



University of KwaZulu- Natal

**THE ROLE OF SELF- MANAGEMENT IN POSTGRADUATE
STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

by

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DECLARATION

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Embarking on a Master's degree whilst being in full-time employment has been a challenge but it involved a topic that I believed needed further investigation. I felt a personal need to explore the dynamics in postgraduate studies and gain insight into students' self-management practices. My family was my greatest support, and I would like to thank my husband Neeresh for being a constant pillar of strength and encouragement during this time as well as my daughters Serisha and Humishka who motivate me to do my personal best at all times.

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ABSTRACT

Self-management has historically been viewed as a crucial success factor in postgraduate studies. There was a combination of both a positive and negative state in respect of self-management as some students displayed the required self-management skills for academic success, whilst others lacked these fundamental elements. The problem lies in the fact that most students have experienced a lack of self-management during their tertiary studies and there was a need to develop or suggest a theoretical framework or solution to their challenge. In addition to affecting the throughput rates of postgraduate students, a lack of self-management also affected the self-confidence of students, as they may have felt a lack of motivation to achieve their goals. A mixed-methods study was conducted with postgraduate students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal to examine the various aspects that contributed towards self-management. Students were required to answer a survey via Survey Monkey to determine their self-management patterns. Twenty-three students completed the surveys, and the findings confirmed that whilst students were self-motivated and had a reasonable degree of self-confidence, there was still a huge reliance on the University and supervisors to provide additional support. Students believed that there would have been a significant increase in the throughput rates had such support been made available. Students were goal orientated and focused; however, they still required assistance from their lecturers, and the University as a whole. It can be deduced that the students had high expectations from both the lecturers and the University in terms of their studies. Therefore, the University needed to introduce extensive support mechanisms for postgraduate students, which included a Master's tutor as well as a dedicated librarian.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
LIST OF APPENDICES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xiii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY	2
1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT	2
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	3
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	3
1.7 TYPE OF STUDY AND METHOD	3
1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	4
1.10 SCOPE OF STUDY	5
1.11 CONCLUSION.....	5

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION	6
2.2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	6
2.3 THE INFLUENCE OF PRIORITISATION ON SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.....	7

2.4	THE ROLE OF PLANNING IN SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.....	7
2.5	THE VALUE OF TASK DIVISION IN STUDENT’S SELF-MANAGEMENT.....	11
2.6	THE EFFECT OF GOAL SETTING ON SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.....	13
2.7	THE IMPACT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON SELF-MANAGEMENT.....	14
2.8	METACOGNITION AND MOTIVATION	17
2.9	CONCLUSION.....	26

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	INTRODUCTION	27
3.2	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
3.3	STUDY AREA	29
3.4	STUDY POPULATION	29
3.5	STUDY SAMPLE AND SIZE	30
3.6	DATA COLLECTION.....	31
3.7	DATA MANAGEMENT.....	32
3.8	DATA ANALYSIS.....	33
3.9	RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY	33
3.10	STUDY LIMITATIONS.....	35
3.11	ELIMINATION OF BIAS	36
3.12	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY	36
3.13	CONCLUSION.....	37

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1	INTRODUCTION	38
4.2	DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS	39
4.2.1	Gender	39
4.2.2	Age	40
4.2.3	Student status	41
4.2.4	Course	42
4.2.5	Faculty and campus	43
4.3	FINDINGS	44
4.3.1	Prioritisation	44
4.3.2	Planning	48
4.3.3	Task division	52
4.3.4	Goal setting	56
4.3.5	Monitoring and evaluation	60
4.4	DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS	64
4.4.1	Gender	64
4.4.2	Age	65
4.4.3	Student status	66
4.4.4	Course	67
4.4.5	Faculty and campus	67
4.5	FINDINGS	67
4.5.1	Prioritisation	67
4.5.2	Planning	68
4.5.3	Task division	68
4.5.4	Goal setting	69
4.5.5	Monitoring and evaluation	69
4.5.6	Challenges and strategies in postgraduate studies	70
4.5.7	The role of the lecturer	70

