work. Some part-time BScN students resorted to paying their colleagues to work for them.

"… so, you have to work yourself out, maybe pay someone else to do your duty so that you can come to school." KH_FGD1_10

"Support from the employer is very minimum. So, it's actually up to you now to get somebody to actually work for you." KM_FGD2_06

Part-time BScN students are expected to be promoted after they finish their degree. However, they had observed their colleagues who have undertaken the same programme earlier and were still working in the same job group as they did with the diploma. As a result, part-time BScN students tended to question why they were taking the course anyway. Since they had already committed time and money, they decided to complete the course anyway. They stated that they were taking the course to acquire the degree certificate.

"… because when we are coming to upgrade, you are coming with a motive that you are making yourself better including even maybe your salary. Because we are

made to believe when you have a degree you earn better than when you have a Diploma." KH_FGD1_04

Part-time BScN students believed that earning a degree certificate would also earn them a promotion. However, this was not the case as employers took time to implement their promotion guidelines. This is exemplified by the disgruntled comments below:

"… we are done with our upgrading course, we are now degree nurses or BScN nurses, to get that promotion wherever we are working, especially with the government is difficult. They are not ready to promote us. Now you find at times our degrees have no value when we want promotion at work." KM_FGD1_01

"… now about demotivating factors in BScN course. Now at the government level, you find that you are a Diploma nurse, and you were employed that way, now I take BScN course, it will take years before I'm re-designated or be considered as a BScN nurse. So, it's quite demotivating." KT_FGD3_04

4.8.2.5   Financial barriers

Financial challenges were emphasised by part-time BScN students. They repeatedly stated that financial support was key in allowing them to progress with the course. They stated that at the onset of the course, the universities only disclosed school and other tuition fees related to the course. As part-time BScN students got on board, they discovered that there were numerous hidden costs of the programme that they did not anticipate. Therefore, they found themselves struggling to fulfil their financial obligations towards the universities and their families. Financial barriers identified in the study included the costs for school fees, accommodation, transport, internet, and the repeating of units.

Part-time BScN students reported that the course was expensive. Besides the cost of the programme, the mode of school fee payment offered by universities made it challenging for part-time BScN students. The students were expected to pay the entire semester school fee within the first two weeks of the semester to access online LMS. School fees included services that students paid for but did not receive. They were charged transport and accommodation services, yet they did not receive those services.

"And then there's an incident which happened just recently when we came, we found out that everybody was charged accommodation fee, everybody." KT_FGD1_08

"… Because the campus itself is enormous, it's so big, from one point to another. Maybe that transport which again we pay for in our fees, we've never seen it happen to us." KM_FGD2_04

Financial challenges were compounded by the hidden costs of the programme. The hidden costs were associated with transport, accommodation, internet and access gadgets, clinical experience and repeating units. Some part-time BScN students came to the university from a distance of 500 kms. That meant that they had to travel the previous day, get accommodation and attend face-to-face classes for a stipulated duration. Some universities required the students to attend face-to-face classes every two days a week, while others offered three weeks of face-to-face classes every two months. Both models of part-time studies had a cost implication on travel and accommodation that part-time BScN students had to bear.

"Most of the universities offering this programme are based in Nairobi or the major cities, and nurses are everywhere in Kenya. So, imagine a nurse who has to travel from Kisii (400 km away) every Wednesday and Thursday to come to Nairobi and they go back there." KH_FGD1_03

The blended learning approach that universities were using to offer part-time BScN programmes had a cost implication on internet and laptop purchase. Part-time BScN students incurred the costs of internet and purchase of laptops to facilitate their study. In some instances, participants had to travel to places where the internet is available to access LMS. Cyber cafes were often used by those who did not have a laptop to access LMS. This resulted in cost implications since cybercafé charges clients per minute.

"… there are some people in very interior areas like Narok where the network is inaccessible, so they have to travel all the way to the nearest town, and I think it's very challenging." KM_FGD1_08

"We are using the online learning platform, some places it is very difficult until you go to a cyber to access learning platform. This person has gone back to work and

also the family needs them and now you are supposed to create time to go to a cyber to go and look on an online platform." NB_FGD_05

As earlier stated in the themes, universities lacked mechanisms to resolve missing grades, forcing students to retake the units and the exams to acquire a grade. This contributed to the hidden cost of the programme as part-time BScN students had to pay to retake the unit or exam.

4.9   SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the results of the first phase of the study. The study sought to understand the nature of support and perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. The study has revealed the support needs of part-time BScN students as human needs, technological needs, psychosocial needs, curriculum review and policy needs. Enablers and barriers to support have been discussed following the theoretical framework. They include programme-related enablers and barriers, institutional-related enablers and barriers, staff-related enablers and barriers, students-related enablers and barriers and financial barriers.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the themes and sub-themes that emerged from individual interviews. The data is presented covers two objectives of the study; (I) to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students and (ii) to describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.

5.2   DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The audio files of individual interviews were handled the same way as those of focus group discussions; uploaded into a computer, transcribed verbatim, counterchecked for accuracy, password protected, and coded by two researchers. To immerse herself in the data, the researcher downloaded the audio files on the phone and would listen to them when driving to and from work. The audio files were also listened to when reading the transcripts to clarify some nuances. Field notes were also used to understand emotions during the interviews. The tone of participants' voices and their hesitancy or confidence in answering questions were noted (Green, Willis, Hughes, Small, Welch, Gibbs & Daly 2007:547). With repeated listening, the researcher started making notes of statements that were essential in answering research questions.

Inductive process was used to analyse the data, similar to what has been described I chapter 4 (Graneheim et al 2017:30). A similar process as the one described in Chapter 4 was followed to produce final themes and sub-themes. A total of 16 codes remained. These codes were analysed and grouped to produce nine sub-codes (Annexure T). These were further analysed and resulted in 4 themes and 10 sub-themes.

5.3   RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.3.1 Sample characteristics

Ten nurse educators teaching part-time BScN students were interviewed. Their years of teaching at the university ranged from four years to 12 years. Nine of them were females with only one male.

5.3.2 Overview of research findings

The study sought to understand the nature of support and perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. The analysis of individual interviews revealed four themes and 11 sub-themes indicative of the perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya.

Table 5.1   Summary of themes and sub-themes indicative of the nature of and perceived needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

Themes	Sub-themes
1 Learning needs	1.1 Theoretical learning
	1.2 Clinical learning
	1.3 Technology learning
2 Resource needs	2.1 Technology resources
	2.2 Financial resources
3 Adult students' needs	3.1 Competing priorities
	3.2 Motivation to learn
	3.3 Teaching pedagogies
4 Psychosocial needs	4.1 Social support
	4.2 Psychological support
	4.3 Employer support

5.4   THEME 1: LEARNING NEEDS

This theme has three sub-themes, namely, theoretical learning, clinical learning, and technological learning. The interview data from the educators revealed that part-time BScN students had a knowledge gap in most nursing knowledge. These knowledge gaps

were evident in their theoretical learning, clinical learning and their use of technology for learning purposes.

5.4.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Theoretical learning

The fact that part-time BScN students were registered nurses created an impression that they were knowledgeable in basic nursing knowledge in most courses. However, their already existing knowledge was not translated to their learning by the way they performed in the exams. This is even though part-time BScN students indicated that there was a repetition of content covered in diploma training and that the part-time BScN curricula should be revised to acknowledge prior learning. However, their educators indicated that their performance in most courses was poor and that it was not reflective of their years of nursing practice. The educators expressed their dismay in the excerpt below:

> "… when it comes to the classroom work, their performance to us is not what we expect especially since they already have been in practice, we expect them to do better than the generic ones." KT_IDI_01

> "Nursing process is still a problem for most of them, pharmacology is a major problem, application of theory to practice is another problem." NB_IDI_01

The educators also attributed their poor performance to their mindset. They indicated that the part-time BScN were difficult to teach compared to the generic students. They stated that part-time BScN are set in their ways of doing things, making it difficult for them to learn new knowledge. Therefore, they needed to unlearn wrong practices to learn new knowledge. The excerpts below express the educators' frustration:

> "My experience has been I find them difficult to teach simply because they already have a certain mindset and a certain way of doing things such that when you are bringing them back to what the right thing should be, we seem to get some resistance." KT_IDI_01

> "… But in actual sense they have been doing things the wrong way and the wrong way has become the right way for them. First, before they learn, you have to unlearn because you find they have already learnt some shortcuts, unlike our

generic undergraduates who are fresh. … so that we are able to have them get new concepts in nursing and understand ..." KM_IDI_02

Theoretical learning needs also included learning materials and the infrastructure needed to access learning materials. The educators indicated that learning resources allocated for part-time BScN students were few and inadequate. Some universities also lacked clear learning modules for part-time BScN students, which made it difficult for students to understand the learning outcomes of the units and the resources to use. Consequently, the students tended to depend on the educators' notes.

> "… but the books are also few, the resource materials in terms of the reference that they need to read are also few." NB_IDI_02

> "… and in terms of support, like for our programme we still do not have very well-done e-learning modules, so you find they are struggling on which notes to study. They have to depend on the notes from the lecturer." NB_IDI_03

Laboratories used to teach certain theoretical components were also ill-equipped.

> "The lab doesn't have all the equipment we would like to use for some of the things we would like to teach is the theory or to show them a video." KT_IDI_01

5.4.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Clinical learning

Educators expressed their frustrations with the mindset of part-time BScN students. They are expected to be treated in a manner that considers that they are already registered nurses with a wealth of knowledge from their clinical practice. However, their clinical performance in basic nursing skills, such as health assessment, did not demonstrate prior knowledge. They also tended to complain about the content being taught, indicating that it was a repetition of the content they covered in their diploma training.

> "They complain about the content, how much they are supposed to do and say that it's actually like a repeat of what they did during their Diplomas for some of them. But we are following Nursing Council guidelines". KT_IDI_02

"Our upgrading students (part-time BScN students) have a hard time doing just a basic physical assessment because in their practice it is not something they do. So, I think part of the resistance is they feel like, "Well we already did this when we were doing our Diploma, but in reality, in real life, this is not done anyway so why are you making us redo it?" So that is what … that the feeling I get from them. KH_IDI_01

Students' failure to demonstrate knowledge in theoretical courses resulted to delay in difficulties in clinical learning. progressing with other complex courses. The excerpt below demonstrates the educator's frustration:

"And you cannot also make this student proceed with the more senior courses. When they will go to the clinical area, you meet the same challenges, you're trying to teach the student who is unteachable because they have not mastered the basics." KM_IDI_01

The educators reported that part-time BScN students lacked support at the clinical learning sites. They were viewed as registered nurses and not students, and hence, they received minimal clinical support.

"… if there could be a way that the university works with the clinical site hand in hand so that the people in the clinical areas understand that these are students who need to be supported." NB_IDI_02

"… there is that reluctance of if you try to compare how the nurses in the clinical areas support part-time BScN students compared to generic BScN students. They give regular BScN students more time compared to part-time BScN students because the assumption is that they (part-time BScN students) have been working so they know what to do." NB_IDI_03

Even though nurses in clinical settings provided minimal support to part-time BScN students, their educators were not able to provide support either. Universities lacked clinical instructors and educators stated that they went to clinical settings to "see what the students were doing" instead of offering clinical teaching and support. They acknowledge that that kind of arrangement was inadequate and compromised students' learning.

"Yes, in the clinical, some institutions do not have mentors, so what happens is there are selected persons who are maybe appointed to just go and see what the students are doing and that may not be adequate." NB_IDI_03

"And our other problem is we would love to have clinical instructors to support. Because for me as much as I practised as a nurse, I have gone back to school, and I do not have time to teach at the clinical sites." KT_IDI_02

The educators questioned the quality of clinical learning that the students were achieving. Students were expected to cover their clinical objectives on their own which resulted in poor performance in both theoretical and clinical assessments.

"Of course, quality is compromised because you are not there all the time to know whether they are meeting those objectives. And sometimes you might wonder because when they come and do an assessment and fail, then you wonder did we expose them enough? … because of the workload, we are not able to go to every clinical site." NB_IDI_01

5.4.3 Sub-theme 1.3: Technological learning

During the individual interview, participants highlighted that the part-time BScN students need to have computer applications skills, to enable them to successfully work on their course work through retrieving study materials and submission of the course assignments. It emerged that some students had gaps in technological skills which limit them from adequately working on their coursework. This educator described how some students lacked keyboard skills:

"… but as they are doing homework with the student, they can engage with their children and be helped on how to type …" KH_IDI_01

Yet another educator commented on how some students were not technologically savvy:

"… And maybe also we are assuming everybody is technology competent I guess, so some of them maybe are not but that is also the assumption that they should be able to log in and do these discussions and post. KT_IDI_01

Lack of basic computer skills presented a challenge to part-time BScN students. They tended not to submit their assignments on time or present work that is not well-researched. When questioned about these issues, they gave the excuse of lack of internet.

> "… good example, when it comes to writing some assignments, they don't like. They don't like the writing part, they will tell you, "My internet was not working," they will tell you. Most of the time they claim network issues whenever you bring up ... I mean you need to be able to download this and this so you can do this assignment." KT_IDI_01

5.5 THEME 2: RESOURCE NEEDS

This theme has two sub-themes, namely, technological resources and financial resources. Part-time BScN students needed technological resources and financial resources to successfully undertake their studies. Technological resources allow them to access learning materials and financial resources enable them to acquire the necessary learning materials and pay school fees on time.

5.5.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Technological resources

Part-time BScN course is offered employing blended learning and heavily depends on the use of technology. The students were required to own computers and have a reliable source of internet to access learning materials, access their assignments, submit their assignments, and communicate with their educators. Failure to own the necessary technological resources made it difficult for part-time BScN students to access learning materials and to have self-directed learning. The excerpts below sum it up:

> "The fact that they are part-time students means that they need to apply self-directed learning, so they need access to internet, they need access to online learning resources. They need access to a library where they can access resources to learn. They need an environment where they can be able to have things like discussions, be able to have access to information even after class." KH_IDI_02

"… most of the time, anything electronic they will always tell you that they have no access to good or fast internet that's why they don't use it, but the resources are there, actually a lot, they are there. KM_IDI_01

Some universities provided students with laptops and tablets to use. This was borrowed from the library on a short-term basis. Even with the provision of these gadgets, some part-time BScN students complain that they have no electricity at home. However, they can find places to charge their gadgets. The educators stated that the programme design seemed to assume that every part-time BScN student should be able to have good internet access.

"... Some of them may not afford to buy a computer, so they are given a tablet." KM_IDI_02

"… I have found students saying they have no electricity at home, they have no computers already and that means such kind of student if you give them a computer and it keeps the power for at least eight hours, whenever they go to charge their phones, they could charge the computers and continue learning with it. And that will help them to move very fast." KH_IDI_01

"… the assumption that everybody can access the internet is a major problem because we have students who come from remote areas. But with the current internet connectivity in the country, so I don't think the internet is the main issue." NB_IDI_02

Furthermore, educators noted that some part-time BScN students lived in regions with poor telephone and internet connectivity. This forced the students to make trips to areas with connectivity for them to download the study materials or send the coursework and the assignments to their lecturers.

"One of the things is the internet availability, especially in these marginalised areas like Garissa and I think some parts of Kitui. We've heard stories from students where we send them notes but they cannot access simply because they have to climb a tree, or they have to get the highest point to get internet connection." KM_IDI_01

"… some of them are working very far. … So that distance. Sometimes even if you want to talk to them on the phone even the network is not there. NB_IDI_01

As evidenced by the participants' responses, some of the students used connectivity challenges as an excuse.

"They don't utilise, to me, most of them don't. ... they will tell you, "My internet was not working," you know most of the time they claim network issues." KT_IDI_01

5.5.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Financial resources

Part-time BScN students' educators imitated that the part-time BScN course was expensive compared to the salaries that part-time BScN students earned. The resources required to undertake the course contributed to increasing the cost of training. Similarly, the cost of transport and accommodation when attending face-to-face sessions also contributed to the increased cost of the programme. The educators in the excerpts below summed up the financial situation as follows:

"Finance is a big problem for a number of them as I said because they have to pay. … they are nurses and nurses are not millionaires." NB_IDI_01

"Financial is normally a big, big issue because they are running families and most of them are breadwinners and in our cultural perspective is, when you are working, everybody expects money from you." KH_IDI_01

"They have to pay for accommodation themselves, we don't give them accommodation. Or even if they are given, it is at a cost, it may not be expensive, but it is at a cost. So, they are paying rent at home, and they are paying another rent here so that one actually increases the cost of training." KT_IDI_02

Most part-time BScN students had financial plans on how they will pay their school fees at the beginning of the programme. However, as time progresses, family emergencies and other social issues arise, making it difficult for them to pay their school fee.

"There is a lot of demand on their finances from several other sources, social backgrounds, the family members ... So, even though somebody may have made

arrangements of how they'll pay their school fees, at one time or the other they start having issues". KH_IDI_02

The financial difficulties experienced by part-time BScN students resulted in them taking longer to complete the course than expected. They defer when they cannot meet their financial obligations with the university and then resume when they can afford to pay the school fee. This results in the course taking longer than the expected two and a half years.

"… I can't forget her; this lady started her upgrading one year before I went for my PhD so that was 2011. By the time I was completing in 2016, that is when she was graduating, and the programme is supposed to take two and a half years." KT_IDI_ 01

In some instances, part-time BScN students failed to graduate, despite having completed the programme, due to school fee balances. They had to clear any fee owed to the university before they could be allowed to graduate.

"So, you can find someone has been here for…they are eligible for graduation, but they stay for one year looking for fee to clear. So, there are those few students who really have genuine financial issues but also there are others who have had sponsors." KM_IDI_01

Public universities lacked financial assistance and scholarships for part-time BScN students, which compounded their financial needs. Few students were sponsored by their employers, but the majority of them were sponsoring their learning.

"Unfortunately for us in public universities, we don't have scholarships, actually I have not seen any scholarships for those upgrading nurses (part-time BScN students). … most of them are self-sponsored." NB_IDI_01

5.6   THEME 3: ADULT STUDENTS' NEEDS

This theme has three sub-themes, namely, competing priorities, motivation to learn and teaching pedagogies.

5.6.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Competing priorities

The educators described part-time BScN students as adult students with a wide range of experience in nursing practice. Adult students have competing priorities that make it challenging for them to concentrate on their studies. The majority of them have families and they are employed. Therefore, they fail to come to class when they have family or work issues to attend to.

> "From my experience, first of all these people are working and majority of them over 90% or 99% have families." NB_IDI_02

> "… they are people with families and children, so they have a lot of challenges. And especially sometimes they have to ask for permission to go and attend to family issues like a kid is sick. You don't expect them to come to class and you can't deny them permission to go." KH_IDI_02

> "So, one of the challenges, you find that some of them come to class late, not just late in the timing for the lecture, but even reporting for the session, the face-to-face sessions …" KT_IDI_02

Unfortunately, their competing priorities negatively affected their studies. Educators reported that part-time BScN students failed to complete their assignments and get the coursework done. As a result, they performed poorly, and their poor performance created an impression that they are not committed to their studies.

> "They have no time to concentrate and do the class work plus all the other things. And come to think about when they do their assignments?" NB_IDI_03

> "So, because of that some end up not doing so well and not looking like they are fully committed because they have to juggle on so many things and to do so many things at the same time. But the majority of them are quite willing, it's only that now there are other competing interests that they have to attend to." NB_IDI_02

5.6.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Motivation to learn

Educators described part-time BScN students to be motivated as adult students. The students joined the programme to achieve personal development goals in their careers. These goals include promotion and better earnings, as stated by this educator:

> "… because they are adult students, they come knowing that I'm here to achieve an objective. Even when we interview them, one would tell you. My objective is to become head of a department. My objective is to specialise in future. My objective is to get a better salary." KH_IDI_02

Educators reported that part-time BScN who had intrinsic motivation to pursue the course tended to be eager to learn and needed minimal extrinsic motivation. They need to feel that the educators and the course design are meeting their personal objectives.