4.5.8	Motivation.....	71
4.5.9	Self-management in postgraduate studies.....	71
4.6	MIXED-METHOD DATA ANALYSIS	72
4.6.1	Demographics	72
4.6.2	Thematic analysis.....	75
4.6.2.1	Prioritisation	75
4.6.2.2	Planning.....	77
4.6.2.3	Task division	79
4.6.2.4	Goal setting.....	80
4.6.2.5	Monitoring and evaluation	82
4.6.2.6	Challenges and strategies in postgraduate studies.....	84
4.6.2.7	The role of the lecturer	86
4.6.2.8	Motivation	87
4.6.2.9	Self-management in postgraduate studies	89
4.7	CONCLUSION.....	90

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	INTRODUCTION	91
5.2	DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.....	91
5.2.1	Research questions.....	92
5.2.2	Research objectives.....	93
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	94
5.4	SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	95
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	96
	APPENDICES	100

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – Research Proposal Acceptance.....	100
Appendix B –Gatekeeper’s Letter	101
Appendix C – Ethical clearance certificate.....	102
Appendix D – Updated ethical clearance.....	103
Appendix E – Editors Letter	104
Appendix F – Digital Receipt (Turnitin)	105
Appendix G – Originality Report (Turnitin).....	106
Appendix H – Quantitative Questionnaire.....	107
Appendix I - Qualitative questionnaire.....	112

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Model of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation.....	6
Figure 2.2: Relationships between Effort and Academic Performance.....	8
Figure 2.3: Pre-intervention Self-efficacy and Self-regulated Learning for an Associate Degree.....	9
Figure 2.4: Pre-intervention Self-efficacy and Self-regulated Learning for General Education.....	9
Figure 2.5: Path Model indicating the Goal Antecedents and Goal Consequences.....	11
Figure 2.6: Distribution of Languishing and Flourishing Participants.....	13
Figure 2.7: Cumulative Percentage Frequency Attrition.....	16
Figure 2.8: Theoretical Model for the Role of Academic Identity in Achievement and Attrition during Bridging Programme Transition.....	16
Figure 2.9: Correlations between Subscale Scores.....	20
Figure 2.10: Attitude toward Classes, Academic Motivation, and Lecture Self-evaluation ...	20
Figure 2.11: Critical Features of Achievement Goal Dynamics.....	21
Figure 2.12: The Proposed Model Combining the what and why of Personal Achievement Goal Pursuit.....	23
Figure 2.13: The Hierarchy of Human Needs.....	23
Figure 2.14: Human needs and “double space”.....	23
Figure 2.15: Hierarchy of needs and “double space”.....	23
Figure 4.1: Gender (Quantitative Survey).....	39
Figure 4.2: Age (Quantitative Survey).....	40
Figure 4.3: Student Status (Quantitative Survey).....	41
Figure 4.4: Course (Quantitative Survey).....	42
Figure 4.5: Faculty and Campus (Quantitative Survey).....	43
Figure 4.6: Prioritisation – Organisation and Structure (Quantitative Survey).....	44
Figure 4.7: Prioritisation – Commitments (Quantitative Survey).....	45
Figure 4.8: Prioritisation – Abilities (Quantitative Survey).....	46
Figure 4.9: Prioritisation – Academics (Quantitative Survey).....	47

Figure 4.10: Planning – Assessments (Quantitative Survey).....	48
Figure 4.11: Planning – Systematic Approach (Quantitative Survey).....	49
Figure 4.12: Planning – Examination Revision (Quantitative Survey)	50
Figure 4.13: Planning – Balanced Approach (Quantitative Survey)	51
Figure 4.14: Task Division – Smaller Divisions (Quantitative Survey).....	52
Figure 4.15: Task Division – Group Work (Quantitative Survey)	53
Figure 4.16: Task Division – Assessment (Quantitative Survey).....	54
Figure 4.17: Task Division – Planner (Quantitative Survey)	55
Figure 4.18: Goal Setting – Individual (Quantitative Survey).....	56
Figure 4.19: Goal Setting – Self-motivation (Quantitative Survey).....	57
Figure 4.20: Goal Setting – Registration (Quantitative Survey).....	58
Figure 4.21: Goal Setting – Re-evaluation (Quantitative Survey).....	59
Figure 4.22: Monitoring and Evaluation – Lecturer (Quantitative Survey)	60
Figure 4.23: Monitoring and Evaluation – Academic Success (Quantitative Survey).....	61
Figure 4.24: Monitoring and Evaluation – Self-assessment Tasks (Quantitative Survey).....	62
Figure 4.25: Monitoring and Evaluation – Postgraduate Studies (Quantitative Survey)	63
Figure 4.26: Gender (Qualitative Survey)	64
Figure 4.27: Age (Qualitative Survey).....	65
Figure 4.28: Student Status (Qualitative Survey)	66
Figure 4.29: Gender (Mixed Methods)	72
Figure 4.30: Age (Mixed Methods)	73
Figure 4.31: Student Status (Mixed Methods).....	73
Figure 4.32: Course (Mixed Methods).....	74
Figure 4.33: Faculty and Campus (Mixed Methods).....	74