> "… it's not like when they come to school you are pushing them, they are eager to learn, they have objectives that they want to meet, and they are also very interested in knowing that the teacher is with them in those objectives however unique they are. So very important that they feel that they are in an environment where their objectives are going to be met." KM_IDI_03

Despite their motivation to learn, their social, family and work responsibilities interfere with their ability to achieve programme goals. Hence, they take longer to complete the programme and achieve their personal goals.

> "They have a lot of social things going on in their life. Every time you give an assignment, they are very quick to tell you, "I didn't do it because my child got sick, my husband did this, my boss refused to give me this …" It's very difficult for them to meet whatever goals they are supposed to meet in the programme." KT_IDI_01

> "… sometimes they take too long in the program, and we have to allow them." KM_IDI_01

Educators hoped that part-time BScN students' motivation to learn would make them reflect on their own practice, and eventually translate to a change of poor practices at

their places of work. It was hoped that the programme would have a significant impact on nursing care.

> "They know what exactly they want, why they have come back to school. And that means that, with time they are reflecting on the richness that they have, they can even be able to make a lot of impact in the workplace and change the model that has been used." KH_IDI_01

5.6.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Teaching pedagogies

The fact that part-time BScN students have competing interests and intrinsic motivations, meant that educators and universities needed to design the programme in a manner that is suitable for them. Consequently, they require teaching pedagogies that are suited for adult students. Educators also stated that their needs as adult students influenced course design and teaching pedagogies, they use to teach them.

> "… it has impacted the way we approach their learning. So, we don't teach them in the same way you would teach someone who is not an adult learner or someone who doesn't have experience." NB_IDI_02

> "… they are unique in the way that they are handled, and you need to realise and recognise them as adults because when they come with the richness of experiences and the roles that they are playing, it's reflected even in their work in the classroom." KH_IDI_01

> "… their experiences and their uniqueness have impacted how we design our modules, how we design their learning, how we interact with them as students have also impacted how we design sort of like if it's leadership, the way you teach leadership to students who have just come from school is different from the way you teach someone who is already working and wants to improve their leadership skills." KH_IDI_02

Educators also viewed part-time BScN students as a resource to their fellow students. Therefore, they designed their courses in such a way that the students were required to share their knowledge with the rest of the class.

"We design learning in a manner that the knowledge they have come with is utilised in generating more knowledge and that they don't just come to be fed then go. It's also important to me as an educator to always tell them you are not just students; you are also partners in improving learning. And you are colleagues because they are nurses, they are licensed, they are practising. So that uniqueness has made us approach learning in a different way." KM_IDI_02

5.7 THEME 4: PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

This theme has three sub-themes: social support, psychological support and employer support.

5.7.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Social support

Educators stated that part-time BScN students needed social support for them to successfully undertake the programme. Social and family expectations of part-time BScN students did not change because they are students. They were still required to participate in all social and cultural activities of the family. As this educator alluded:

"The social environment that the students have come from is not a social environment where you can say you will not attend funerals, you will not attend weddings, you will not attend baptisms, you will not attend naming of babies. There are all these many social requirements that the family expects you to participate in." KH_IDI_02

Moreover, they also intimated that female part-time BScN students experienced unique challenges emanating from marriage, relationships, pregnancy, and parenting. Female part-time BScN students tended to miss assignment deadlines due to family emergencies such as a sick child. Generally, female part-time students tended to struggle to meet the programme goals of their training, due to a lack of social support. This situation is described in the excerpts below:

"… there was also this issue of the family and I really sympathise with the ladies. There are also social challenges emanating from their marriage, emanating from their relationships. At the end of the day, you know as an educator you are really split, you don't know what to do." KM_IDI_01

"We've also had students having social issues. Like I can give an example of a student who had a problem with the husband. The husband was not for the idea of her coming to school and she got a lot of problems with the husband." KH_IDI_02

Consequently, part-time BScN students needed family support to successfully compete in their studies. Lack of family and spousal support made it difficult for female students to progress with their studies, as demonstrated in the excerpt below:

"… One of the students I think told me the husband wanted to divorce her after 50 years of marriage and chased her away and she was about to graduate, that's why she didn't graduate …" KM_IDI_01

5.7.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Psychological support

Educators of part-time BScN students stated that there was a need for psychological support to be offered to part-time BScN students. Due to their nature as adult students, and their various conflicting roles, part-time BScN students experienced role distress. Educators stated that universities had mechanisms in place to provide psychological support to part-time BScN students. These mechanisms ranged from faculty advisors, counselling services and provision of chaplain services and prayer rooms.

"There is also a counselling system and our university has counsellors. Whereby in extreme cases where you are not able to handle and you really think this student would benefit from such support, it's normally very good to engage them." KH_IDI_01

"For us here at least we are lucky we have Chaplaincy Department we also have the Counselling. So, there are those students who really have weighty social issues so we normally listen to them and then we refer them to the chaplaincy, they go pray for them and the Counselling Department." KM_IDI_01

5.7.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Employer support

Educators of part-time BScN students stated that part-time BScN students required support from their employers to successfully complete their programme of study.

Educators described support needed from employers as flexible work schedules that allow part-time BScN students to attend classes and sit for their exams. They noted that some part-time BScN students struggled to get time to attend classes due to a lack of employer support. The students tended to work night shifts and attend classes during the day.

> "… our programme has a face-to-face schedule, where they come and are in class for two weeks. And for some, it's difficult to even secure permission for the full two weeks to be in class, so some have to be working at night and coming to class during the day." KT_IDI_02

> "… you find them sometimes missing exams because they have not been officially released from their workplace. And they can't stay out of work because they need the money to pay fees." NB_IDI_03

Educators noted that there was a difference in conduct and performance between part-time BScN students who received support from their employers and those who did not. Part-time BScN students who were supported by their employers were performing better in their academic activities compared to those who did not receive any support from their employers.

> "… for those who are supported by their employers, you will even notice the way they behave. They are happy, and they are performing well. But these others who seem to be struggling to get permission to go to school, sometimes they are on night shift and then they come to class in the morning." KM_IDI_01

5.8 ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BSCN STUDENTS

Similar to barriers and enablers in Chapter 4, enablers and barriers emanating from individual interviews were categorised in line with the conceptual framework. They are institutional-related, program-related, and students-related. These factors are further discussed below.

5.8.1 Enablers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students

Data revealed institutional-related enablers and no enablers relating to the programme, students or staff were identified.

5.8.1.1 Institutional-related enablers

Institutional-related enablers include the provision of counselling services, faculty advisors and the use of online learning management systems. Educators of part-time BScN students indicated that the provision of counselling services and faculty advisors to part-time BScN students was key in providing support to part-time BScN students.

> "… our institution has a counselling system and faculty advisors who are independent of the learning moment. So that helps because there is someone that the students can trust and they are able to verbalise their issues and you just let them open up and then they say everything. It's not that you may help them, but that listening really makes a lot of difference." KH_IDI_01

> "… our counselling departments or the counsellors it's free of charge, when you are a student, you don't pay anything, what you need is just your time to plan and come and go through this." KM_IDI_02

Similarly, the use of online management systems was viewed as an enable for student support. Educators stated that LMS allowed them to interact with students who are away from campus and gave them opportunities to clarify issues that the part-time BScN students did not understand.

> "… currently we are on the digital platform, everything is online. All the materials we send…once the student has registered, has paid the fees, they are able to access the materials online." KM_IDI_01

> "Course content that was taught face to face, again is available online. So, the student is able to access the information they could have missed from the beginning. We also never deny a student access to the lecturer, it's an open-door policy." KT_IDI_02

5.8.2 Barriers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students

Data revealed several factors that act as barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students. Barriers are discussed in line with the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. They are classified as institutional-related barriers, programme-related barriers, and student-related barriers.

5.8.2.1 *Institutional-related barriers*

Institutional-related barriers that emerged from the data include few educators, which resulted in a lack of mentorship and lack of supervision of part-time BScN students, a lack of adequate resources and a high number of students. Educators of the part-time BScN programme intimated that they were understaffed with a huge workload. In one university, the department of nursing had four nursing educators against a student population of 150. This high workload was a barrier to them offering support to part-time BScN students. Educators stated that they taught various nursing programmes, starting from diploma to PhD programmes. Therefore, the numbers of students were high in comparison with the number of educators available.

> "The workload is a lot, considering that we have students all the way from diploma to PhD. It is quite a challenge. You have classes, you have students to supervise, you have students in their clinical area, you still have meetings and those kinds of things." NB_IDI_03

As a result of the high workload, educators reported feeling demotivated. As one educator expressed his/her frustration in the excerpt below:

> "Sometimes you really want to do the best, but you are overwhelmed also the workload is too much and probably maybe you are also not seeing the good output that you expect, you get demotivated. Personally, I have been demotivated in a situation where I am really trying to do my best, but I don't see the output. … you tell yourself next time, why go to that trouble …" KM_IDI_02

In most universities, part-time and regular BScN programmes were being offered concurrently, and educators reported paying attention to the regular BScN students at the expense of part-time BScN students. This is evident in the excerpt below:

"The problem is we have the regular students. The regular programme runs concurrently with theirs (part-time programme) and we don't put them in the same classes. So, if I'm teaching, I have to teach here (regular programme) and run there and teach (part-time programme). If I'm setting exams, I set our exam here (regular programme) and I set their exam there (part-time programme). If they can reduce my workload on this side (regular programme), I would be better off going to teach there (part-time programme)." NB_IDI_01

This resulted in minimal interaction between part-time BScN students and their educators, a lack of mentorship for part-time BScN students and minimal supervision offered to part-time BScN students. This is evident from the excerpts below.

"At one point in time you have several groups that you are dealing with, so it becomes a bit taxing on the lecturer to be able to give their best because you have to sub-divide your time and meet all the different programmes and groups." NB_IDI_02

Nurse educators were aware of their roles in clinical teaching but were limited by the shortage. The shortage of full-time nursing educators, extended beyond the classroom to clinical experience settings. This is articulated by the educator below:

"… we are only four, four faculty members and our students are doing clinicals. So, in clinicals, we are expected to really follow and see our students once a week. We have to really be engaged, checking what they are doing, doing with them, etc. … but I do not have time." KM_IDI_01

Nursing educators stated that they lacked time to supervise and support part-time BScN students while in clinical settings due to their workload. Consequently, their absence in clinical settings affected the quality of learning by part-time BScN students. This is articulated by the excerpt below:

"… of course, the quality is affected because you are not there all the time to know whether they are meeting those objectives. … again because of the workload we are not able to go to every clinical site." KM_IDI_02

"So, there is minimal supervision. But the good thing as they do their rotations in the hospitals, most of them it's the hospitals they work in." NB_IDI_01

In rare cases where educators went to clinical settings, they failed to provide support to part-time BScN students. As one educator described the visits to clinical settings as "going to see what the students are doing".

"Yes, in the clinicals I know … what happens is there are selected persons who are maybe appointed to just go and see what the students are doing ..." NB_IDI_03

Nurse educators described strategies they had put in place to address the shortage. The educators tended to have contact with students working in geographical regions near the university and excluded those working far away. Similarly, universities paid clinical staff to mentor their part-time BScN students.

"Like I would give an example like we do have contact with them only once a week and those are those just who are near us. But those who are away it is not possible so you will just do conferences with them, attach them different mentors but you are not so sure if the mentors have qualified." KM_IDI_02

"So, we pay mentorship fee, but we insist that work must be done, and we work alongside the mentors. What I do like for example, I do reproductive and teaching, so I ensure that I work alongside the mentor so that whatever I'm teaching, she does not duplicate, and there's no disagreement on what we are saying." KT_IDI_01

Educators noted that skills laboratories needed for part-time BScN training were lacking certain resources. The ill-equipped skills laboratories coupled with the lack of clinical supervision, are institutional barriers that negatively impacted the clinical learning of part-time BScN students.

"The lab doesn't have all the equipment we would like so some of the things we teach them is theory or you show them a video. And our other problem is we would love to have clinical instructors to support." NB_IDI_03

The lack of an adequate number of educators and lack of adequate training resources was compounded by the institutional focus on an increasing number of students. This paradox is highlighted by the educator below:

"The goal is, increase the numbers, increase the numbers, we need more students, we need more students. But then the programme is very hard to run if you have so many students, yet you don't have the support in terms of the number of hours and resources you are allocated to teach these particular students." KT_IDI_01

The participants recommended that the universities should increase the number of educators, to enable them to offer the required support to part-time BScN students. They also recommended that the universities provide the necessary resources to students.

"The university should ensure that the staffing is good because without good staffing, definitely, it's going to affect the students. So, if we had good staffing, we wouldn't have a problem helping these students from wherever they are." NB_IDI_03

"Of course, we would love to have more staff, we would love to have resources, such that the students who need support actually can get the support either financially, psychologically, technology-wise and things like that." KT_IDI_01

Furthermore, there was a recommendation for universities to hire clinical instructors, to improve clinical learning for part-time BScN students.

"The university could invest in hiring clinical instructors." NB_IDI_01

5.8.2.2 *Student-related barriers*

Student-related barriers include limited contact with educators, limited time for their studies, the working status of the part-time BScN students, and their attitude. The status of part-time BScN students was perceived to be a barrier to their support by their

educators. The fact that they are working nurses, with competing roles and interests contributed to their inability to receive support from their educators and their universities. Educators imitated that part-time BScN students had limited time for their studies, compared to the amount of content they were expected to cover in the programme.

> "I see they need a lot of time. The work that is given to them is a lot considering the time they have." NB_IDI_03

> "… for the two weeks, they are supposed to cover content which is equivalent to one or two-semester content." NB_IDI_02

> "They have no time to concentrate and do the class work plus all the other things. And come to think about when they do their assignments, it takes their family time you see." KM_IDI_03

Since part-time BScN students seemed to have less time available for their studies, the situation made it difficult for them to get the assignments done. Educators stated that when they gave part-time BScN students group work to do, the students found it challenging to find time and meet as a group to get the work done. Most of them tended to rush to work after class, instead of meeting as students to work on a given assignment. This is illustrated in the excerpt below:

> "When you give a group assignment, it becomes very difficult for them because they are supposed to be discussing outside class hours. But these students are reporting for night duty. So, you find that becomes a challenge to them. If they are to participate in that group discussion, maybe they participate on their WhatsApp page …" KT_IDI_02

Part-time BScN students seemed set in their way as working nurses. Educators stated that part-time BScN students were reluctant to learn certain aspects of the course that they deemed inapplicable to their place of work. The educator below explains a student's reluctance to learn how to formulate nursing care plans because he/she was not required to formulate nursing care plans by her employer.

> "I was in the clinical area and an upgrading (part-time BScN student) nurse told me, "The only thing I don't like about this upgrading is that I have to do a care plan.

Why do I have to do a care plan and in my practice, I don't do care plans?"
KH_IDI_03

Some educators stated that the attitude of part-time BScN students toward their learning was a barrier to them receiving support. Educators observed that some part-time BScN lacked commitment to their learning, hence causing educators to question their motive for joining the programme. As one educator explained:

"One of the major obstacles for us is their attitude. If you ask me, personally I think some of them are upgrading not because they want to advance their skills, it's for promotion purposes and to get out of whatever position they are in. Because at the end, you don't see the commitment or the excitement of learning." KT_IDI_01

Educators indicated that they needed training on how to handle part-time BScN students. They acknowledged that they tended to complain about them instead of supporting them.

"So, I think even for us (educators) maybe we should be trained on how to handle the upgrading (part-time BScN) nurses. Because I think our expectations maybe are too much or not enough. Such that when we get to class, we complain a lot. We are more disappointed than supporting them, do you get my point?" NB_IDI_01

5.8.2.3   Programme-related barriers

Programme-related barriers include the structure of the programme and curriculum redundancy. Educators stated that the part-time nature of the programme was a barrier to their ability to support part-time BScN students.

"One of the biggest barriers is the structure of our programme where students come for a very short time. They come to class for two days a week. They are so challenged with time because within that day they are supposed to learn several courses ..." KH_IDI_01

The limited time they spent on campus makes it difficult for educators to have physical contact with the part-time BScN students. At the end of the day, part-time BScN students are rushing home or to work.

"That means even if you want to support them, some of them may not be available because they are rushing to go and balance the other responsibilities." KM_IDI_01

Educators revealed that the curriculum for the part-time BScN programme had content that was similar to what the students had learnt in their diploma programme, as stated by this educator:

"The other thing is some subjects are so repeated and the student is wondering why you keep repeating these things. So, I don't know whether we need to think about what are the areas that we need to get this person a BScN level …" KH_IDI_02

"... this person is already an established clinician. we need to think about how we can transform the curriculum so that students have an opportunity to generate new knowledge." KM_IDI_02

"The curriculum the Nursing Council gives us, to be honest, there's really not much difference with the diploma one. They are just telling you, Do this, do this and do this number of hours. So, to me, I don't blame the students as such because, to be honest, there's really no difference." KT_IDI_01

Consequently, educators recommended that the part-time BScN curriculum should be reviewed to make it relevant to part-time BScN students and address the issue of repeated content.

"There is a need for curriculum review so that we know what content is suitable for this particular group of students. What do we scrap off, and what do we bring in?" NB_IDI_03

"So probably we go back to the drawing board with the other stakeholders and look at our curriculum, how should we design it? And by the way, it should be universal, it should be used by all institutions." KM_IDI_01

"… they are repeating content. Maybe the only thing we can do is review the curriculum and see what is helping them." KT_IDI_02

5.9   SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the results of the individual interviews conducted with educators of part-time BScN students. The study sought to understand the nature of support and perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. Data from individual interviews revealed support needs of part-time BScN students as learning needs, resource needs, adult students needs and psychosocial needs. Enablers and barriers to support have been discussed following the theoretical framework. Enablers to supporting part-time BScN students identified in the data were institutional-related enablers. Barriers to supporting part-time BScN students include institutional-related barriers, student-related barriers, and programme-related barriers.

CHAPTER 6

DATA INTEGRATION AND LITERATURE CONTROL

6.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion of the integrated study findings and positions the results in the current body of knowledge. In this study, data were obtained from part-time BScN students in phase one of the study, and educators of part-time BScN students in phase two of the study. The findings of two data sets are integrated and refined themes and sub-themes identified.

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support strategies. The objectives of the study were, to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students, to describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya and to develop and validate guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

6.2   LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY

Search engines used to search relevant articles included JSTOR, EBSCO Host research, HINARI, Google Scholar, CINAHL plus, SAGE journals, Cochrane library, Clinical Key Nursing, and PubMed. The terms 'student support', OR 'learner support' AND 'part-time students', OR 'mature students', OR 'non-traditional students', AND 'higher education' were used. Similarly, 'part-time students' AND 'learning resources' OR 'curriculum needs' OR 'university policies' OR 'psychological needs' AND 'higher education' were also used. Studies that were in other languages, other than English were excluded. The researcher limited the search to review articles and research reports that are no more than ten years old. A total of over 15,000 thousand hits were found. However, the majority of these articles were addressing nursing care and nursing students in general. Further scrutiny of the articles to establish relevance led to a total of 519 articles. After further screening, 30 articles were included in the literature review. Most of the literature available is related to students in higher education in general and not specific to nursing students.

6.3   SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data were collected in two phases. Phase one involved focus group discussions with part-time BScN students and phase two involved individual interviews with part-time BScN students' educators. Ten focus group discussions were held with 8-12 part-time BScN students, and ten individual interviews were conducted with the ten part-time BScN students' educators. All focus group discussions and individual interviews were recorded using two recorders. The voice files were transferred to a laptop that was purchased for the study. The audio files and transcripts were password protected and stored in separate folders. The voice files were transcribed verbatim. The accuracy of the verbatim was checked by the researcher and a local mentor. Data were coded by two researchers, and they agreed on the final codes. Focus group discussions data were coded first, and main points were used as probed in individual interviews.

6.4   INTEGRATED STUDY FINDINGS

To fully understand the support needs of part-time BScN students, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya, the findings of focus group discussions (part-time BScN students) and individual interviews (educators of part-time BScN students) were integrated. For the discussion, the data sets will be referred to as part-time BScN students and the educators of part-time BScN students. The integrated findings are summarised in Figure 6.1 below.