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Descriptive statistics of variables in the study.....	8
Table 2.2: Characteristics of participants.....	12
Table 2.3: The type of reasons underlying different types of achievement goals	22
Table 4.1: Gender (Quantitative survey)	39
Table 4.2: Age (Quantitative survey).....	40
Table 4.3: Student status (Quantitative survey).....	41
Table 4.4: Course (Quantitative survey).....	42
Table 4.5: Faculty and campus (Quantitative survey)	43
Table 4.6: Prioritisation – Organisation and structure (Response schedule – Quantitative) ...	44
Table 4.7: Prioritisation – Commitments (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	45
Table 4.8: Prioritisation – Abilities (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	46
Table 4.9: Prioritisation – Academics (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	47
Table 4.10: Planning – Assessments (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	48
Table 4.11: Planning – Systematic approach (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	49
Table 4.12: Planning – Examination revision (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	50
Table 4.13: Planning – Balanced approach (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	51
Table 4.14: Task division – Smaller divisions (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	52
Table 4.15: Task division – Group work (Response schedule – Quantitative)	53
Table 4.16: Task division – Assessment (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	54
Table 4.17: Task division – Planner (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	55
Table 4.18: Goal setting – Individual (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	56
Table 4.19: Goal setting – Self-motivation (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	57
Table 4.20: Goal setting – Registration (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	58
Table 4.21: Goal setting – Re-evaluation (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	59
Table 4.22 Monitoring and evaluation – Lecturer (Response schedule – Quantitative)	60
Table 4.23: Monitoring and evaluation – Academic success (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	61

Table 4.24: Monitoring and evaluation – Self-assessment tasks (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	62
Table 4.25: Monitoring and evaluation – Postgraduate studies (Response schedule – Quantitative).....	63
Table 4.26: Gender (Qualitative survey)	64
Table 4.27: Age (Qualitative survey).....	65
Table 4.28: Student status (Qualitative survey).....	66
Table 5.1: Themes and sub-themes.....	91

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- M. Comm** - Master of Commerce
- PA** - Physical activity
- SDT** - Self-determination theory
- UKZN** - University of KwaZulu-Natal

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Senko and Hulleman (2013) believe that postgraduate study demands a great amount of discipline and self-management as many universities are now offering the options of part-time lectures or distance learning. Therefore, some students may now need to manage the responsibilities of a job, family and tertiary education. The decision to embark on postgraduate studies may be driven by the need for career development or further knowledge relating to an area of interest. Students are often motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in order to exert the required effort to achieve academic performance. Intrinsic factors include achievement and socialisation whereas extrinsic factors involve rewards and possible career advancement. (Tollefson, 2000). However, whilst the zeal of commencing with postgraduate studies is heightened at the start of a course, the pressures of work and family life also have an impact on the level of involvement and the desire to achieve accolades during the course. Self-management then becomes an important tool and success factor in the academic journey. Students gradually develop a greater knowledge of themselves in terms of potential and limitations. In an attempt to maintain a work/life balance, there are often times when there are challenges as a result of pressurised timelines. These then lead to a manifestation of stress and the level of output may be compromised owing to diminished concentration. It therefore becomes extremely important to have good self-management skills to be able to deal with deadlines and it also requires consistent motivation towards the attainment of goals. This chapter entails outlining the problem statement and looking at both the research objectives as well as the research questions that need to be answered.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Goodman, Jaffer, Keresztesi, Mamdani, Mokgatle, Musariri, Pires and Schlechter (2011) postulate that there is a direct correlation between positive self-management and academic performance. Students lack self-management and therefore seldom feel that they should be held accountable should they not meet the required standard and stipulated timelines. This could be due to a lack of emotional intelligence as well as a lack of discipline concerning their role at the university. The trend has greater manifestations in the first year of study but there is a general trend throughout postgraduate studies as well. However, it is also true that a small

population of students have the self-management skills required to embark on postgraduate studies. Subsequently, there is a correlation between self-management and academic success as students take on unnecessary stress in the days prior to assessments being due despite being given the due dates of assessments well in advance. The trend needs to be studied in order to increase the throughput rate of graduates, thereby reducing the need for additional academic years being granted for certain courses. The gaps in the existing literature lie in the fact that limited studies have been conducted in the South African context. The important concepts in this study are self-efficacy, goal orientation, planning, and task division. The value of self-efficacy, goals, planning, and task division will be investigated in terms of their direct correlation to academic success. In addition, theoretical conceptualisation of self-management was investigated.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the self-management techniques of postgraduate students.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a combination of both a positive and negative state in respect of self-management as some students display the required self-management skills for academic success whilst others lack these fundamental elements. The problem lies in the fact that most students have experienced a lack of self-management during their tertiary studies and there is a need to develop or suggest a theoretical framework or solution to their management. In addition to affecting the throughput rates of postgraduate students, a lack of self-management also affects the self-confidence of students as they may feel a lack of motivation to achieve their goals. Therefore, it is important to examine both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and the various motivational theories that manifest themselves in the tertiary context. In doing so, the various factors that impact the success of postgraduate studies will be determined in order to assist both current and prospective postgraduate students. Students will have a better understanding of the aspects to consider when trying to ensure effective self-management. The selected problem exists at national level and would benefit all tertiary institutions.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives for this study are:

- To assess the influence of prioritisation on self-management during postgraduate studies
- To determine the role of planning in self-management during postgraduate studies
- To establish whether breaking tasks into smaller components influences students' self-management during their studies
- To determine the effect of goal setting on self-management during postgraduate studies.
- To investigate whether monitoring and evaluation influences students' self-management during postgraduate studies

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to meet the research objectives, the following questions were posed to respondents:

- How does prioritisation influence students' self-management during postgraduate studies?
- What is the role of planning in students' self-management during their postgraduate studies?
- To what extent does breaking activities into small components influence students' self-management during their studies?
- How does goal setting influence students' self-management during their studies?
- To what extent do monitoring and evaluation influence students' self-management during their studies?

After the respondents completed the survey, the objectives of the research were met as the surveys allowed for collection of both statistical and rich data.

1.7 TYPE OF STUDY AND METHOD

For the purpose of this study, an explanatory research design was used. Research was conducted using mixed methods. Surveys were used to obtain information on the research topic. The population for this study is the Masters of Commerce students at the Westville campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). For the quantitative aspect of the study, a notice to participate in the survey was placed on UKZN's site and students who met the

qualifying criteria, were invited to participate in the study. For the qualitative aspect, students from the Master of Commerce class were invited to participate in a survey which has more open-ended questions as opposed to the quantitative survey. Both data sets were analysed using thematic analysis and were represented accordingly. Convenience and cluster sampling methods were used for the purpose of this study.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Relevance can be seen in the direct correlation between levels of self-motivation and the throughput rates at university. Understanding the individuals' roles in their own academic success, requires a great degree of accountability. In participating in this study students may develop a heightened sense of self-awareness which will allow them to focus on their areas of weakness. Lecturers will have a theoretical framework of the emotional and motivational challenges facing students who are pursuing postgraduate studies. The solutions that are derived from this study will allow a greater understanding of the value of self-management in relation to academic success. In doing so, the various factors that impact the success of postgraduate studies will be determined which will assist both current and prospective postgraduate students. Students will have a better understanding of the aspects to consider when trying to ensure effective self-management. The selected problem exists at national level and would benefit all tertiary institutions. Future students will benefit and academics could cite this work when teaching.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Self-management: This refers to individuals taking responsibility for themselves in terms of their behaviour and well-being.

Motivation: It is regarded as the reason behind why individuals act in a particular way

Intrinsic motivation: This refers to behaviour that is driven by internal rewards.

Extrinsic motivation: This refers to behaviour that is driven by external rewards.

Achievement motivation: This refers to the need for success as well as the attainment of excellence.

1.10 STUDY OUTLINE

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- In this chapter, literature pertaining to the research topic is discussed. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks are also discussed.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

- In this chapter, the research design and methods are dealt with as well as aspects such as reliability and validity (amongst others).