6.5   SUPPORT THROUGH RESOURCES PROVISION

Resource needs identified in this study include an adequate number of educators, the technology needed to access learning, adequate infrastructure to support learning technology, and finances. The study findings revealed that there was a shortage of teaching and learning resources and a shortage of nurse educators in Kenyan universities. This is consistent with findings in the literature about the global shortage of nursing faculty which is worse in low- and middle-income countries (WHO, 2020). Nurse educators in undergraduate programmes are facilitators of learning rather than a source of knowledge (Efendi, Chen & Kurniati 2018:20; Pozdnyakova & Pozdnyakova 2017:245). Part-time students have had a history of campus isolation, and fewer opportunities to engage on campus, and much higher attrition rates than their full-time peers (Lee 2017:4).

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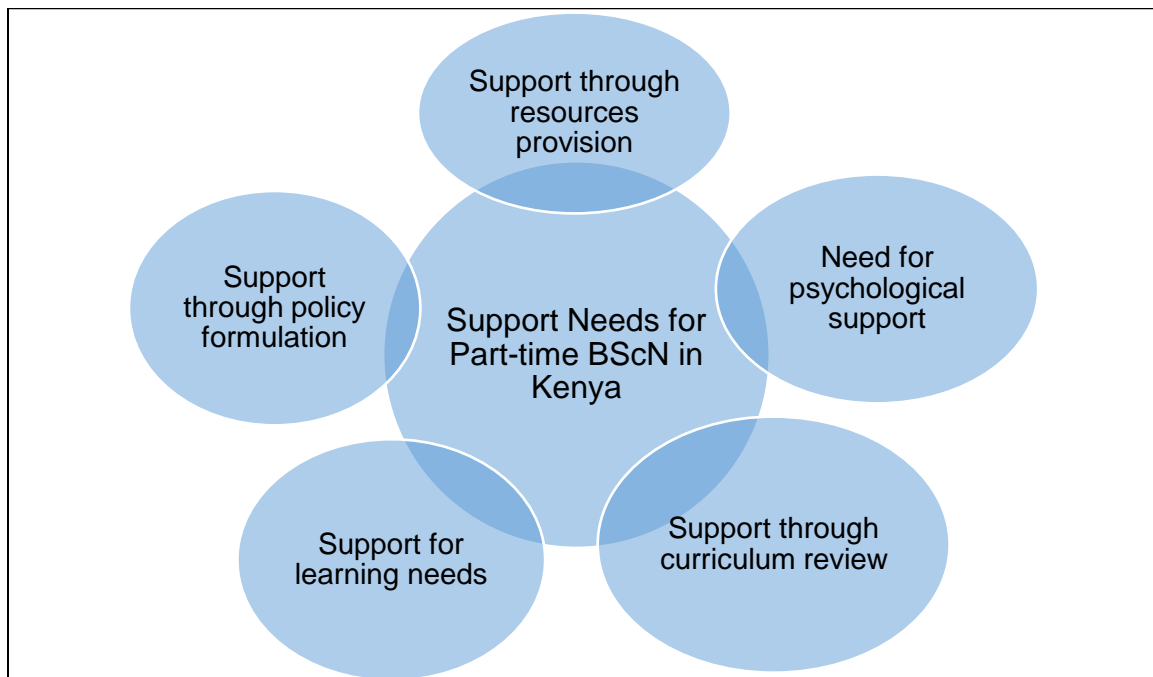
Figure 6.1: Themes emerging from the two data sets

They were mostly working full-time and needed to maintain their employment while studying (Lee 2017:4). Similarly, the very nature of the part-time BScN programme in Kenya resulted in students spending less time on campus. Therefore, the shortage of educators resulted in minimal contact between educators and students, which in turn resulted in minimal engagement, mentorship and supervision of learning (Farr-Wharton, Charles, Keast, Woolcott & Chamberlain 2018:171). Studies have shown that minimal contact and exchange between educators and undergraduate students resulted in minimal student engagement and dissatisfaction with the course, which in turn led to attrition (Farr-Wharton et al 2018:171).

Participants stated that they needed adequate technology and technological infrastructure for their learning. This included internet and internet access gadgets such as laptops and computers. These findings are similar to findings of a study that explored undergraduate students' perceived benefit of using the internet and digital resources for research and learning in North-eastern Nigerian universities; which indicated that 86.8% of students sampled claimed that they lacked adequate access to internet facilities on their campus (Oberiri & Iyendo 2018:14). Part-time BScN students in Kenya reported gaps in technological skills which limited their ability to meet course requirements. The study also showed that technological failures in the institutions' systems, affected other operations of learning management systems. These findings are in agreement with

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findings from other studies that revealed that technology was an essential component in teaching undergraduate students (Fawaz, Hamdan-Mansour & Tassia 2018:106; Ghavifekr, Kunjappan, Ramasamy & Anthony 2016:42; Yerdelen-Damar, Boz & Aydin-Günbatar 2017:396).

Part-time BScN students in Kenya revealed that they needed support through the provision of necessary infrastructural resources to enhance learning. The infrastructure stated included internet connectivity and access gadgets, equipped venues for teaching and learning, accommodation facilities, library facilities, and demonstration equipment. These findings have been averred by Fawaz et al (2018:106) in their work on challenges facing nursing education in Lebanon. Similar sentiments were echoed by Bvumbwe and Mtshali (2018:7) in their integrated review of nursing education in sub-Saharan Africa, which revealed that there was a need to increase investment in teaching and learning infrastructure. The findings are also consistent with those of a study that evaluated support services provided to undergraduate nursing students in two UK universities (Ooms, Fergya, Marks-Marana, Burke & Sheehy 2013:90). The UK study revealed that undergraduate nursing students needed library support, learning centre support and support with academic writing and literacy skills (Ooms et al 2013:91). The findings of this study revealed that most clinical learning sites lacked equipment and essential tools for conducting nursing procedures. These findings are similar to findings of a study conducted in Tanzania that revealed that clinical learning sites lacked basic equipment and supplies for nursing care procedure, which resulted in students using improvised materials that did not meet the standards (Gemuhay, Kalolo, Mishiro Chipwaza & Nyangena 2019:3).

The study revealed that part-time BScN students in Kenya lacked adequate financial support from the universities. The government loan scheme for higher education was not favoured by part-time BScN students since it required them to pay the previous loan in full before getting another loan disbursed. One university offered partial scholarships to part-time BScN students, based on their financial needs. However, the partial scholarships were perceived to be inadequate due to the high school fee being charged. Additionally, part-time BScN students stated that the programme was expensive. They highlighted the direct and indirect costs of training as a major concern. The direct cost of training involved school, clinical training and examination fees. The indirect cost of learning involved transport and accommodation, buying laptops, internet access, and

materials for clinical learning. These findings are similar to the findings of studies done in European countries, where financial expenses for the education of adult students are considered burdensome for family budgets and inadmissible in many families (Butcher 2020:18, Pozdnyakova & Pozdnyakova 2017:245). Therefore, most European countries provide financial support to undergraduate students as part of the widening participation of minority and mature students in higher education (Butcher 2020:1; Skrbinjek 2020:421-427). Financial support in European countries is in form of grants, loans, allowances and tax incentives. Students are not expected to pay back grants, but loans are paid back with interest. Grants are in form of needs-based grants, merit-based grants and universal grants (Skrbinjek 2020:421). Needs-based grants in European countries are awarded to economically disadvantaged students without regard to their academic performance (Skrbinjek 2020:423). These grants are comparable to needs-based partial scholarships that were available in one of the universities in the study. Universal grants in European countries are awarded to student wide population with disregard to financial needs or academic performance (Skrbinjek 2020:423). Kenya does not offer grants to students but has a government-run higher education loan open to all university students. The students are expected to pay back the money advanced to them as higher education loans when they start working. Part-time BScN students in this study did not find the government higher education loan scheme appropriate for them. The loan scheme had different rules for mature students as compared to younger students. Mature students are expected to pay the first loan disbursement before they can apply for next year's loan. As Butcher (2020:19) stated in his work titled; Unheard voices of part-time adult students in the UK, policymakers need to make students' loan repayment rules appear affordable to someone in their thirties and with other financial responsibilities. This requires financial investment by the students, who distribute their financial resources among many courses and personal requirements (Gemuhay et al 2019:3). The students wished they would get support from the training institutions, employers, well-wishers, and government in meeting the training cost.

6.6   NEED FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Psychological needs identified in the study are social support, psychological support and employer support. The study revealed the need for psychological support for part-time BScN students in Kenya. These findings are similar to the findings of a study done in the UK that looked at the effectiveness of support services offered to nursing students in two

universities (Ooms et al 2013:90). The study found that nursing students needed psychological support for them to succeed in their studies. This study revealed that part-time BScN students experienced social distress because of the multiple roles they must undertake. Other studies have reported similar findings and have described psychological distress among the female part-time students due to multiple social responsibilities and being the primary caregiver in the family (Kumar, Chakraborty & Kumar 2020:494; Li, Han, Wang, Sun & Cheng 2018:122; Lin 2016:120). Furthermore, the findings of this study indicated the need for social support from fellow students, colleagues and family members. Similar findings have been reported social distress among RN to BSN students and part-time students in other countries (Li et al 2018:122; Lin 2016:121). Ooms et al (2023:91) reported the need for social support among mature students in order to cope with life and studies. Lack of social support to the female student was noted to hinder them undertake their studies successfully (Li et al 2018:122; Lin 2016:121). Moreover, those who reported having received support were noted to have attended and completed their course on time and with minimal or without reporting distress.

Part-time BScN students in Kenya stated that they required emotional and financial support from their families. The study also revealed that some female part-time BScN students who did not receive spousal support in their learning tended to take longer in university or quit their studies altogether. The need for family support to university students have been widely reported in the literature (Bergman, Gross, Berry & Shuck 2014:92; Costa, Taylor, Goodfellow & Ecochard 2020:107; Li et al 2018:122; Lin 2016:120; Tetteh & Attiogbe 2019:530). Costa et al (2020:107) state that family has been widely regarded as a cornerstone for student support, and that loss of family ties is disadvantageous to university students. A review of the literature on family support in higher education institutions revealed that female students were likely not to complete their studies due to a lack of family support (Li et al 2018:122; Lin 2016:120). Similar findings were found in a study conducted in Ghana that examined the perspectives of working university students (Tetteh & Attiogbe 2019:530). A study carried out among university students attending eight four-year institutions, indicates that family emotional support plays an important role in fostering positive academic outcomes (Bergman, Gross, Berry & Shuck 2014:92; Roksa & Kinsley 2019:415). Furthermore, family emotional support is beneficial for academic outcomes as it promotes psychological well-being and facilitates greater student engagement (Roksa & Kinsley 2019:415; Tetteh & Attiogbe 2019:530). Similar findings were found in a study conducted in India, among

working part-time students (Kumar et al 2020:495). Additionally, the way female adult undergraduate students in Kenya make decisions to go back to education is likely to be controversial considering the patriarchal traditional culture and societal expected roles (Alshebou 2019:32). Therefore, family support is critical for their success.

The findings revealed that part-time BScN students need employer/workplace support in the form of flexible working hours in order to succeed in their studies. In the contrary, it has been observed that institutions of higher learning tend to assume that working students in higher education should prioritise their studies over their employment (Remenick & Bergman 2021:34). Yet part-time BScN students need to maintain their employment to afford the cost of the programme. This means that there is a need for universities to find practical ways to assist part-time BScN students to combine work and study (Tetteh & Attiogbe 2019:536). There are benefits and disadvantages to being a working part-time BScN student. The nursing work that part-time BScN students engage in provides a basis for the application of theoretical concepts learnt in class (Kumar et al 2020:493; Pozdnyakova & Pozdnyakova 2017:245; Remenick & Bergman 2021:36). A study conducted in India using participants who were working full-time and pursuing part-time studies, found that part-time students needed psychological support from their employers (Kumar et al 2020:494). Even though the employers had paid for the part-time studies of their employees, the employees stated that they would have appreciated psychological support as well (Kumar et al 2020:494). This contrasts with the participants in this study who did not report the need for psychological support from employers.

6.7 SUPPORT THROUGH CURRICULUM REVIEW

The study revealed that there was a need for curriculum redesign for part-time BScN students. It was noted that the part-time BScN curriculum had content that was repeated from diploma nursing training. Clinical objectives and assessments were similar to those that were conducted at the diploma nursing training. This situation resulted in part-time BScN students questioning the need for a part-time BScN programme. The need for curriculum redesign has been emphasised by several authors, since mature and working students need to see that their education realities reflect their working realities (Butcher 2020:24; Kumar et al 2020:494; Remenick & Bergman 2021:35). They need to be able to translate knowledge acquired in their studies to their work environment (Kumar et al 2020:494; Remenick & Bergman 2021:35). Most participants acknowledged that they

were undertaking the part-time BScN programme to acquire a degree certificate, but they did not feel they have learnt new concepts. In contrast, Fawaz et al (2018:105) avers that regular review of the BScN curriculum is essential to level learning with rapidly evolving nursing practice. A review of nursing education in Sub-Saharan Africa indicated the need for curricula reforms to produce graduates that can meet the needs of the population (Bvumbwe & Mtshali 2018:4).

The study findings revealed that part-time BScN students needed to be taught using teaching pedagogies that acknowledge their status as mature students. Similarly, educators of part-time BScN students stated that there was a need to acknowledge part-time BScN students' prior knowledge and experience and incorporate them into their learning. In contrast to the findings, recognition of prior learning has been used to broaden access to higher education in other countries (Udeagha, Van der Wath & Moagi 2022:2). It is a process used to assign credits through formal recognition of non-formal and informal learning acquired through relevant life and work experience (Udeagha et al 2022:2. The findings of Alshebou (2019:32) which demonstrated the need for educators to value and capitalise on the wealth of experience that adult students bring to the learning experience. Alshebou (2019:32) suggests that this can be achieved by including adult undergraduate students' experiences in the learning process and building on their experience in the learning process. Concerns have been raised that, educators can be a barrier to adult undergraduate students' success when they show little respect for adult undergraduate students' experiences and knowledge (Quiggins, Ulmer, Hainline, Burris, Ritz & Van Dusen 2016:274). Quiggins et al (2016:273) study revealed that barriers to instructional and educational planning played a role in determining the continuation of education among non-traditional undergraduate students.

6.8   SUPPORT THROUGH POLICY FORMULATION

The findings of the study revealed the need for institutional policies that are specific to the needs of part-time BScN students. The study revealed that there is a need for guidelines on exam regulations that include follow-up mechanisms for missing marks, academic calendars, and student regulations. These findings are echoed by Remenick and Bergman (2021:39), who argue that for universities to be welcoming and accessible to working students, they need to examine their policies and practices. They note that many policies in universities support traditional students but create barriers to working

students. They highlight that most student support services are provided in person during the 9 am to 5 pm weekday, which makes them inaccessible to working students (Remenick & Bergman 2021:39).

Part-time BScN students reported the need for flexible and friendly schedules for the part-time BScN programme. This corresponds to Lin (2016:120) who noted that adult female students required lecturers' support, in designing study timetables with flexible dates for assignments and coursework handovers. This is because female adult undergraduate students confront the competing pressure of childcare and social responsibilities which influence their academic experience and progress (Alshebou 2019:34; Lin 2016:122). It was noted that timely communication of the schedules was important (Pozdnyakova & Pozdnyakova 2017:247) to provide part-time BScN students with adequate time to plan and organise how to finance the course fees and plan job-related responsibilities to allow the student to attend the course obligations. Similarly, Remenick and Bergman (2021:39) argue that universities must implement more flexible courses that would allow full-time employed students to have greater access to course options. Flexibility has been used to help mature undergraduate students persist. As Remenick (2019:123) argues, rather than placing the onus and burden on the student to conform to the university, institutions could alter current practices to meet the needs of the diverse body of students.

Part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities were subjected to policies and regulations that were designed for full-time and younger BScN students. Furthermore, some universities aligned their programme schedules with that of full-time BScN students. Similar findings have been reported by Quiggins et al (2016:274) who argued that many institutions of higher education were not adapting programmes to meet the needs of non-traditional students, yet expected students to modify their behaviours to fit into the more traditional programmes. Quiggins et al (2016:273) study found that participants perceived the lack of a non-traditional student office on campus, mentoring programme and non-traditional student support group as the largest barriers to continuing their education. They recommended the implementation of a stronger support system for non-traditional students at the university level, which could potentially mitigate the barriers faced by these students (Quiggins et al 2016:273). They also indicated that institutions of higher education were hesitant to meet the needs of the growing non-traditional student population. This hesitation could be related to the administration's fear of the cost associated with meeting the needs of these students (Quiggins et al 2016:273).

Therefore, there is a need for universities to develop regulations and policies that suit part-time BScN students' needs.

6.9   SUPPORT FOR LEARNING NEEDS

Educators of part-time BScN students stated that although the students had previous knowledge and experience, this knowledge was not always demonstrated in class. The educators reported that they expected part-time BScN students to perform well in theoretical courses that they had covered in diploma training. However, this was not the case and part-time BScN students needed additional support in theoretical courses. These findings are echoed by the findings of a South African study that found that BScN students who joined university through recognition of prior learning were used to teacher-centred methods of learning (Udeagha et al 2022:4). Consequently, they tended to struggle with student-centred teaching approaches, experienced various academic and clinical challenges, and were observed to have self-doubt (Udeagha et al 2022:4). Furthermore, they received minimal support in the clinical settings, felt overburdened with cooperative learning and lacked necessary technological skills. Consequently, they struggled to perform well and were fearful (Udeagha et al 2022:4).

This study revealed that the clinical learning of part-time BScN students was not in tandem with their prior learning and experience. The shortage of nurse educators for part-time BScN students had an impact on the clinical learning of part-time BScN students. Consequently, part-time BScN students received minimal clinical support from nurse educators and clinical preceptors. These findings are similar to findings in a university in Western Cape, South Africa involving full-time BScN students (Mthimunye & Daniels 2020:215). Similar to findings were observed in Finland where students reported a lack of clinical instruction and a feeling of being abandoned in clinical learning settings (Heinonen, Kääriäinen, Juntunen & Mikkonen 2019:3).

This study found that part-time BScN students were extrinsically motivated to pursue a bachelor's degree by their career progression and were motivated to learn despite their competing priorities. This is in line with the findings of a study conducted in Ghana, which revealed that part-time undergraduate students in Ghana were extrinsically motivated in their pursuit of further education (Amponsah, Torto & Badu-Nyarko 2018:586). However, the findings contradict the findings of Alshebou (2019:34), who determined that adult

students are more intrinsically motivated and want more control over their learning activities.

6.10   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the combined findings of the study and positions the findings in the literature. The study sought to understand the nature of support and perceived support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya. The combined findings of the two sets of data have revealed the support needs of part-time BScN students as resources provision, psychosocial support, curriculum review, policy formulation and support for learning needs.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED PART-TIME BSCN STUDENT SUPPORT IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES

7.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the process followed to develop and validate the guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The development of the guidelines was based on the findings of phase I (focus group discussion) and phase II (individual interviews) and supportive literature as discussed in Chapter 6. The final objective was achieved after guidelines were developed and validated with nursing educators in Kenyan universities.

7.2   DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES

Logical reasoning was applied to develop the guidelines for enhanced support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. Logical reasoning can be inductive reasoning or deductive reasoning (Polit & Beck 2018:40). Inductive reasoning is the process of developing conclusions from specific observations, while deductive reasoning is the process of developing specific predictions from general principles (Polit & Beck 2018:40). Inductive reasoning was used to develop guidelines from the themes that emerged from the integrated data. The conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support has indirectly contributed to guidelines development through data collection and data analysis processes.

7.3   VALIDATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The researcher purposefully selected thirteen nurse educators to validate the guidelines. Each educator was sent a letter to guide the validators (Annexure M), the proposed guidelines (Annexure O), and the guideline validation form (Annexure N), via email. They were asked to validate the guidelines using the following criteria: clarity,

comprehensiveness, applicability, adaptability, credibility and validity. The guidelines were sent to sixteen educators and thirteen participated in the validation process.

All validators were educators in various universities in Kenya and South Africa and were PhD holders. Nine validators had experience in teaching part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. Of these nine, five validators from Kenya worked in public universities, three worked in private universities and one worked in the Nursing Council of Kenya. All four validators from South Africa were professors teaching in South African universities. The table below shows the attributes of the validators.

Table 7.1: Attributes of guideline validators

Attribute	Descriptor	Frequency
Employment position	Nurse educators	5
	Dean, School of Nursing	2
	Chair, Nursing Council of Kenya	1
	Deputy Registrar, Nursing Council of Kenya	1
Academic rank	Professor, Nursing	5
	Senior lecturer	8
Country	Kenya	9
	South Africa	4
Academic qualifications	Doctoral Degree	13

Table 7.2 displays the results of the validation process. Variable feedback was provided by the validators as evidenced by the comments below. Most validators supported the guidelines with suggestions for improvements.

Table 7.2: Results of the validation process

Criteria	Not accepted	Accepted with recommendations	Accepted as it is	Comments from validators
Clarity		5	8	• The guidelines are clearly formulated in simple and understandable language. • The student was detailed and covered all aspects of teaching and learning because nursing education is two-pronged, consisting of both theory and practice. • Overall, the guidelines are clearly formulated but I do want to point out the following to enhance the clarity on guideline 12 (psychological support).
Comprehensiveness		2	11	• The guidelines are comprehensive enough and supported by themes, categories and concluding statements. • The guidelines comprehensively cover the scope of student life – mentorship, equipment, finances, theoretical and clinical learning needs, curriculum design, assessment practices and psychological and social aspects.
Credibility		5	8	• Yes, they are credible. • The guidelines are credible, identified gaps and weaknesses in the education and training of students enrolled in the programme under study and came up with relevant and practically applicable recommendations/ suggestions. • The themes and guidelines are well aligned.
Applicability		3	10	• Yes, the issues raised are applicable in both types of programme and are generalisable to other settings and countries. • The guidelines are appropriate and possible to implement. • I do believe that the guidelines are appropriate for application to nursing education institutions offering part-time BScN programmes.
Adaptability		1	12	• The guidelines will be of benefit to all universities offering this programme. • Yes, they are comprehensive enough and applicable in any nursing education institution.

Criteria	Not accepted	Accepted with recommendations	Accepted as it is	Comments from validators
				• The scope and nature of the guidelines are adaptable to all Institutions of Higher Education.
Validity		3	10	• The guidelines can enhance the support of all students, both full-time and part-time. • The guidelines have the potential of providing immense support to students and also improve programme objectives. • I would therefore comfortably say that the guidelines could enhance support of part-time BScN students if adopted as they are.
Further suggestions		1	12	• The use of a self-study module followed by an entrance examination before the commencement of the bachelor's programme may be considered. • These guidelines are timely and would revolutionise training for not only part-time nursing students but the training of all nurses as a whole.

7.4 PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL VALIDATED GUIDELINES

After preliminary guidelines were developed, validators' suggestions were incorporated to make the final guidelines. Guidelines emerged as five themes as illustrated in the table below. Each theme had categories and for each category, a guideline was formulated. A rationale for each guideline is presented and recommendations for implementation were made.

Table 7.3: Themes and categories related to guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenya

Themes	Categories
1 Support through resources provision	1.1 Human resources 1.2 Technological resources 1.3 Financial resources
2 Support for learning needs	2.1 Theoretical learning 2.2 Clinical learning sites 2.3 Resources for clinical learning
3 Support through curriculum review	3.1 Review of curriculum content 3.2 Review of teaching pedagogies 3.3 Innovative assessment strategies
4 Support through policy formulation	4.1 Examination policy on matters related to grades 4.2 Students' regulations
5 Need for psychosocial support	5.1 Psychological support 5,2 Social support

7.5 THEME 1: SUPPORT THROUGH RESOURCES PROVISION

This theme contains three categories namely, human resources, technological resources, and financial resources. The evidence suggested that these categories were crucial in the provision of enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

7.5.1 Category 1.1: Human resources

From the human resources category, a guideline was formulated that addresses the human resource support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.1: Summary of concluding statements regarding human resources support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

- Educators were not available to part-time BScN students for follow-up sessions after class.
- Educators of part-time BScN students prioritised regular students' learning over part-time BScN students' learning.
- Educators of part-time BScN students prioritised regular students' learning over part-time BScN students' learning.
- The part-time nature of the programme resulted in minimal contact with educators, impending mentorship opportunities.

Guideline 1: Provision of supervision, mentorship, and support to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning environment

The rationale for the guideline

Mature students have been shown to have higher attrition levels in universities than younger students . They also tend to struggle with their learning due to the years they have been away from the classroom. Mentorship, support and supervision of part-time and mature students have been shown to reduce their attrition in higher education.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

(1) Universities should:

- Employ an adequate number of educators for part-time BScN students to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum.
- Hire competent nurse educators with clinical skills and practising RN.
- Where educators are expected to conduct clinical teaching, universities should ensure a ratio of one educator to 10 students.
- Allocate funds to nursing departments to facilitate nursing educators providing clinical supervision for part-time BScN students.

(2) Nursing departments in universities should:

- Develop a formal mentorship programme for part-time BScN students.
- Train mentors to successfully mentor part-time BScN students.

- Develop a programme for the supervision of part-time BScN students while in clinical settings.

(3)   Educators of part-time BScN students should:

- Provide supervision to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning settings.
- Mentor part-time BScN students following the mentorship programme developed by the department.
- The nursing regulator (Nursing Council of Kenya) should enforce a 1:10 clinical educator-to-student ratio.
- To utilise LMS creatively as these platforms provide chatrooms wherein students can interact with educators on a 24-hour basis.

7.5.2 Category 1.2: Technological resources

From the technological resources category, a guideline was formulated that addresses the technological resources support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.2:   Summary of concluding statements regarding technological resources support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

• Part-time BScN programme is offered via blended learning mode and all learning resources were available online.
• Part-time BScN students needed laptops and internet access for easier learning.
• Part-time BScN students from remote parts of the country didn't have internet access. Hence, they needed to travel to a place with internet connection to access learning resources.
• Online learning infrastructure needed to be accessible always, and especially when submitting assignments.
• Learning management systems were not always reliable and were sometimes inaccessible for an extended period of time.
• Provision of internet by universities made it easier for part-time BScN students to access learning resources.
• Part-time BScN students contacted their educators through the online learning management system (LMS).
• Quizzes and continuous assessment tests (CATs) were offered through the online LMS.

Guideline 2: Provision of a learning management system and relevant technical support to part-time BScN students

The rationale for the guideline

An accessible and functional learning management system is vital for part-time BScN students to access learning resources, take their quizzes and CATs, and interact with their educators.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

(1)   Nursing education institutions should implement the following measures to enhance technological support for part-time BScN students.

- To orientate the part-time BScN students to the use of LMS
- Provide internet-enabled gadgets with pre-loaded course materials to part-time BScN students.
- Have in-built quizzes and CATs into the devices for them to take at the appointed time in the semester.
- Provide on-campus internet access for students.
- ICT departments in nursing education institutions provide regular maintenance of online learning management systems.
- In case of an outage of LMS, ICT departments work speedily to restore it.
- Libraries should provide online resources (e.g. Proquest e-books) for part-time BScN students and continuously monitor them for currency and availability.
- Libraries should regularly maintain online platforms and avoid extended periods of outages.

(2)   Nursing educators used internet-enabled gadgets to monitor students learning and provided immediate feedback to part-time BScN students where needed.

7.5.3 Category 1.3: Financial resources

From the financial support category, a guideline was formulated that addresses the financial support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.3: Summary of concluding statements regarding financial support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

- Part-time BScN programme was perceived to be expensive by most part-time BScN students.
- Part-time BScN students had other financial obligations that made it difficult for them to pay their school fee on time.
- There were hidden costs of the programme that the students had to bear. Such as accommodation costs, transport costs, cost of internet and laptops, cost of clinical experience, etc.
- Available students' financial assistance programmes are designed to accommodate full-time regular students and not part-time students.
- The government funding system for university education was not favourable to part-time BScN students due to the short repayment period of the high education loan advanced.

Guideline 3: Provision of financial support to part-time BScN students by partnering with funding agencies and provision of scholarships

The rationale for the guideline

Current financial assistance programmes accommodate full-time students and not part-time students.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Universities offering part-time BScN programmes to:

- Negotiate with higher education funding agencies to develop financial assistance programmes that suit part-time BScN students.
- Partner with funding agencies (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, Higher Education Loans Board, Mastercard) that can fund part-time BScN students.
- Provide merit scholarship programmes that include part-time BScN students.

- Explore flexible payment methods for part-time BScN students, which can put into consideration that they are salaried employees.

7.6   THEME 2: SUPPORT FOR LEARNING NEEDS

This theme contains three categories namely, theoretical learning, clinical learning sites and resources for clinical learning. The evidence suggested that these categories were crucial in the provision of enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

7.6.1 Category 2.1: Theoretical learning

From the theoretical learning category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support for the theoretical learning needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.4: Summary of concluding statements regarding support for theoretical learning of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

- Part-time BScN students had minimal contact with their educators beyond theoretical teaching contact.
- There was lack of students' engagement in learning.
- Learning resources were available on LMS, but sometimes they were inaccessible due to problems with LMS.
- Teaching of theoretical components did not put into consideration the students prior learning.

Guideline 4: Implementation of teaching and learning strategies that engage mature students and provide relevance of learning to their nursing practice

The rationale for the guideline

Student engagement has been shown to improve student retention and success in higher education.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nurse educators to:

- Organise teaching and learning activities in a way that builds on the existing knowledge that part-time BScN students bring into the learning experience.
- Make learning relevant to part-time BScN students' nursing practice by using clinical cases and scenarios that are relevant to part-time BScN students.
- Make online learning engaging and relevant to part-time BScN students.

7.6.2 Category 2.2: Clinical learning sites

From the clinical learning sites category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support for the clinical learning needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.5: Summary of concluding statements regarding support for clinical learning sites of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

- Clinical learning sites were ill equipped to facilitate learning of part-time BScN students.
- Clinical learning sites were under-staffed. Therefore, part-time BScN students lacked mentors and preceptors while in clinical placements.
- Part-time BScN students were viewed as manpower while in clinical learning settings. Therefore, they received minimal support from preceptors and were expected to cover shortage of registered nurses in clinical settings.
- Educators provided minimal support to part-time BScN students while in clinical learning placements.
- Educators only visited clinical learning sites on assessment days to conduct clinical assessments of part-time BScN students.

Guideline 5: Preparation of clinical learning sites in readiness to support part-time BScN students

The rationale for the guideline

Clinical learning sites used for clinical learning of part-time BScN students lacked mentors and preceptors to support clinical learning for part-time BScN students.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing education institutions to:

- Train preceptors in clinical sites used by part-time BScN students to support their learning.
- Employ competent clinical instructors where hospitals are not in a position to provide preceptors.
- Provide continuous professional development to RNs in clinical learning sites to ensure they stay abreast with current scientific development.

Nursing Directorate at Ministry of Health to:

- Development of clinical education and training guidelines aimed at standardising a system of clinical education and training for nurses and midwives in the country.
- Make provision for resources for learning in the clinical learning environments, e.g. medical supplies, registered nurses and clinical preceptors.
- Coordinate between nursing education institutions and clinical learning environments to ensure a smooth favourable learning environment for part-time BScN students.

7.6.3 Category 2.3: Resources for clinical learning

From the resources for the clinical learning category, a guideline was formulated that addresses resources needed to support for clinical learning of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.6: Summary of concluding statements regarding resources needed to support for clinical learning of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

- Part-time BScN students were not supported and supervised by their educators while in their clinical learning settings. Educators showed up in the clinical learning settings on the day of the assessment.
- Government hospitals that were designated as clinical learning sites lacked basic supplies needed for part-time BScN learning. This is despite the fact that part-time BScN students were required to pay for clinical learning experiences.

Guideline 6: Provision of resources for clinical learning

Rationale for guideline

Clinical sites are poorly equipped to support the learning of part-time BScN students. Alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills can be used to support the learning of clinical skills.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

- Nursing education institutions work with stakeholders to equip clinical sites with the necessary resources for training students.
- Nursing departments provide clinical sites with critical consumables needed for students learning and assessments.
- Nursing education institutions to explore alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills.
- Nursing educators use simulation technology to teach clinical skills.

7.7 THEME 3: SUPPORT THROUGH CURRICULUM REVIEW

This theme contains three categories namely, review of curriculum content, review of the teaching pedagogy, and innovative assessment strategies. The evidence suggested that these categories were crucial in the provision of enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

7.7.1 Category 3.1: Review of curriculum content

From the review of the curriculum content category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support through curriculum review as a crucial support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.7: **Summary of concluding statements regarding review of curriculum content for part-time BScN programme in Kenyan universities**

- Part-time BScN programme curriculum contained content that was a repetition of content covered in diploma programme. This resulted in a curriculum that was packed with content and had to be covered in two and a half years.
- The content was similar to a 4-year BScN programme, yet they part-time programme is a two-and-a-half-year programme.
- In a bid to cover the content, some aspects were glossed over or not covered at all.

Guideline 7: Review of part-time BScN curriculum content

The rationale for the guideline

A curriculum review is needed to address redundant content and align the curriculum with the BScN scope of practice.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the following aspects of curriculum content:

- Dovetail diploma curriculum with part-time BScN programme content to eliminate redundancy.
- Review expected learning outcomes to incorporate prior learning.
- Align the BScN programme competencies with the scope of practice for BScN nurses in Kenya.
- Include assessment strategies that allow for high-order thinking.

Nursing departments in universities to conduct training of part-time BScN educators on teaching pedagogies. This can be implemented as a teaching certification course that nurse educators can undertake, e.g. Advance Higher Education fellowship.

7.7.2 Category 3.2: Review of teaching pedagogies

From the review of teaching pedagogies category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support through curriculum review as a crucial support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.8: Summary of concluding statements regarding review of teaching pedagogies for part-time BScN programme in Kenyan universities

- Teaching pedagogies utilised did not encourage students' engagement
- There was need for educators to use teaching strategies that were suited to mature students.
- Blended learning lacked engagement in the design of online activities.

Guideline 8: Review of teaching pedagogies

The rationale for the guideline

Teaching pedagogies need to be innovative and engaging to part-time BScN students.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the following aspects of teaching pedagogy:

- Include innovative teaching strategies.
- Align teaching strategies with the needs of mature students.
- Implement teaching pedagogy that engages adult students and allows for the application of learning to clinical practice.

7.7.3 Category 3.3: Innovative assessment strategies

From the innovative assessment strategies category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support through curriculum review as a crucial support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.9:   Summary of concluding statements regarding innovative assessment strategies for part-time BScN programmes in Kenyan universities

- Assessments for part-time BScN programme were similar to assessments done at diploma training.
- Assessment strategies used in part-time BScN programme were similar to those used in diploma training.
- Clinical assessments in part-time BScN programme were similar to those done in diploma programme.

Guideline 9: Implementation of innovative assessment strategies

The rationale for the guideline

Assessments in part-time BScN programmes should allow for assessment of higher-order thinking, to differentiate them from those carried out in diploma training.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing education departments in universities should:

- Review curriculum to include innovative assessment strategies that allow for assessment of higher order thinking such as synthesis and evaluation.
- Implement theoretical assessment strategies that allow for the assessment of higher-order thinking skills.
- Review clinical assessment strategies to include strategies that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making, as opposed to assessing skills only.
- Align the assessment strategies with the objectives of the clinical learning placement.
- Implement clinical assessments that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making in clinical settings.

7.8   THEME 4: SUPPORT THROUGH POLICY FORMULATION

This theme contains two categories namely, examination policy on matters related to grades and students' regulations. The evidence suggested that these categories were

crucial in the provision of enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

7.8.1 Category 4.1: Examination policy on matters related to grades

From the examination policy on matters related to grades guidelines category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support through policy formulation as a crucial support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.10: Summary of concluding statements regarding examination policy on matters related to grades guidelines for part-time BScN programme in Kenyan universities

- There were no clear guidelines on what should be done in the event of examination policy on matters related to grades.
- Part-time BScN students were forced to re-take courses to graduate.
- Repeating a unit resulted in financial burden and added to the cost of training.

Guideline 10: Formulation of policy on the grading of courses

The rationale for the guideline

Universities lack mechanisms to address students' missing grades.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Universities offering part-time BScN programmes should:

- Develop a regulation that addresses students' missing grades.
- Develop a regulation that will allow part-time BScN students to challenge grades awarded.
- Create mechanisms for follow-up and tracing missing grades.
- Improve management of students' documents including examination documents.

7.8.2 Category 4.2: Students' regulations

From the students' regulations category, a guideline was formulated that addresses support through policy formulation as a crucial support need of part-time BScN students in Kenya.

This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.11:   Summary of concluding statements regarding students' regulations for part-time BScN programmes in Kenyan universities

• Some universities lacked policies that address challenges that were unique to part-time BScN students. E.g., there lacked credit transfer policy.
• Part-time BScN fee was billed as though they were full time students
• The part-time BScN students were not represented in the students' council, and hence their challenges were not being addressed.

Guideline 11: Formulation of regulations specific to part-time BScN programme

The rationale for the guideline

Part-time students were operating under student regulations meant for full-time students.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

- Universities should develop programme regulations that guide the implementation of part-time BScN programmes, e.g., credit transfer policy.
- University finance department to develop a fee billing mechanism that reflects the part-time BScN programme.
- Universities that offer part-time BScN programmes should create mechanisms to allow participation of part-time BScN in students' leadership councils.

7.9   THEME 5: NEED FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

This theme contains two categories namely, psychological support and social support. The evidence suggested that psychosocial support is crucial in the provision of enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

7.9.1 Category 5.1: Psychological support

From the psychological support for enhanced support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.12: Summary of concluding statements regarding psychological support for part-time BScN programme in Kenyan universities

- Some universities lacked orientation programme for part-time BScN.
- Part-time BScN students experienced psychological stress emanating from their multiple roles.
- Most part-time BScN students lacked employer support necessitating them to use their off-duty time for school.
- Some universities provided faculty advisors to support part-time BScN students in their academic journey. However, part-time BScN students did not fully utilise the faculty advisors for support.
- Most universities availed counselling services to students in need. However, part-time BScN students rarely utilised this service due to the fact that they spent minimal time in campus.

Guideline 12: Provision of psychological support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

The rationale for the guideline

Psychological support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with psychological challenges/stress brought about by their multiple roles, which may interfere with their studies and reduce their attrition rate.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing departments should:

- Offer orientation to new part-time BScN students.
- Offer pastoral support to part-time BScN students through the Dean of students' office and other students' welfare services.
- Create a mechanism for identifying part-time BScN students in need of psychological support.

- Work in collaboration with the counselling department to offer counselling services that ensure confidentiality to part-time BScN students in need.
- Train part-time BScN students on self-care techniques that are effective in reducing stress, e.g. mindfulness, meditation, yoga etc.
- Provide recreation facilities for students to use during breaks and after classes.

7.9.2 Category 5.2: Social support

From the social support category, a guideline was formulated that address psychological support for enhanced support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. This guideline is based on the concluding statements below.

Box 7.13: Summary of concluding statements regarding social support for part-time BScN programme in Kenyan universities

- Most part-time BScN students were married and had young families. Therefore, they needed social support in terms of childcare and other family responsibilities.
- Lack of spousal support made it difficult for some female part-time BScN students to complete their course.
- Family responsibilities and obligations are a priority for part-time BScN students.
- Part-time BScN students needed social support from their families and colleagues to successfully complete their programme.

Guideline 13: Provision of social support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities

The rationale for the guideline

Social support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with their families and employment responsibilities.

Recommendations on the implementation of the guideline

Nursing departments should:

- Continue to provide faculty advisors to part-time BScN students.
- Empower educators to be able to identify students in need of social support and direct them to the available services.
- Mentor the students to identify various resources they can use for social support

- Provide alternative modes of learning, such as online learning, for students facing a social crisis (such as lack of childcare or illness of a family member).

- Support female students during their post-delivery period to allow them to continue with learning. This can be achieved through the provision of online learning opportunities.

- Provide lactation rooms for breastfeeding mothers to encourage them to attend classes and continue with exclusive breastfeeding. These facilities should also accommodate caregivers supporting the mothers.

- Implement a peer support programme among part-time BScN students. The peer support programme will foster cohesion among part-time BScN students and act as an avenue for the provision of social support to each other in times of crisis.

7.10 SUMMARY

This chapter presented a discussion on guidelines development and validation of guidelines to enhance support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The guidelines were formulated using concluding statements that arose from the data. Nurse educators with experience in teaching part-time BScN programmes validated the guidelines for clarity, comprehensiveness, credibility, applicability and adaptability. Their feedback was used to refine the guidelines that have been presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONSOF THE STUDY

8.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study, the contributions of the study, and the study's limitations. It also summarises the guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenya.

8.2   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenya to develop guidelines for enhanced student support strategies. This was guided by three study objectives which are (1) to explore the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students, (2) to describe the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya, and (3) to develop and validate guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The interpretation of research findings will be guided by the objectives of the study.

8.3   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

A two-phased exploratory descriptive qualitative phenomenological study design was used for the study. Sampling was done in three stages using the non-probability sampling technique. The first stage involved purposeful sampling of the four Kenyan universities. The second stage involved purposeful sampling of groups of part-time BScN students in each of the four universities. The third stage involved the convenient sampling of part-time BScN students and their educators who were willing to participate in focus group discussions and individual interviews. The sample size for the study was 100 part-time BScN students and ten part-time BScN students' educators.

In line with the qualitative paradigm, the study assumed that support for part-time BScN students is individually constructed and understood differently from one part-time BScN student to another. Therefore, data were collected using focus group discussions with part-time BScN students, and individual interviews with part-time BScN students' educators. Ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and maleficence were observed, through informed consent, maintaining privacy and confidentiality.

The conceptual framework of What Works? A model of student support and success was used to guide data collection and data analysis. The model emphasises three spheres of student support and engagement in higher education: the academic sphere, the social sphere, and the service sphere. In each sphere of support, the model emphasises an institution's capacity to offer support, the staff's capacity to offer support and students' capacity to engage to receive support.

8.3.1 Phase I

Phase one involved focus group discussions with part-time BScN students from four universities in Kenya. Ten focus group discussions were held with 8-12 part-time BScN students. All focus group discussions were recorded using two recorders. Field notes were taken to supplement the data. The voice files were transferred to a laptop that was purchased for the study. Voice files were then transcribed verbatim. The accuracy of the verbatim was checked by the researcher and a local mentor. Data was analysed through content analysis (Roller 2019:4). Data were coded by two researchers, the researcher and a local mentor. The researchers agreed on the final codes.

8.3.2 Phase II

Ten individual interviews were conducted with the ten part-time BScN students' educators. All individual interviews were recorded using two recorders. Field notes were also taken to supplement the data. Voice files were transferred to a laptop that was purchased for the study. The voice files were then transcribed verbatim. The accuracy of the verbatim was checked by the researcher and a local mentor. Data were coded by two researchers, the researcher and the local mentor. The researchers agreed on the final codes.

8.3.3 Development and validation of guidelines

The final objective, to develop guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students was achieved through guidelines development and validation. From the integrated data from focus group discussions and individual interviews, concluding statements were grouped to form themes and categories that were formulated into guidelines. A total of 13 guidelines were developed, with recommendations for implementation. The guidelines were sent by experts in nursing and nursing education in Kenya and South Africa, and members of the nursing regulation authority in Kenya.

8.4 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The conclusions presented are derived from the integrated themes and categories derived from phase I and phase II findings on the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students, and enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students. Finally, the conclusions of phase I and phase II were integrated and presented as concluding statements for the 13 validated guidelines and their recommendations for implementation, as presented in Table 8.1.

8.4.1 Conclusions of phase I

From phase I of the study, four themes emerged as the nature of support and perceived support needs by part-time BScN students in Kenya. The themes were resource needs, psychological needs, curriculum redesign needs, and policy needs. From the theme resource needs, part-time BScN students described the resources they needed as adequate nurse educators for classroom and clinical teaching, financial support to meet their financial obligations of the programme and teaching and learning infrastructure that adequately supported their learning in campus and out of campus. Financial obligations of the programme included other aspects such as transport, accommodation and payment for clinical sites, and not just tuition fees. The second theme, psychosocial support, described part-time BScN students' need for support from their families, employers and colleagues. Family support was described as childcare and finances, while support from employers and colleagues was in form of time to study and a flexible working schedule. The theme curriculum redesign needs to describe the need for a review

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of the current part-time BScN curriculum to recognise prior learning of the part-time BScN students. From the theme policy needs, part-time BScN students stated that there was a need for universities to develop training regulations and student policies that were specific to the unique needs and characteristics of part-time BScN students. Part-time BScN students stated that the current training regulations and students' policies were suited for full-time BScN students.

Also from phase, I data, enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students were identified and guided by the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. Enablers to provide support to part-time BScN students in Kenya emerged as institutional-related enablers, program-related enablers, and student-related enablers. Institutional-related enablers include the use of technology to access the library and other learning resources, adult-friendly regulations, a conducive physical environment and a flexible fee payment plan. Programme-related enablers include clinical learning at one's place of work and the use of blended learning strategies. Students-related enablers include proper planning and employer support. Barriers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students emerged as institutional-related barriers, programme-related barriers, student-related barriers, staff-related barriers, and financial barriers.

8.4.2 Conclusions of phase II

From phase II of the study, four themes emerged as the nature of support and perceived support needs by part-time BScN students in Kenya. The themes were learning needs, resources need, adult students' needs and psychosocial needs. In the theme of learning needs, educators of part-time BScN students indicated that part-time BScN students needed support in theoretical learning, clinical learning and the use of technology. From the theme of resources need, educators of part-time BScN students indicated that part-time BScN students needed financial and technological support to successfully complete the programme. The theme of adult students' needs revealed that nurse educators needed to use adult-friendly teaching pedagogies while teaching part-time BScN students. Nurse educators also needed to organise teaching and learning activities in a manner that appreciates that part-time BScN students faced competing priorities in their studies. The theme of psychosocial support described the need to provide psychological and social support to part-time BScN students.

Also from phase II data, enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students were identified and guided by the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success. Institutional-related enabler to the provision of support to part-time BScN students was described as the provision of counselling services and faculty advisors. Barriers to the provision of support to part-time BScN students were identified as institutional-related barriers, programme-related barriers, and student-related barriers. Institutional-related barriers were described as few nurse educators in nursing departments, which resulted in high workload, inability to support part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning sites and lack of mentorship to part-time BScN students. Student-related barriers were described as the attitude of part-time BScN students and the working status of part-time BScN students, which resulted in their limited contact with educators and limited time for their studies. Programme-related barriers were described as the structure of the programme and curriculum redundancy.

8.4.3 Conclusions on integrated data from phases I and II

Findings from phases I and II were integrated to form the basis for the guidelines for enhanced support of part-time BScN students in Kenya. From the integrated data, there emerged five themes and 13 categories based on the concluding statements presented. The five themes are supported as resources provision, support for learning needs, support through curriculum review, support through policy formulation and need for psychosocial support. From the 13 categories, 13 guidelines were developed and their associated recommendations for implementation. The recommendations were directed to Kenyan universities offering part-time BScN programmes, nursing departments offering part-time BScN programmes, nursing educators of part-time BScN students, nursing directorate at the Ministry of Health, regulators of nursing education and other stakeholders (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1: Final validated guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenya

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
Support through resources provision	Human resources	• Educators were not available to part-time BScN students for follow-up sessions after class. • Educators provided minimal support to part-time BScN students while in clinical learning placements. • Educators of part-time BScN students prioritised regular students' learning over part-time BScN students' learning. • The part-time nature of the programme resulted in minimal contact with educators, impeding mentorship opportunities.	*Guideline 1: Provision of supervision, mentorship, and support to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning environment* **Rationale** Mentorship, support and supervision of part-time and mature students have been shown to reduce their attrition in higher education.	Universities should: • Employ an adequate number of educators for part-time BScN students to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum. • Hire competent nurse educators with clinical skills and practising RN. • Where educators are expected to conduct clinical teaching, universities should ensure a ratio of one educator to 10 students. • Allocate funds to nursing departments to facilitate nursing educators providing clinical supervision for part-time BScN students. Nursing departments in universities should: • Develop a formal mentorship programme for part-time BScN students. • Train mentors to successfully mentor part-time BScN students. • Develop a programme for the supervision of part-time BScN students while in clinical settings.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
				The programme should stipulate the amount of time a nursing educator should spend in clinical teaching of part-time BScN students.
				Educators of part-time BScN students should:
				• Provide supervision to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning settings.
				• Mentor part-time BScN students following the mentorship programme developed by the department.
				• The nursing regulator (Nursing Council of Kenya) should enforce a 1:10 clinical educator-to-student ratio.
				• To utilise LMS creatively as these platforms provide chatrooms wherein students can interact with educators on a 24-hour basis.
	Technological resources	• Part-time BScN programme is offered via blended learning mode and all learning resources were available online. • Part-time BScN students needed laptops and internet access for easier learning.	*Guideline 2: Provision of a learning management system and relevant technical support to part-time BScN students*	Nursing education institutions should implement the following measures to enhance technological support for part-time BScN students: • To orientate the part-time BScN students to the use of LMS

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		• Part-time BScN students from remote parts of the country didn't have internet access. Hence, they needed to travel to a place with an internet connection to access learning resources. • Online learning infrastructure needed to be accessible always, especially when submitting assignments. • Learning management systems were not always reliable and were sometimes inaccessible for an extended period. • The provision of the internet by universities made it easier for part-time BScN students to access learning resources. • Part-time BScN students contacted their educators through the online learning management system (LMS). • Quizzes and continuous assessment tests (CATs) were offered through the online LMS.	**Rationale** An accessible and functional learning management system is vital for part-time BScN students to access learning resources, take their quizzes and CATs, and interact with their educators.	• Provide internet-enabled gadgets with pre-loaded course materials to part-time BScN students. • Have in-built quizzes and CATs into the devices for them to take at the appointed time in the semester. • Provide on-campus internet access for students. • ICT departments in nursing education institutions provide full-time personnel that provide regular maintenance support of online learning management systems. • In case of an outage of LMS, ICT departments work speedily to restore it back. • Libraries should provide online resources (e.g. Proquest e-books) for part-time BScN students and continuously monitor them for currency and availability. • Libraries should regularly maintain online platforms and avoid extended periods of outages. • Nursing educators used internet-enabled gadgets to monitor students learning and provided immediate feedback to part-time BScN students where needed.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
	Financial resources	• The part-time BScN programme was perceived to be expensive by most part-time BScN students. • Part-time BScN students had other financial obligations that made it difficult for them to pay their school fees on time. • There were hidden costs of the programme that the students had to bear such as accommodation costs, transport costs, cost of internet and laptops, cost of clinical experience, etc. • Available students' financial assistance programmes are designed to accommodate full-time regular students and not part-time students. • The government funding system for university education was not favourable to part-time BScN students due to the short repayment period of the high education loan advanced.	*Guideline 3: Provision of financial support to part-time BScN students by partnering with funding agencies and provision of scholarships* **Rationale** Current financial assistance programmes accommodate full-time students and not part-time students.	Universities offering part-time BScN programmes to: • Negotiate with higher education funding agencies to develop financial assistance programmes that suit part-time BScN students. • Partner with funding agencies (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, Higher Education Loans Board, Mastercard) that can fund part-time BScN students. • Provide merit scholarship programmes that include part-time BScN students. • Explore flexible fee payment methods for part-time BScN students, which can put into consideration that they are salaried employees.
Support for learning needs	Theoretical learning needs	• Part-time BScN students had minimal contact with their educators beyond theoretical teaching contact. • There was a lack of students engaged in learning.	*Guideline 4: Implementation of teaching and learning strategies that engage mature students and*	Nurse educators to: • Organise teaching and learning activities in a way that builds on the existing knowledge that part-time

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		• Learning resources were available on LMS, but sometimes they were inaccessible due to problems with LMS. • The teaching of theoretical components did not put into consideration the students prior learning.	*provide relevance of learning to their nursing practice* **Rationale** Student engagement has been shown to improve student retention and success in higher education.	BScN students bring into the learning experience. • Make learning relevant to part-time BScN students' nursing practice by using clinical cases and scenarios that are relevant to part-time BScN students. • Make online learning engaging and relevant to part-time BScN students.
	Clinical learning needs	• Clinical learning sites were ill-equipped to facilitate the learning of part-time BScN students. • Clinical learning sites were understaffed. Therefore, part-time BScN students lacked mentors and preceptors while in clinical placements. • Part-time BScN students were viewed as manpower while in clinical learning settings. Therefore, they received minimal support from preceptors and were expected to cover a shortage of registered nurses in clinical settings. • Educators provided minimal support to part-time BScN students while in clinical learning placements.	*Guideline 5: Preparation of clinical learning sites in readiness to support part-time BScN students* **Rationale** Clinical learning sites used for clinical learning of part-time BScN students lacked mentors and preceptors to support clinical learning for part-time BScN students.	Nursing education institutions to: • Train preceptors in clinical sites used by part-time BScN students to support their learning. • Employ competent clinical instructors where hospitals are not in a position to provide preceptors. • Provide continuous professional development to RNs in clinical learning sites to ensure they stay abreast with current scientific development. Nursing Directorate at Ministry of Health to: • Development of clinical education and training guidelines aimed at standardising a system of clinical education and training for nurses and midwives in the country.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		• Educators only visited clinical learning sites on assessment days to conduct clinical assessments of part-time BScN students.		• Make provision for resources for learning in the clinical learning environments, e.g. medical supplies, registered nurses and clinical preceptors. • Coordinate between nursing education institutions and clinical learning environments to ensure a smooth favourable learning environment for part-time BScN students.
	Resources for clinical learning	• Part-time BScN students were not supported and supervised by their educators while in their clinical learning settings. Educators showed up in the clinical learning settings on the day of the assessment. • Government hospitals that were designated as clinical learning sites lacked the basic supplies needed for part-time BScN learning. This is although part-time BScN students were required to pay for clinical learning experiences.	*Guideline 6: Provision of resources for clinical learning* **Rationale** Clinical sites are poorly equipped to support the learning of part-time BScN students. Alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills can be used to support the learning of clinical skills	• Nursing education institutions work with stakeholders to equip clinical sites with the necessary resources for training students. • Nursing departments provide clinical sites with critical consumables needed for students learning and assessments. • Nursing education institutions to explore and use alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills.
Support through curriculum review	Review of curriculum content	• The Part-time BScN programme curriculum contained content that was a repetition of content covered in a diploma programme. This resulted in a curriculum that was	*Guideline 7: Review of part-time BScN curriculum content*	Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the

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Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		packed with content and had to be covered in two and a half years. • The content was similar to a 4-year BScN programme, yet the part-time programme is a two-and-a-half-year programme. • In a bid to cover the content, some aspects were glossed over or not covered at all.	**Rationale** A curriculum review is needed to address redundant content and align the curriculum with the BScN scope of practice.	following aspects of curriculum content: • Dovetail diploma curriculum with part-time BScN programme content to eliminate redundancy. • Review expected learning outcomes to incorporate prior learning. • Align the BScN programme competencies with the scope of practice for BScN nurses in Kenya. • Include assessment strategies that allow for high-order thinking. • Nursing departments in universities to conduct training of part-time BScN educators on teaching pedagogies. This can be implemented as a teaching certification course that nurse educators can undertake, e.g. Advance Higher Education fellowship.
	Review of teaching and learning strategies	• Teaching pedagogies utilised did not encourage students' engagement • There was a need for educators to use teaching strategies that were suited to mature students.	*Guideline 8: Review of teaching and learning strategies*	Nursing departments in universities to build the capacity of nurse educators in: • Developing competency-based curriculum.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		• Blended learning lacked engagement in the design of online activities.	**Rationale** Teaching and learning strategies need to be innovative and engaging for part-time BScN students.	• The utilisation of innovative teaching and assessment strategies that are aligned to a competency-based curriculum. Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the following aspects of teaching pedagogy: • Include innovative teaching strategies. • Align teaching and learning strategies with the needs of mature students. • Implement teaching and learning strategies that engage adult students and allow for the application of learning to clinical practice.
	Innovative assessment strategies	• Assessments for part-time BScN programme were similar to assessments done at diploma training • Assessment strategies used in part-time BScN programmes were similar to those used in diploma training.	*Guideline 9:* *Implementation of innovative assessment strategies* **Rationale** Assessments in part-time BScN programmes should allow for	Nursing education departments in universities should: • Review curriculum to include innovative assessment strategies that allow for assessment of higher order thinking such as synthesis and evaluation. • Implement theoretical assessment strategies that allow for the

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		• Clinical assessments in the part-time BScN programme were similar to those done in a diploma programme.	assessment of higher-order thinking, to differentiate them from those carried out in diploma training.	assessment of higher-order thinking skills. • Review clinical assessment strategies to include strategies that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making, as opposed to assessing skills only. • Align the assessment strategies with the objectives of the clinical learning placement. • Implement clinical assessments that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making in clinical settings.
Support through policy formulation	Examination policy on matters related to grades	• Examination policies in Kenyan universities were silent on what should be done in case of missing students' grades. • In the event of missing grades, part-time BScN students were forced to retake courses to graduate. • Repeating a unit resulted in a financial burden and added to the cost of training.	*Guideline 10: Formulation of policy on the grading of courses* **Rationale** Universities lack mechanisms to address students' missing grades.	Universities should: • Develop a regulation that addresses the grading of courses. • Develop a regulation that will allow part-time BScN students to challenge grades awarded. • Create mechanisms for follow-up and tracing students' grades. • Improve management of students' documents including examination documents. • Optimise utilisation of learning information and management system (LMIS) as an

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
				effective/alternative in the storage of student grades/marks.
	Students' regulations	• Some universities lacked policies that address challenges that were unique to part-time BScN students. E.g., there lacked credit transfer policy. • Part-time BScN fee was billed as though they were full-time students • The part-time BScN students were not represented in the students' council, and hence their challenges were not being addressed.	*Guideline 11: Formulation of regulations specific to part-time BScN programme* **Rationale** Part-time students were operating under student regulations meant for full-time students.	• Universities should develop programme regulations that guide the implementation of part-time BScN programmes. E.g., credit transfer policy. • University finance department to develop a fee billing mechanism that reflects the part-time BScN programme. • Universities that offer part-time BScN programmes should create mechanisms to allow participation of part-time BScN in students' leadership councils.
Need for psychosocial support	Psychological support	• Some universities lacked orientation programmes for part-time BScN. • Part-time BScN students experienced psychological stress emanating from their multiple roles. • Most part-time BScN students lacked employer support necessitating them to use their off-duty time for school. • Some universities provided faculty advisors to support part-time BScN students in their academic journey. However, part-time BScN students	*Guideline 12: Provision of psychological support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities* **Rationale** Psychological support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with psychological challenges/stress brought about by their multiple	Nursing departments should: • Offer orientation to new part-time BScN students. • Offer pastoral support to part-time BScN students through the Dean of students' office and other student welfare services. • Create a mechanism for identifying part-time BScN students in need of psychological support. • Work in collaboration with the counselling department to offer counselling services that ensure

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
		did not fully utilise the faculty advisors for support. • Most universities availed counselling services to students in need. However, part-time BScN students rarely utilised this service because they spent minimal time on campus.	roles, that may interfere with their studies and reduce their attrition rate.	confidentiality to part-time BScN students in need. • Train part-time BScN students on self-care techniques that are effective in reducing stress, e.g. mindfulness, meditation, yoga etc. • Provide recreation facilities for students to use during breaks and after classes.
	Social support	• Most part-time BScN students were married and had young families. Therefore, they needed social support in terms of childcare and other family responsibilities. • Lack of spousal support made it difficult for some female part-time BScN students to complete their courses. • Family responsibilities and obligations are a priority for part-time BScN students. • Part-time BScN students needed social support from their families and colleagues to successfully complete their programme.	*Guideline 13: Provision of social support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities* **Rationale** Social support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with their families and employment responsibilities.	Nursing departments should: • Continue to provide faculty advisors to part-time BScN students. • Empower educators to be able to identify students in need of social support and direct them to the available services. • Mentor the students to identify various resources they can use for social support • Provide alternative modes of learning, such as online learning, for students facing a social crisis (such as lack of childcare or illness of a family member). • Support female students during their post-delivery period to allow them to continue with learning. This can be achieved through the

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guidelines	Recommendations for implementation
				provision of online learning opportunities. • Provide lactation rooms for breastfeeding mothers to encourage them to attend classes and continue with exclusive breastfeeding. These facilities should also accommodate caregivers supporting the mothers. • Implement a peer support programme among part-time BScN students. The peer support programme will foster cohesion among part-time BScN students and act as an avenue for the provision of social support to each other in times of crisis.

8.5   RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are based on the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study and the proposed guidelines.

8.5.1 Recommendations for part-time nursing education

The following recommendations regarding part-time nursing education have been proposed.

Universities offering part-time BScN programmes should:

- Ensure adequate and competent nurse educators facilitate theoretical and clinical teaching, as well as mentor part-time BScN students.
- Work with all stakeholders (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, University education regulators and nursing regulators) to develop a curriculum suited for part-time BScN students. It should be dove-tailed to the diploma programme and recognise prior learning.
- Universities to work with the government to come up with practical forms of financial support that suit the part-time BScN students.
- Provide necessary funds to support nursing departments in the implementation of part-time BScN curriculum.
- Nursing departments in universities to conduct training of part-time BScN educators on teaching pedagogies. This can be implemented as a teaching certification course that nurse educators can undertake, e.g. Advance Higher Education fellowship.

Nurse educators for part-time BScN programmes should:

- Continue to appraise themselves with teaching and learning strategies suited to support mature and part-time students.
- Engage in reflective practice of their teaching of part-time BScN students.
- Participate in continuous professional development activities to support their teaching of part-time BScN students.

- Enrol in mentoring programmes that will develop their skills in mentoring part-time BScN students.
- Be creative in the implementation of a part-time BScN curriculum to avoid repetition of teaching and assessment techniques used in diploma institutions.
- Identify part-time BScN students who need further support and refer them to the relevant university departments for support.

8.5.2 Recommendations for practice

Employers of part-time BScN students should:

- Engage with their employee to find practical ways to assist part-time BScN students to combine work and studies.
- Provide flexible schedules to allow part-time BScN students.

8.4.3 Recommendations for policy

Nursing Directorate at Ministry of Health to:

- Development of clinical education and training guidelines aimed at standardising a system of clinical education and training for nurses and midwives in the country.
- Make provision for resources for learning in the clinical learning environments, e.g. medical supplies, registered nurses and clinical preceptors.
- Coordinate between nursing education institutions and clinical learning environments to ensure a smooth favourable learning environment for part-time BScN students.

Universities offering part-time BScN programmes should:

- Develop policies and regulations that address challenges faced by part-time BScN students. Develop an examination policy that addresses missing students' grades.

8.5.4 Recommendations for implementation of the guidelines

Universities and nursing departments offering part-time BScN programmes should:

- Consider adopting and implementing the guidelines that apply to their needs.
- Develop a plan for the implementation of the guidelines.
- Identify key stakeholders that would support the implementation of the guidelines. Some of the key stakeholders are the university regulators, nursing regulators, university education funding agencies, and employers of part-time BScN students.
- Monitor the implementation process and make any adjustments where needed.

8.5.5 Recommendations for further research

The researcher recommends that further research be conducted in the following areas:

- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the guidelines in enhancing support to part-time BScN students
- Further studies on some of the findings from the study. There is a need to evaluate how the needs identified in this study impact the overall performance of part-time BScN students.
- Further studies on the effectiveness of current part-time BScN programme curricula in enhancing competencies of nurses who have been through part-time BScN programmes.
- The findings have indicated that the curriculum is redundant and there is poor clinical learning. Further studies on how to improve the part-time BScN programme in Kenya by addressing curriculum review and clinical learning.
- Similar studies must be conducted in other health disciplines to enhance the support of part-time and mature students in Kenyan universities.

8.6   CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

Mature and part-time students' needs in Kenyan universities have not been explored before. The study explored the needs of part-time BScN programmes and developed guidelines to support this group of students. This study makes a unique contribution to the body of knowledge in nursing education by providing guidelines to enhance support for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The study also provides a platform for curriculum review and the development of other tools that can inform larger studies.

8.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in four universities in Kenya. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all universities in Kenya but can be applied to other universities offering part-time BScN programmes in Kenya. The study has not specifically highlighted demographic characteristics of the students. Marital status, parenthood and financial status could have influenced the experiences of these students. Further studies need to be conducted to examine the influence of demographic characteristics to students support and success in higher education in Kenyan universities.

8.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study question on what constitutes the support needs of part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities for the successful completion of their studies has yielded diverse evidence. The evidence revealed that support needed by part-time BScN students is the provision of learning resources, support of learning needs, curriculum review, policy formulation and psychosocial support. Enablers and barriers for the provision of support to part-time BScN students were institutional-related, programme-related, financial-related, students-related and staff-related, in line with the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success (Thomas 2012:16).

It can therefore be concluded that the study's objectives of exploring the nature of support and perceived support needs for part-time BScN students were achieved. Furthermore, the study also determined the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN students in Kenya were achieved in line with the conceptual framework of What Works? Model of student support and success (Thomas 2012:16). Finally, guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities were developed and validated.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: Ethical Clearance Certificate from the University of South Africa

UNISA | university of south africa

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES
REC-012714-039 (NHERC)

15 February 2017

HSHDC/620/2017
MS GM Mbuthia
Student: 5856-364-4
Supervisor: Prof GH van Rensburg
Qualification: D Litt et Phil
Joint Supervisor: –

Dear MS GM Mbuthia

Decision: Ethics Approval

Name: MS GM Mbuthia

Proposal: Guidelines for enhanced student support to working part-time Bachelor of Science in nursing students in Kenya.

Qualification: DPCHS04

Thank you for the application for research ethics approval from the Research Ethics Committee: Department of Health Studies, for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for the duration of the research period as indicated in your application.

> The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the Research Ethics Committee: Department of Health Studies on 15 February 2017.
>
> The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:
>
> 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
>
> 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the Research Ethics Review Committee, Department of Health Studies. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.

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ANNEXURE B1: Request for permission to conduct research at Aga Khan University

Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

5th January 2018

Dr. Eunice Ndirangu,
Academic Head,
School of Nursing and Midiwifery,
Aga Khan University,

Dear Dr. Eunice Ndirangu,

RE: Request for permission to conduct research at Aga Kha University School of Nursing and Midwifery

I, Gladys Mbuthia, am doing research with Prof G. H. van Rensburg, a professor in the Department of Health Sciences, towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled; Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

The aim of the study is explore the nature of and perceived needs for support to working part-time BScN students, determine the enablers and barriers to providing support to working part-time BScN in Kenya and develop guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

Your institution has been selected because it offers the BScN program on a part-time basis to working nurses.

The study will entail focus group discussions with working part-time BScN students and individual interviews with the educators teaching BScN students.

The benefits of this study are development of guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenya. There are no foreseeable risks of harm or side-effects that you are likely to be experienced by part-time BScN students and their educators if they this study. However, part-time BScN students may feel concerned that negative comments about the university may affect your studies. The researcher assures of confidentiality and anonymity of your responses. Should they feel the need to discuss their fears with someone, they will be referred to the student counsellor in your institution.

Feedback procedure will entail a report to your department which will include the guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenya.

Attached please find a copy of the ethical clearance certificate issued by the university as well as a copy of the proposal.

Should you wish to communicate with the supervisor about any matters related to the study, you may contact Prof GH van Rensburg at vrensgh@unisa.ac.za. Alternatively you may

contact the Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Health Studies at Unisa at maritje@unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

Gladys Mbuthia,
Senior Instructor, Aga Khan University, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Email: Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu, Phone no. 0203747483/1120
Mobile no. 0720789754

ANNEXURE B2: Ethical Clearance letter from Aga Khan University

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Ref: 2017/REC-48(v1)
21st April 2017

Ms. Gladys Mbuthia
Principal Investigator and Faculty member
Aga Khan University, Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Ms. Mbuthia,

Re: GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO WORKING PART-
        TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

The Aga Khan University, Nairobi Research Ethics Committee (REC) is in receipt of your proposal submitted on 22nd March 2017. In a meeting held on 10th April 2017, the committee records that this is a low-risk study. However, the committee wants you to re-consider the interview time, because 60 to 90 minutes is rather long time.

The committee has granted conditional approval (as per attached official stamped protocol) for this project based on core ethical standards, which have been fully instituted in the protocol. Prior to commencing the study, you will be expected to ensure compliance with relevant institutional administrative and financial regulations. For further details of this regulations please contact Research Office. Besides, please obtain a research licence from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and also obtain a site approval from the four chosen study sites. Copies of these approvals should be submitted to the Research Office for record purpose. Subsequently, you are authorized to conduct this study from 22nd April 2017. This approval is valid until 21st April 2018.

The study should be conducted in full accordance with all the applicable sections of the REC guidelines and you should notify the REC immediately of any changes that may affect your research project. You must immediately report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants to the REC. All consent forms must be filed in the study binder. You must provide an interim report before expiration of the validity of this approval and request extension if additional time is required for study completion. As the principal investigator you must advise the REC when this study is finished or discontinued and a final report submitted to the Research Office. If you have any questions and/or require assistance to obtain research permit from NACOSTI, please contact Research Office research.supportea@aku.edu or 020-366 2148/1136.

With best wishes,

Dr. Amyn Lakhani, Chairman
Research Ethics Committee, AKU (Nairobi)

ANNEXURE C: Letter of research authorisation from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254 20 2213 171,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: cg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
when replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI KENYA

Ref No. NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028

Date: 8th May, 2017

Gladys Muthoni Mbuthia
Aga Khan University
P.O. Box 21774-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Guidelines for enhanced student support to working part-time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending 5th **May, 2018.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001: 2008 Certified

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ANNEXURE D: Research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MISS. GLADYS MUTHONI MBUTHIA
of AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY KENYA ,
39340-623 Nairobi ,has been permitted
to conduct research in *Nairobi County*

on the topic: *GUIDELINES FOR
ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO
WORKING PART-TIME BACHELOR OF
SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN
KENYA*

for the period ending:
5th May,2018

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028
Date Of Issue : 8th May,2017
Fee Recieved :Ksh 2000

Applicant's
Signature

Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

ANNEXURE E1: Request for permission to conduct research at the University of Nairobi/KNH Research Ethics Committee

Gladys M. Mbuthia,
Aga Khan University,
P. O. Box 39340-00623,
Nairobi

13th February 2019,

Deputy Vice Chancellor - RPE,
University of Nairobi,
P. O. Box 30197-00100,
Nairobi.

Through:
The Director,
School of Nursing and Midwifery,
College of Health Sciences,

RE: Request for permission to conduct research at University of Nairobi, School of Nursing, on a study entitled 'Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya'

I, Gladys Mbuthia, am doing research with Prof G. H. van Rensburg, a professor in the Department of Health Sciences, towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled; Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

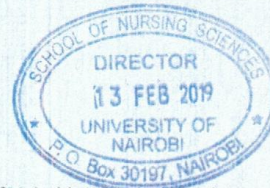The aim of the study is to explore the nature of and perceived needs for support to working part-time BScN students, determine the enablers and barriers to providing support to working part-time BScN in Kenya and develop guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

Your institution has been selected because it offers the BScN program on a part-time basis to working nurses.

The study will entail focus group discussions with working part-time BScN students and individual interviews with the educators teaching BScN students.

The benefits of this study are development of guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenya. There are minimal foreseeable harm that is likely to be experienced by part-time BScN students and their educators if they participate in this study. The part-time BScN students may feel concerned that negative comments about the university may affect their studies. The researcher assures of confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Should they feel the need to discuss their fears with someone, they will be referred to the student counsellor using the existing University of Nairobi Protocol.

Feedback procedure will entail a report to the department which will include the guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenya.

Attached please find a copy of the ethical clearance certificate issued by the university as well as NACOSTI research permit.

Should you wish to communicate with the supervisor about any matters related to the study, you may contact the secretary to KNH-UoN Ethics and Research Committee, Prof. M. L. Chindia, at uonknh_erc@uonbi.ac.ke. Alternatively you may contact the Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Health Studies at Unisa at maritje@unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

Gladys Mbuthia,
Senior Instructor, Aga Khan University, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Email: Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu, Phone no. 0203747483/1120
Mobile no. 0720789754

Cc:

The Principal,
College of Health Sciences,
University of Nairobi

dverpe@uonbi.ac.ke

ANNEXURE E2: Ethical clearance letter from University of Nairobi/KNH Research Ethics Committee

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
P O BOX 19676 Code 00202
Telegrams: varsity
Tel:(254-020) 2726300 Ext 44355

KNH-UON ERC
Email: uonknh_erc@uonbi.ac.ke
Website: http://www.erc.uonbi.ac.ke
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/uonknh.erc
Twitter: @UONKNH_ERC https://twitter.com/UONKNH_ERC

KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL
P O BOX 20723 Code 00202
Tel: 726300-9
Fax: 725272
Telegrams: MEDSUP, Nairobi

Ref: KNH-ERC/A/381

1st December, 2017

Gladys Mbuthia
PhD candidate
School of Nursing and Midwifery
Aga Khan University, Kenya
Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu

Dear Gladys

RESEARCH PROPOSAL –GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO WORKING PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA (P520/09/2017)

This is to inform you that the KNH- UoN Ethics & Research Committee (KNH- UoN ERC) has reviewed and **approved** your above proposal. The approval period is from 1st December 2017- 30th November 2018.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

a) Only approved documents (informed consents, study instruments, advertising materials etc) will be used

b) All changes (amendments, deviations, violations etc.) are submitted for review and approval by KNH-UoN ERC before implementation.

c) Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to KNH- UoN ERC within 72 hours.

d) Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events (SAEs) or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to the KNH-UoN ERC within 72 hours of notification

e) Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period (*Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal*).

f) Submission of an *executive summary* report within 90 days upon completion of the study. This information will form part of the data base that will be consulted in future when processing related research studies so as to minimize chances of study duplication and/ or plagiarism.

Protect to discover

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ANNEXURE F1: Request for permission to collect data at Kenya Methodist University (KEMU)

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Health Sciences
School of Nursing and Midwifery

Gladys Mbuthia,
Aga Khan University
P. O. Box 39340-00623
Nairobi
Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu

29th September 2017

The Vice Chancellor,
Kenya Methodist University,
P. O. Box 267 -60200,
Meru, Kenya.

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION

I am a lecturer of Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery, and I am undertaking my PhD in nursing studies at University of South Africa. I hereby write to you to request permission to undertake data collection in your institution. My research topic is titled 'Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya'

My data collection procedure will involve holding two focus group discussions with upgrading part-time BScN students, and individual interviews with three faculty members who teach the upgrading part-time BScN students. The focus group discussions and interviews will focus on support needs of the upgrading part-time BScN students.

The study has received ethical approval from University of South Africa (HSHDC/620/2017), Aga Khan University and NASCOSTI. The study is funded by Aga Khan University. Attached, find the research proposal and all ethical clearances, as requested.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gladys Mbuthia

P.O. Box 39340 - 00623, Parklands, Nairobi, Kenya
Telephone: +254 20 374 7483, 374 5808
Email: sonam.ke@aku.edu; Website: www.aku.edu

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ANNEXURE F2: Letter of permission to collect data from Kenya Methodist University (KEMU)

Kenya Methodist University

P.O Box 267 - 60200, Meru, Kenya, Tel: (+254-020) 2118423-7, 064-30301/31229 Fax: (+254-064) 30162 Email: info@kemu.ac.ke , Website: www.kemu.ac.ke

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

23rd October, 2017

Gladys Mbuthia
Agha Khan University
P.O. Box 39340-00623,
NAIROBI.

Dear Gladys,

RE: AUTHORIZATION TO COLLECT DATA

Reference is made to your letter dated September 29th 2017 seeking authorization to collect data at KeMU on your Study "**Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part - Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya**". I am glad to inform you that this request has been reviewed and approved on the basis of the proposal and the supporting documents presented. Note therefore that:

1. Any substantial changes on the scope of the research will require an approval.
2. Any resulting publication(s) should acknowledge KeMU and
3. You are required to provide a copy of the final report to KeMU through the Director -Research & Research & Innovation
4. It is advised that an advance notice (not less than 14 days) be sent to officers in the University, prior to conducting any interviews.
5. Where it concerns data from students, the communication shall be through the office of Dean of Students.

These terms will govern the conduct of this research unless revised in writing.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. MAURICE O. OKOTH, PhD
VICE CHANCELLOR

NB: Please return a signed copy of this authorization to Directorate of Research & Innovation Office before commencing data collection.

Name of Principal Investigator: .... Signature.....................

Date: ....

Nairobi Campus: Kolhange Street, P.O. Box 45240-00100 Nairobi - Tel: +254-20-2118443/2248172/2247192/0725-751678, Fax: 254-20-2248158. Email:nairobicampus@kemu.ac.ke
Nakuru Campus: Macho Plaza, 4th Floor. P.O. Box 3654-20100, Nakuru, Tel +254-61-2214456 Fax 051-2216446, Email:nakurucampus@kemu.ac.ke
Mombasa Campus: Former Oshwal Academy, P.O. Box 89983, Mombasa. Tel: +254 - 041-2495945 / 8, Fax 041-2495048. Email: mombasacampus@kemu.ac.ke
Nyeri Campus: Lware Building, 4th Floor. Tel: +254-61-2032904. Fax: 254-61-2034100 Email: nyericampus@kemu.ac.ke

The Future is Here!

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ANNEXURE G1: Request for permission to collect data from Kenyatta University

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Health Sciences
School of Nursing and Midwifery

Gladys Mbuthia,
Aga Khan University,
P. O. Box 39340-00623,
Nairobi.
Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu

29th September 2017

To:
Vice Chancellor,
Kenyatta University,

Through:
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Research, Innovation & Outreach
Kenyatta University,
P. O. Box 43844 -00100,
Nairobi, Kenya.

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION

I am a lecturer of Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery, and I am undertaking my PhD in nursing studies at University of South Africa. I hereby write to you to request permission to undertake data collection in your institution. My research topic is titled 'Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya'

My data collection procedure will involve holding two focus group discussions with upgrading part-time BScN students, and individual interviews with three faculty members who teach the upgrading part-time BScN students. The focus group discussions and interviews will focus on support needs of the upgrading part-time BScN students.

The study has received ethical approval from University of South Africa (HSHDC/620/2017), Aga Khan University and NASCOSTI. The study is funded by Aga Khan University. Attached, find the research proposal and all ethical clearances, as requested.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gladys Mbuthia

ANNEXURE G2: Letter of permission to collect data from Kenyatta University

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH,
INNOVATION AND OUTREACH

Ref: KU/DVCR/RCR/VOL.3/239

P. O. Box 43844 – 00100
Nairobi. Kenya
Tel. 254-20-810901 Ext. 026
E-mail: dvc-rio@ku.ac.ke

Gladys Mbuthia,
AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

3rd November, 2017

Dear Ms. Mbuthia,

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

This is in reference to your letter dated 30th September, 2017 requesting for authorization to collect research data at Kenyatta University on the topic *"Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya"* towards a PhD degree of Aga Khan University.

I am happy to inform you that the Vice-Chancellor has approved your request to collect data. It has been noted that your data collection targets staff and students in the School of Nursing.

The University requires that, upon completion of your research, you submit a hard copy of your thesis to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research who shall forward it to the University Library. Kindly therefore complete Form RIO3 and return it to my office prior to the commencement of collection of data.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. F. Q. Giravenir
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Research, Innovation & Outreach
cc. Vice-Chancellor
    Dean, School of Nursing

ANNEXURE H: Participant information sheet and consent (students)

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (STUDENTS)

UNISA Ethics clearance reference number: **REC-012714-039**
NACOSTI Research permission reference number: **NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028**

Date: 9 November 2018

TITLE: GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO WORKING PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Gladys Mbuthia, and I am doing research with Prof Gisela van Rensburg, a professor in the Department of Health Sciences, towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled **GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA.**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research to explore and describe student support needs among part-time BScN students and to develop guidelines for enhanced support programmes for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

WHY AM I INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

I chose you as a study participant since you are a part-time BScN student. I obtained your contact details from you after you willingly agreed to participate in the study. I chose the part-time BScN students, of which you are one of them since you meet the criteria for my study.

The study will involve part-time BScN from four private universities in Kenya. I cannot tell you the exact number of participants since the focus group discussions will continue until no new themes is emerging from the data.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves focus groups for part-time BScN students and semi-structured interviews for educators teaching part-time BScN students. As you are **a part-time BScN student**, your role will be to participate in **focus group discussions**.

The questions that will be asked will be open-ended and related to student support. The focus group discussions will last approximately 90 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason and with no repercussions at all.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

By you participating in this study, you will be benefiting part-time BScN students, who will be provided with enhanced support that will emanate from the findings of this study. You may or may experience the benefits of this study as a part-time BScN student, depending on your current year of study.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

There are no foreseeable risks of harm or side effects that you are likely to experience by participating in this study. However, you may feel concerned that negative comments about the university may affect your studies. The researcher assures of confidentiality

and anonymity of your responses. Should you feel the need to discuss their fears with someone, you will be referred to the student counsellor in your institution.

You are required to sign a confidentiality abiding form to ensure that you shall not discuss the content of the focus group discussion with other people after the FGD, and neither shall you disclose the identity of other participants to the study.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research. Your responses will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The data will be accessed by the researcher and the note-taker and other relevant persons for the purposes of the study. They shall maintain the confidentiality of the data by signing a confidentiality document.

Your responses may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you permit for other people to see the records.

Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

A focus group discussion will involve six to eight participants, who may or may not be known to you. While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of the transcribed verbatim will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the researcher's office for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The information will be destroyed by shredding the hard copies and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme. This will be done five years after the completion of my PhD studies.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no payment that you shall receive for participating in this study.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Unisa (HSHDC/620/2017), NACOSTI (Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028), and your university. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Gladys Mbuthia on 0720789754 or Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Gladys Mbuthia, 072078974, Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof GH van Rensburg, +2712429651, vrensgh@unisa.ac.za or Prof JE

Maritz, Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Health Studies at Unisa at <u>maritje@unisa.ac.za</u>. Contact the research ethics chairperson of the Aga Khan University Ethics committee, Dr Amyn Lakhani, <u>amyn.lakhani@aku.edy</u> if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Gladys Mbuthia

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunities to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the focus group discussion.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant's name and surname…………………………………………… (Please print)

Participant signature…………………………………….………. Date…………………

Researcher's name and surname…………………………………………… (Please print)

Researcher's signature………………………………………….. Date…………………

ANNEXURE I: Focus group discussion guide

Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

UNISA Ethics clearance reference number: REC-012714-039

NACOSTI Research permission reference number: NACOSTI/P/17/51762/26702

Date: 13th December 2018

Introduction

A. (**Establish Rapport**) [shake hands] My name is Gladys Mbuthia and I am the principal investigator of this study, which is part of my PhD studies. I welcome you to this focus group discussion. I would like us to know one another, so each one of you shall tell us their name and the year of study.

B. (**Purpose**) I would like to ask you questions about the nature of and perceived needs for support to working part-time BScN students, and the enablers and barriers to providing support to working part-time BScN in Kenya, to develop guidelines for enhanced support to working part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

C. (**Motivation**) I hope to use this information to develop guidelines to enhance support for working part-time BScN students in the universities in Kenya.

D. (**Time Line**) The focus group discussion should take about 90 minutes. Are you available to respond to some questions at this time?

Focus group discussion guide

Grand tour question will be; what kind of support do you need from your institution of learning, as a part-time BScN student to succeed in your studies?

Probing questions will be asked during the FGD based on the discussions to elicit more information on each of the aspects covered in the questions.

Closing

I appreciate the time you took for this focus group discussion. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know so that I can successfully develop guidelines for the university to support part-time BScN students better?

This interview will be transcribed and counterchecked for accuracy. The findings of the study will be communicated through a thesis and other forms of report of which your university will also receive one.

Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Thank you again.

Gladys Mbuthia

ANNEXURE J: Participant information sheet and consent (educators)

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (EDUCATORS)

UNISA Ethics clearance reference number REC-012714-039:
NACOSTI Research permission reference number: NACOSTI/P/17/51762/26702

Date: 13 December 2018

Title: Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Gladys Mbuthia, and I am doing research with Prof. Gisela van Rensbug, a professor in the Department of Health Sciences, towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research to explore and describe student support needs among part-time BScN students, and to develop guidelines for enhanced support programme for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

I chose you as a study participant since you are an educator teaching part-time BScN students. I obtained your contacts details from you, after you willingly agreed to participate in the study. I chose you since you are an educator teaching part-time BScN students, and you meet the criteria for my study.

The study will involve nurse educators teaching part-time BScN from four private universities in Kenya. I cannot tell you the exact number of participants since interviews will continue until there is no new themes emerging from the data.

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WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves focus groups for part-time BScN students and semi-structured interviews for educators teaching part-time BScN students. As you are an educator, your role will be to participate the in interviews.

The questions that will be asked will be open-ended and related to student support. The individual interviews will last approximately 60 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason and with no repercussions at all.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

By you participating in this study, will not benefit from the study since you are an educator and not a student. However, your participation will benefit part-time BScN students, who will be provided with enhanced support that will emanate from the findings of this study.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

There are no foreseeable risks of harm or side-effects that you are likely to experience by participating in this study.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorder anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about

your involvement in this research. Your responses will be given a code number, or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The data will be accessed by the researcher and the note taker and other relevant persons for the purposes of the study. They shall maintain confidentiality of the data by signing a confidentiality document.

Your responses may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of the transcribed verbatim will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the researcher's office for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The information will be destroyed by shredding the hard copies and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme. This will be done five years after the completion of my PhD studies.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no payment that you shall receive for participating in this study. However, you shall be provided with transport reimbursement to the venue of the focus group discussion.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Unisa (HSHDC/620/2017), NACOSTI (Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/17/51762/17028) and your university. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Gladys Mbuthia on 0720789754 or Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Gladys Mbuthia, 072078974, Gladys.Mbuthia@aku.edu.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof. GH van Rensburg, +2712429651, vrensgh@unisa.ac.za or Prof JE Maritz, Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Health Studies at Unisa at maritje@unisa.ac.za. Contact the research ethics chairperson of the Aga Khan University Ethics committee, Dr. Amyn Lakhani, amyn.lakhani@aku.edy if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Gladys Mbuthia

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant's name and surname……………………………………… (Please print)

Participant signature…………………………………….…….. Date…………………

Researcher's name and surname…………………………………… (Please print)

Researcher's signature…………………………………….. Date…………………

ANNEXURE K: Interview guide

GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

UNISA Ethics clearance reference number **REC-012714-039**:
NACOSTI Research permission reference number: **NACOSTI/P/17/51762/26702**

Date: 13 December 2018

Introduction

A. (**Establish Rapport**) [shake hands] My name is Gladys Mbuthia and I am the principal investigator of this study, which is part of my PhD studies. I welcome you to this interview. Thank you for setting time from your busy schedule for this interview.

B. (**Purpose**) I would like to ask you questions about nature of and perceived needs for support to part-time BScN students, and the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time BScN in Kenya, to develop guidelines for enhanced support to part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities.

C. (**Motivation**) I hope to use this information to develop guidelines to enhance support for part-time BScN students in the universities in Kenya.

D. (**Time Line**) The interview should take about 30 minutes. Are you available to respond to some questions at this time?

Interview guide

1   Please share your experiences with teaching of part-time students in terms of their unique characteristics and needs as students.

2   What would you regard as the enablers and barriers to providing support to part-time students?

3   How do you perceive the support needs for part-time BScN students?

4   What would your recommendations be to enhance the support to the part-time students?

Probing questions will be asked during the interview based on the discussions to elicit more information on each of the aspects covered in the questions.

Closing

I appreciate the time you took for this interview. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know so that I can successfully develop guidelines for the university to support part-time BScN students better?

This interview will be transcribed and counterchecked for accuracy. The findings of the study will be communicated through a thesis and other forms of report of which your university will also receive one.

Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Thank you again.

Gladys Mbuthia

ANNEXURE L: Confidentiality binding form

Guidelines for Enhanced Student Support to Working Part-Time Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students in Kenya

I ……………………………………. (participant name) am willing to participate in the above-mentioned study conducted by Gladys Mbuthia (researcher). PhD student with the University of South Africa. The purpose and the method of the study has been explained to me. By signing this agreement, I confirm that I am aware and will abide by the following:

Ethical approval and consent to conduct the study was obtained from Unisa, Aga Khan University and National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation in Kenya. The information obtained will be used in reports with no mentioning of individual identifiable information.

All personal information will be kept confidential.

The identity of the participants will be protected by the researcher.

All audiotapes, transcriptions and consent forms will be kept under lock and key and will remain in safe keeping for a minimum period of five years after which it will be destroyed.

I will respect the opinions of my fellow participants.

I will not disclose any information outside the group.

I will not link any information to any group member.

Participant name : ………………………………………………
Participant signature : ………………………………………..
Date : ………………………………………………………………..

Researcher name: ………………………………………………
Researcher signature: …………………………………………
Date: ………………………………………………………………..

ANNEXURE M: Letter to guide validators

25 May 2022

Dear Dr……………………..

REQUEST FOR VALIDATION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED SUPPORT FOR PART-TIME BScN STUDENTS IN KENYAN UNIVERSITITIES

The attached preliminary guidelines were developed based on the findings of the study on support needs for part-time BScN students in Kenyan universities. The study was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science degree at the University of South Africa, under the supervision of Professor Gisela van Rensburg.

This letter serves to request your assistance to validate the guidelines in your capacity as an expert in the field of healthcare education and training, guideline development and/or as educator of part-time BScN students in a Kenyan University.

Kindly indicate whether the guidelines conform to the attached criteria by answering the questions in the validation form. Feel free to attach extra notes if the space provided is not sufficient or you wish to highlight any other matter related to the guidelines.

Kindly return the comments at your earliest convenience but not later than 10th June 2022. For further information or concerns, you may contact me or my supervisor, Prof GH van Rensburg, +27124296514, vrensgh@unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely
Gladys Mbuthia (PhD student: Department of Health Studies)
+254720789754
58563644@mylife.unisa.ac.za

ANNEXURE N: Validation form

GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED SUPPORT FOR PART-TIME BScN STUDENTS IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES

GUIDELINE VALIDATION FORM

Please indicate whether the guideline conforms to the following criteria by answering the following questions. Feel free to attach extra notes if the space provided is not sufficient.

Clarity

Based on the themes, categories and concluding statements provided, are the guidelines clearly formulated?

Explain your response

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Provide suggestions for improvement to enhance clarity

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Comprehensiveness

Each guideline is supported by themes, categories and concluding statements. In your opinion, do the guidelines address the associated themes, categories and concluding statements?

Explain your response

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Provide suggestion for improvement

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Credibility

Do the guidelines address the themes in the guidelines document? \

Explain your response

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Are they relevant to nursing education institutions offering part-time BScN programmes? (If you do not have experience of part-time programmes, your expert opinion could still be of value based on your experience as educator).

Explain your response

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Applicability

Are the guidelines appropriate for application to nursing education institutions offering part-time BScN programme? (If you do not have experience of part-time programmes, your expert opinion could still be of value based on your experience as educator).

Explain your response

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Adaptability

Can the guidelines be adapted to other universities offering nursing education?

Explain your response

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Do the guidelines adequately address support needed in theoretical and clinical learning of part-time BScN nursing students? (If you do not have experience of part-time programmes, your expert opinion could still be of value based on your experience as educator).

Explain your response

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Can the guidelines be adopted to other nursing students other than part-time BScN students?

Explain your response

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Validity: Can the guidelines enhance support of part-time BScN students if adopted as they are? (If you do not have experience of part-time programmes, your expert opinion could still be of value based on your experience as educator).

Explain your response

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Any other comments

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ANNEXURE O: Proposed preliminary guidelines for enhanced support for part-time BScN students in Kenya

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
Support through resources provision	Human resources	• Educators were not available to part-time BScN students for follow-up sessions after class. • Educators of part-time BScN students prioritised regular students' learning over part-time BScN students' learning. • The part-time nature of the programme resulted in minimal contact with educators, and impending mentorship opportunities.	*Guideline 1: Provision of supervision, mentorship, and support to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning environment* **Rationale** Mature students in higher education have been shown to have higher attrition rates compared to younger students. They also tend to struggle with their learning due to the years they have been away from the classroom.	Universities should: • Employ an adequate number of educators for part-time BScN students to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum. • Hire competent nurse educators with clinical skills and practising RN. • Where educators are expected to conduct clinical teaching, universities should ensure a ratio of one educator to 10 students. • Provide resources to nursing departments to facilitate clinical supervision for part-time BScN students by nursing educators. Nursing departments in universities should: • Develop a formal mentorship programme for part-time BScN students. • Train mentors to successfully mentor part-time BScN students. • Develop a programme for the supervision of part-time BScN students while in clinical settings. Educators of part-time BScN students should:

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
				• Provide supervision to part-time BScN students while in their clinical learning settings. • Mentor part-time BScN students following the mentorship programme developed by the department. The nursing regulator (Nursing Council of Kenya) should enforce a 1:10 clinical educator-to-student ratio.
	Technological resources	• Part-time BScN programme is offered via blended learning mode and all learning resources were available online. • Part-time BScN students needed laptops and internet access for easier learning. • Part-time BScN students from remote parts of the country didn't have internet access. Hence, they needed to travel to a place with an internet connection to access learning resources. • Online learning infrastructure needed to be accessible always, especially when submitting assignments. • Learning management systems were not always reliable and were sometimes	*Guideline 2: Provision of a learning management system and relevant technical support to part-time BScN students* **Rationale** An accessible and functional learning management system is vital for part-time BScN students to access learning resources, take their quizzes and CATs, and interact with their educators.	Nursing education institutions should implement the following measures to enhance technological support for part-time BScN students. • To orientate the part-time BScN students to the use of LMS. • Provide internet-enabled gadgets with pre-loaded course materials to part-time BScN students. • Have in-built quizzes and CATs into the devices for them to take at the appointed time in the semester. • Provide on-campus internet access for students. • ICT departments in nursing education institutions provide regular maintenance of online learning management systems. • In case of an outage of LMS, ICT departments work speedily to restore it back.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		inaccessible for an extended period. • The provision of the internet by universities made it easier for part-time BScN students to access learning resources. • Part-time BScN students contacted their educators through the online learning management system (LMS). • Quizzes and continuous assessment tests (CATs) were offered through the online LMS.		• Libraries should provide online resources (e.g. Proquest e-books) for part-time BScN students and continuously monitor them for currency and availability. • Libraries should regularly maintain online platforms and avoid extended periods of outages. • Nursing educators use internet-enabled gadgets to monitor students learning and provided immediate feedback to part-time BScN students where needed.
	Financial support	• The Part-time BScN programme was perceived to be expensive by most part-time BScN students. • Part-time BScN students had other financial obligations that made it difficult for them to pay their school fees on time. • There were hidden costs of the programme that the students had to bear. Such as accommodation costs, transport costs, cost of internet and laptops, cost of clinical experience, etc. • Available students' financial assistance programmes are	*Guideline 3: Provision of financial support to part-time BScN students by partnering with funding agencies and provision of scholarships* **Rationale** Current financial assistance programmes accommodate full-time students and not part-time students.	Universities offering part-time BScN programmes to: • Negotiate with higher education funding agencies to develop financial assistance programmes that suit part-time BScN students. • Partner with funding agencies (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, Higher Education Loans Board, Mastercard) that can fund part-time BScN students. • Provide merit scholarship programmes that include part-time BScN students. • Explore flexible fee payment methods for part-time BScN students, which can put into consideration that they are salaried employees.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		designed to accommodate full-time regular students and not part-time students. • The government funding system for university education was not favourable to part-time BScN students due to the short repayment period of the high education loan advanced.		
Support for learning needs	Theoretical learning needs	• Part-time BScN students had minimal contact with their educators beyond theoretical teaching contact. • There was a lack of student engagement in learning. • Learning resources were available on LMS, but sometimes they were inaccessible due to problems with LMS. • The teaching of theoretical components did not put into consideration the students prior learning.	*Guideline 4: Implementation of teaching and learning strategies that engage mature students and provide relevance of learning to their nursing practice* **Rationale** Student engagement has been shown to improve student retention and success in higher education.	Nurse educators to: • Organise teaching and learning activities in a way that builds on the existing knowledge that part-time BScN students bring into the learning experience. • Make learning relevant to part-time BScN students' nursing practice by using clinical cases and scenarios that are relevant to part-time BScN students. • Make online learning engaging and relevant to part-time BScN students.
	Clinical learning sites	• Clinical learning sites were ill-equipped to facilitate the learning of part-time BScN students. • Clinical learning sites were understaffed. Therefore, part-time BScN students lacked	*Guideline 5: Preparation of clinical learning sites to make them ready to support part-time BScN students.*	Nursing education institutions to: • Train preceptors in clinical sites used by part-time BScN students to support their learning. • Employ competent clinical instructors where hospitals are not in a position to provide preceptors.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		mentors and preceptors while in clinical placements. • Part-time BScN students were viewed as manpower while in clinical learning settings. Therefore, they received minimal support from preceptors and were expected to cover the shortage of registered nurses in clinical settings. • Educators provided minimal support to part-time BScN students while in clinical learning placements. • Educators only visited clinical learning sites on assessment days to conduct clinical assessments of part-time BScN students.	**Rationale** Clinical learning sites used for clinical learning of part-time BScN students lacked mentors and preceptors to support clinical learning for part-time BScN students.	• Provide continuous professional development to RNs in clinical learning sites to ensure they stay abreast with current scientific development.
	Resources for clinical learning	• Part-time BScN students were not supported and supervised by their educators while in their clinical learning settings. Educators showed up in the clinical learning settings on the day of the assessment. • Government hospitals that were designated as clinical learning sites lacked the basic supplies needed for part-time	*Guideline 6: Provision of resources for clinical learning* **Rationale** Clinical sites are poorly equipped to support the learning of part-time BScN students. Alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills can	• Nursing education institutions work with stakeholders to equip clinical sites with the necessary resources for training students. • Nursing departments provide clinical sites with critical consumables needed for students learning and assessments. • Nursing education institutions to explore alternative modalities of teaching clinical skills.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		BScN learning. This is although part-time BScN students were required to pay for clinical learning experiences.	be used to support the learning of clinical skills.	• Nursing educators use simulation technology to teach clinical skills.
Support through curriculum review	Review of curriculum content	• The Part-time BScN programme curriculum contained content that was a repetition of content covered in a diploma programme. This resulted in a curriculum that was packed with content and had to be covered in two and a half years. • The content was similar to a 4-year BScN programme, yet the part-time programme is a two-and-a-half-year programme. • In a bid to cover the content, some aspects were glossed over or not covered at all.	*Guideline 7: Review of part-time BScN curriculum content* **Rationale** A curriculum review is needed to address redundant content and align the curriculum with the BScN scope of practice.	Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the following aspects of curriculum content: • Dovetail diploma curriculum with part-time BScN programme content to eliminate redundancy. • Review expected learning outcomes to incorporate prior learning. • Align the BScN programme competencies with the scope of practice for BScN nurses in Kenya. • Include assessment strategies that allow for high-order thinking.
	Review of teaching and learning strategies	• Teaching pedagogies utilised did not encourage students' engagement. • There was a need for educators to use teaching strategies that were suited to mature students. • Blended learning lacked engagement in the design of online activities.	*Guideline 8: Review of teaching and learning strategies* **Rationale** Teaching and learning strategies need to be innovative and engaging for part-time BScN students.	Nursing education institutions in conjunction with nursing regulators and regulators of university education, to review the part-time BScN curriculum and address the following aspects of teaching pedagogy: • Include innovative teaching strategies. • Align teaching and learning strategies with the needs of mature students.

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Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
				• Implement teaching and learning strategies that engage adult students and allow for the application of learning to clinical practice.
	Innovative assessment strategies	• Assessments for part-time BScN programme were similar to assessments done at diploma training. • Assessment strategies used in part-time BScN programmes were similar to those used in diploma training. • Clinical assessments in the part-time BScN programme were similar to those done in a diploma programme.	*Guideline 9: Implementation of innovative assessment strategies* **Rationale** Assessments in part-time BScN programmes should allow for assessment of higher-order thinking, to differentiate them from those carried out in diploma training.	Nursing education departments in universities should: • Review curriculum to include innovative assessment strategies that allow for assessment of higher order thinking such as synthesis and evaluation. • Implement theoretical assessment strategies that allow for the assessment of higher-order thinking skills. • Review clinical assessment strategies to include strategies that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making, as opposed to assessing skills only. • Align the assessment strategies with the objectives of the clinical learning placement. • Implement clinical assessments that allow for the assessment of critical thinking and decision-making in clinical settings.
Support through policy formulation	Examination policy on matters related to grades	• Examination policies in Kenyan universities were silent on what should be done in case of missing students' grades.	*Guideline 10: Formulation of policy on the grading of courses*	Universities should: • Develop a regulation that addresses the grading of courses.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		• In the event of missing grades, part-time BScN students were forced to retake courses to graduate. • Repeating a unit resulted in a financial burden and added to the cost of training.	**Rationale** Universities lack mechanisms to address students' missing grades.	• Develop a regulation that will allow part-time BScN students to challenge grades awarded. • Create mechanisms for follow-up and tracing students' grades. • Improve management of students' documents including examination documents.
	Students' regulations	• Some universities lacked policies that address challenges that were unique to part-time BScN students. E.g., there lacked credit transfer policy. • Part-time BScN fee was billed as though they were full-time students • The part-time BScN students were not represented in the students' council, and hence their challenges were not being addressed.	*Guideline 11: Formulation of regulations specific to part-time BScN programme* **Rationale** Part-time students were operating under student regulations meant for full-time students.	• Universities should develop programme regulations that guide the implementation of part-time BScN programmes. E.g., credit transfer policy. • University finance department to develop a fee billing mechanism that reflects the part-time BScN programme. • Universities that offer part-time BScN programmes should create mechanisms to allow participation of part-time BScN in students' leadership councils.
Need for psychosocial support	Psychological support	• Some universities lacked orientation programmes for part-time BScN. • Part-time BScN students experienced psychological stress emanating from their multiple roles. • Most part-time BScN students lacked employer support	*Guideline 12: Provision of psychological support* **Rationale** Psychological support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with their multiple roles that interfere with	Nursing departments should: • Offer pastoral support to part-time BScN students through the Dean of students' office and other student welfare services. • Create a mechanism for identifying part-time BScN students in need of psychological support.

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		necessitating them to use their off-duty time for school. • Some universities provided faculty advisors to support part-time BScN students in their academic journey. However, part-time BScN students did not fully utilise the faculty advisors for support. • Most universities availed counselling services to students in need. However, part-time BScN students rarely utilised this service because they spent minimal time on campus.	their studies and reduce their attrition rate.	• Work in collaboration with the counselling department to offer counselling services that ensure confidentiality to part-time BScN students in need.
	Social support	• Most part-time BScN students were married and had young families. Therefore, they needed social support in terms of childcare and other family responsibilities. • Lack of spousal support made it difficult for some female part-time BScN students to complete their courses. • Family responsibilities and obligations are a priority for part-time BScN students. • Part-time BScN students needed social support from	*Guideline 13: Provision of social support* **Rationale** Social support is needed to enable part-time BScN students to cope with their families and employment responsibilities.	Nursing departments should: • Continue to provide faculty advisors to part-time BScN students. • Empower educators to be able to identify students in need of social support and direct them to the available services. • Mentor the students to identify various resources they can use for social support • Provide alternative modes of learning, such as online learning, for students facing a social crisis (such as lack of childcare or illness of a family member).

Themes	Categories	Concluding statements	Guideline	Recommendations for implementation
		their families and colleagues to successfully complete their programme.		- Support female students during their post-delivery period to allow them to continue with learning. This can be achieved through the provision of online learning opportunities. - Provide lactation rooms for breastfeeding mothers to encourage them to attend classes and continue with exclusive breastfeeding. These facilities should also accommodate caregivers supporting the mothers. - Implement a peer support programme among part-time BScN students. Peer support programmes will foster cohesion among part-time BScN students and act as an avenue for the provision of social support to each other in times of crisis.

ANNEXURE P: Code book for focus group discussion

Codes and exemplar			
Exemplar	Code	Sub-themes	Themes
they really need to disseminate the timetables and assignments on time and the willingness to assist individual students who are struggling.	timetables and assignments		
because it will discourage her from the studies and then she might even advise others negatively that I was there and I was frustrated. So it hinders other nurses from coming to upgrade.	Negative publicity		
I would like a support such that if there is an interruption during the studying time of which most of the time the interruption is caused by the regular students, I would like a support such that the university would be able to regulate or reschedule especially for the part-time students, the program	reschedule programme		
If we get maybe a support like that like the university can be able to squeeze in or reschedule something in between for the part-time student, we would really appreciate that.	reschedule programme		
Probably they should have a program that will accommodate those students that failed their exams. So you find the CATs are running concurrently with the supplementaries	exam schedule		
where they are accommodating us, you see you are in a room where you being placed like four guys and you are grownups so you are even forced to sleep in a double decker	sleeping arrangements perceived as belittling		
Then you also have to work without day-offs so that at least you can accumulate them.	no days off for duration of study		
The other challenges maybe that I can add, you realize that most of us are working in the facilities where you are alone, so sometimes you are supposed to maybe close the facility and then you come.	release challenge		
I think the challenges also vary from county to county	variation in challenges		
at the end of the day, you will have to look for a way to circumvent all the challenges and			

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A36: personally I started school when I was only is it two months in that employment so I was not eligible for release. So I have to organize myself, work throughout, day and

A	B	C	D
22	If you are doing it there they will see that, this person is learning at KU and is doing this here, maybe some can be interested.	positive publicity		
23	we have challenges like family issues, jobs so there are so many things already in our minds. you have some social problems at home, you need to attend to them, at the same time you need to be in class.	multiple competing roles		
24	Okay what I can recommend, lecturers should understand that we are mature people, we are not like regular students, they should treat us special. My recommendation is lecturers should treat us as part-time as special, not as regular. We don't have time to read,	barrier to learning - mature students		
25	Because at times you end up being frustrated, you have some social problems at home, you need to attend to them, at the same time you need to be in class. So it delays your learning and then at the end of the day some might even lose hope and just discontinue with the classes	social issues		
26	maybe even the part time students were only to take, like us who are to take like two years, two and a half years or three, you find that because of the interruptions you go all the way to five years.	delayed learning		
27	in fact the university is even frustrating us, they are forcing us to stay inside, deducting our money direct from school fees of which for us most of us because we have families, we don't like staying inside.	forced accommondation		
28	okay the policy of the institution is that when you sit for an exam and then you fail to hit the pass mark, you have one chance to do a retake, if you don't make it again, you go back one year, this is too much	punitive exam policy		
	when we come to the end of the clinical rotation, we have to do some assessments. And most of us face challenge with the lecturers or the assessors, they harass us so much, it's like, they treat us like we are beginners in the clinical assessment. So assessor can…she can			

Perceived needs | Communication | Curriculum | LMS | Students Records | Accomondation

ANNEXURE Q: Example of data analysis for focus group discussions

24 KU_FGD_PART_08: You know the program is divided into two, we have the classes we

25 attend when we come for the holidays more of school based and then we have the classes

26 we attend online. So most of the time the challenge he's talking about is the classes we

27 are attending when we are online which should run from like now when we break, we'll

28 start the classes as from January to March before we come. So in between January and

29 March, that's the time there's delay of...they are supposed to release notes as per their

30 program...given their program. January they release February and March. So sometimes

Poor internet connectivity

31 it is challenging for people from Northern Kenya because of network. So maybe you

Ideas for improvement

32 were supposed to do an assignment and before you log in, it has logged already off. So

33 we...that the main thing you need is there must be an extension, they should have an

34 extension of time. If it is a one-week assignment they can give for two weeks or one

month so it will gives us time for those people in network challenging areas.

36 Q: Okay, interesting. Anybody else? Yes, we can pass it to number 5.

Challenges

Multiple competing priorities

37 KU_FGD_PART_05: Another support that we require as BScN students, you know we

38 are parents, we have some...people have so different...we have...we come from different

39 backgrounds, we have challenges like family issues, jobs so there are so many things

40 already in our minds. So at times if for special cases like maybe I'll be pregnant or my

tardiness

Consequences multiple roles

41 kid is sick, then at times maybe you delay attending some classes and when you attend

42 teacher tells you now that you'll not receive it by that time, it is more stressful. We'll

Perceived need Individual tutoring

43 wish that if that lecturer will get free time with that student and then take the student

44 through what others had learned during that time that that student was not there such that

45 she catches up and then we continue together as a group. Because at times you end up

46 being frustrated, you have some social problems at home, you need to attend to them, at

Consequences despair

47 the same time you need to be in class. So it delays your learning and then at the end of

48 the day some might even lose hope and just discontinue with the classes and they might

2

even not think of coming back. And then in future that one will affect the students

50 because it will discourage her from the studies and then she might even advise others

51 negatively that I was there and I was frustrated. So it hinders other nurses from coming to

52 upgrade

53 Q: Okay.

54 KU_FGD_PART_05: Yeah.

55 Q: Yes number 4.

56 KU_FGD_PART_04: For me, I would like to see an outline for the whole course given to

57 students, what is expected for the first year and for the second year and the last half of the

58 third year. What I have in mind is that we will be coming back here in April, but between

59 January and April we don't know what they have aligned for us in terms of placements.

60 That communication if it is forthcoming well in advance some of the students will be able

61 even to probably make arrangements where money is involved and also time. To me that

62 is what probably I would wish to see.

63 Q: Oh okay.

64 KU_FGD_PART_04: Yeah.

65 Q: So clear objectives and outline of what the course entails so that as you're starting off

66 you know what sort of commitment is expected at whatever stage.

67 KU_FGD_PART_04: Yes I'll give an example, we are supposed to do this class an

68 assessment for abnormal baby, that one we do know but when it is going to be done, we

69 cannot tell. When we have that information prior we are able to have that in mind and

70 again arrange for time and money. And considering that we are also working, we need

71 also some of us need to notify employers in time because okay we are different, some

[Handwritten margin annotations: "Negative ripple effect on program", "Program plan", "Need to know forward plg of clinical placements", "Financial & time implications", "current our very late", "uncertainty", "no communication for forward planning", "release"]

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72   in private some others in government sector. So some have easier time others do not have

73   that time. So when we have the outline with us, it is going to be easy for all of us.

74   Q: Alright, somebody else's addition, what do you perceive as…what do you need or

75   what support from the university for you to succeed? Someone else? Number 9?

76   KU_FGD PART_09: As for me my suggestion is like now the university most of the

77   time their program is taken according to the regular students. But you see like now us like

78   the part time students, most of them are working, they have other issues outside there. So

79   I would like a support such that if there is an interaction during the studying time of

80   which most of the time the interruption is caused by the regular students. You'd …it's

81   very unlikely that you get part-time students causing interruptions in the university. I

82   would like a support such that the university would be able to regulate or reschedule

83   especially for the part-time students, the program. It's not that like if they have something

84   to do like if it's done in May then this program has to run in May. They cannot shift it to

85   come maybe a month earlier or re-plan for the students. Such as maybe even the part time

86   students were only to take, like us who are to take like two years, two and a half years or

87   three, you find that because of the interruptions you go all the way to five years. If we got

88   maybe a support like that like the university can be able to squeeze in or reschedule

89   something in between for the part-time student, we would really appreciate that

90   Q: Good, that's a good point. Anything else?

91   KU_FGD_PART_06: Yeah probably

92   Q: Yes number 6.

93   KU_FGD PART_06: I would give an example of a scenario that we have. In our class

94   we have some of our colleagues who are having their supplementaries and you will find

95   that the last week of our schedule as per the calendar of the session, we are also having

4

23   Q: And traffic.

24   **KEMU_IDI_01:** Traffic. So there was that issue you know you have so much information

25   you would like to cover but the time is limited. So these learners when they come class first   *fatigue*

26   they are late, the second thing they are tired so you find yourself...I mean you find at some

27   point you are really talking to yourself. So I found that you know there was that issue of time

28   and then you are teaching people who are already tired. You give them assignment, tomorrow   *failure to get*

29   you are meeting again, the assignment has not been touched. So you as a lecturer I think at   *assignment done.*

30   some point you really have to compromise and you know, you don't want to really pressure   *compromised*

31   them. They are already under pressure from work and you don't want to give them so much   *teaching*

32   work. So at the end of the day you feel that really they have not gotten what you would have   *learning not*

33   wanted them to...not to get.   *achieved.*

34   Now the other issue again being working people, you will realize that maybe you've

35   scheduled for an important session or a CAT then someone tells you that, "You know my

36   employer has not released me." And you know nurses because of the handover, you cannot

37   go until you have to hand over. So sometimes you have people telling you that, "You know   *failure to*

38   my colleague didn't turn so I'm not coming." So you have a scheduled CAT, a sitting CAT.   *attend classes*

39   someone has missed the CAT what do you do? So you know there is that you know you have   *missing CATs*

40   to have that human hearing but also sometimes you have to be a professional and you know.

41   You really have to act wisely. So that was the other issue. Now other than time and employer   *Time constraints*

42   related, there was also this issue of the family and I really feel...I sympathize with the ladies.   *female students*

43   Q: Yes.

Challenges experienced by the educators are these students come to class late and when they are fatigued. Assignments are not done on time. This compromises teaching and learning

KEMU_IDI_01: Yes. Like even as we speak there is a student of mine who he was to present her research and she told me that her kids disappeared I really hope she got them. So there are also these…so you find that there are also you know these other social challenges emanating from their marriage, emanating from their relationships. So at the end of the day you know as an educator you are really split, you don't know what to do. You want your students to get the best, but at the same time you also want to sympathize. So what I normally tell students is that you know, you've made a choice to be in the school and a degree has to be earned. So we'll understand, if you tell us that your employer has denied you off, bla, bla, just deal with your employer. Finish…education will not go anywhere you will come back again. And I always tell them you must have that delicate balance. If you find that the school is becoming too much, we'll allow you to go, take your time. And we actually encourage some of them, they would come breaking down, they don't know what to do. And I tell them, "You know what, education will not go anywhere, take your time, defer. When you feel that you are not ready come and extend the deferral." And we let…and it really worked. Yeah so those are some of the challenges.

Then the other thing I have felt as an educator I don't know sometimes you feel that in nursing there's so much to know, so much to know. And I think for us in the School of Medicine particularly nursing, we are mixed with the other faculty so they don't understand. You look at their content it is very little. No one understands that a nurse has to know everything but within a very period of time. So they give us this trimester system which does not work. I wish we could get you know, we could work in…we could work, we could find our own way of working as a School of Medicine or even just Nursing and Medicine. Because we have our own unique characteristics, we run on a trimester system, the students they do an exam

week and I expect learners to participate and then you grade. You know if someone has

participated...we were not even looking at whether they are getting it, but you want ~lack of participation~

133 participation, you grade, you will realize that people get zero. You post another assignment

134 no one is doing it, you post another third one, there is no response so it wasn't helping ~lack of participation~

135 anything. But that was supposed to have been the ideal way of doing it.

136 **Q:** So that there is some sort of contact between the student and the teacher.

137 **KEMU_IDI_01:** Yes we were meant to have that interaction, ongoing interaction between ~lack of interaction~

138 the learner and the teacher. Then I think also the way we are now implementing is not the

139 right you know, the ideal way because the ideal way would be you are given lecture 1, maybe

140 you have arranged your lectures for that duration. If it's 12 weeks maybe you have 3 lectures ~minimal contact with students~

141 or 12 lectures, you give them comprehensive notes, they read, they do a quiz before they

142 access...

143 **Q:** The next one.

144 **KEMU_IDI_01:** Second, like that. So that at the end of the day you are very sure this learner ~minimal learning~

145 is reading and you must attain a certain pass mark maybe 70%. But what we do we just pump

146 the material online, we can download, go and sit on them, wait for the exam, go through them ~lack of student engagement~

147 overnight, come and sit for the exam. That is the reality of the things.

148 **Q:** And so when they come then for the exam, what are the things...are you able to tell

149 whether the learning has taken place or not?

150 **KEMU_IDI_01:** W have no way of proving because we give them the assignment, they send

151 to us online, we mark, some do very well because of copy pasting. Some do poorly, so we

The online mode of learning was perceived by educators to be
challengeging to the students. Students Educator interaction
with students was minimal and student engagement was not
given need. Students failed to participate in online learning
activities, making it difficult for educators to monitor learning.

ANNEXURE S: Letter from the editor

C Woudberg

Language Practitioner

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To whom this may concern:

I hereby confirm that I have completed the language and technical editing of the research proposal titled **GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA** by Gladys Muthoni Mbuthia. My involvement was restricted to language usage, spelling, completeness and consistency, referencing style and general technical formatting. I did no structural re-writing of the content and did not influence the academic content in any way.

Kind regards,

Christelle Woudberg

ND Language Practice

Member of the South African Translators 'Institute

ANNEXURE T: Codes

Themes	Sub-themes	Codes
Resource needs	Human resources	Increased lecturer student ratio
		Increased student interaction and support
		Lecturer work load reduction
		Staffing
		Transportation of staff and students
		Time constrains
		Rewards and incentives for lectures
		Mentorship for both staff and students
		Unsupportive staff
	Financial support need	School fees
		Gadget provision
		Accommodation facilities/expenses
		Transport expenses
		Poor social economic status
		Scholarships
		Internet cost
	Infrastructural support need	Equipped venues
		Accommodation facilities
		Libraries and Library services
		Internet connectivity and gadgets
		Teaching & training venues
		Online support platform
		Demonstration equipment
		Supply of books
		Online platforms provision
		Means of transport
		Hostels & accommodation provision
		Digital training materials
		Introduction of Satellite campuses
Technological need	Technological skills	Computer skills
		Internet skills
		Technological hitch
		Systems lapse
Psychological needs	Social support needs	Multiple social responsibilities
		Emotional drain
		Social challenges
		Extracurricular activities
		Conflicting social responsibility
	Employer/work place support need	Self-initiative
		Work place conflicts
		Employers support
		Lack of promotions
	Emotional support need	Conflicts between lecturers and Institutions
		Self-denial
		Intrusive demands for scholarships
		Students strikes
		Conflicts between lectures and students
		Course time lines review

Themes	Sub-themes	Codes
Curricular redesign needs	Curriculum content and review	Programme curriculum review
		BScN scope review and determination
		Enrollment requirement/experience
Policy need	Training Institutional regulations	Friendly fees payment schedules
		Academic dates communicated
		Individualised services
		Open forums
		Fees waiver
		Partnerships creation between health care and training institutions
		Time adjustment for the course
		Institutional support
		Mediation between students and employers
		Missing Marks
		Rules and regulations
		Communication and feedbacks
		Feedbacks delivery
		Institutional problems
		Clinical flexibility
		Time lines for fees payment
	Student regulations	Timelines for assignments and exams
		Students representation
		Proper student orientation
		Feedbacks delivery
		Optional study mode

ANNEXURE U: Originality turnitin report

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by Gladys Mbuthia

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GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORT TO PART-TIME BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENTS IN KENYA

by

GLADYS MUTHONI MBUTHIA

submitted in accordance with the requirements for

the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

NURSING SCIENCE

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF GH VAN RENSBURG

NOVEMBER 2022

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