Chapter 4: Data Collection and Analysis

- In this chapter, the data collection is discussed. Quantitative data is converted into qualitative data for the purpose of analysis. Data is then analysed according to thematic analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results and Recommendations

- In this chapter, the results are analysed according to thematic analysis and discussed in relation to the specified research objectives. Recommendations are provided and limitations of the study are also indicated.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Self-management is not a stand-alone concept and can be linked to motivation and academic performance. The inability to manage the various aspects in one's life will have a direct impact on the levels of motivation as well as the subsequent academic results. Chapter two analyses the existing literature on self-management and related concepts in order to provide a foundation for the research.

CHAPTER TWO

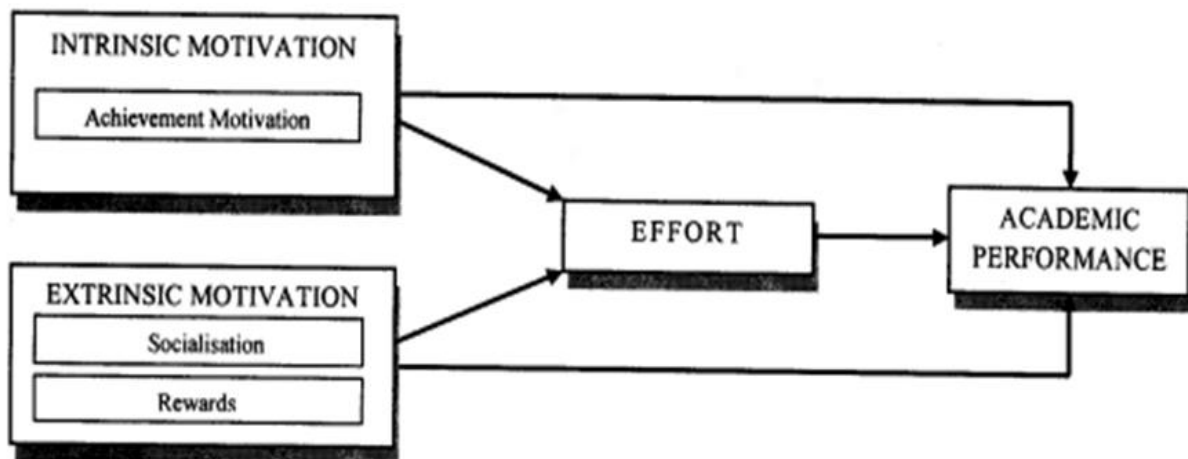
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Self-management is an important aspect in postgraduate studies as it may determine the level of academic success achieved at tertiary level. In particular, the Master of Commerce course is offered as a part-time option and, as such, requires a great deal of commitment from students. The role of self-management is discussed by referring to literature on the topic.

2.2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The model below (Fig 2.1) indicates the relationship between motivation and academic performance. It can be deduced that the levels of motivation affect the effort that students exert towards academic performance. Students are motivated by internal and external factors. It can be argued that those with a higher intrinsic motivation have a greater propensity for academic success. However, rewards as an external motivator also play an important role in student motivation and subsequent academic performance. (Goodman, Jaffer, Keresztesi, Mamdani, Mokgatle, Musariri, Pires & Schlechter, 2011).



Goodman et al., (2011)

Figure 2.1: Model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

2.3 THE INFLUENCE OF PRIORITISATION ON SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Prioritising tasks according to their relevant due date may seem like an obvious solution to effective self -and time management; however, in the absence of adopting a priority mind-set this may not be possible. Van Dinther, Dochy and Segers (2011) postulate that self-efficacy plays an important role in determining the choices that people make based on what they feel they are capable of doing. It makes sense that a higher degree of self-efficacy will result in an increased effort towards an individual's tasks. Liao (2011) believes that being able to have effective self-management has a direct outcome with positive learning outcomes. With an increase in the academic expectations of postgraduate students, it has become more important than ever to prioritise tasks so that all tasks can reach completion. It requires that students have good self-management skills. Self-management can only be achieved through having a keen sense of self-awareness.

Toellefson (2000) states that expectancy value theory suggests that the extent to which students will devote their time and effort on a task depends on their view of whether they will be able to complete the task and obtain the subsequent rewards associated with the task. Students have to start prioritising tasks in order to avoid the stress involved with deadlines which will undoubtedly lead to a compromised effort regarding the given task. A feeling of positive self-worth affects the level of commitment that students have towards their academic studies. However, students are also inclined to work harder at those tasks which they believe will offer greater rewards and which they see as being important. According to the expectancy value theory, students will devote their time and attention to a task that they deem has significant value. The task has to hold some importance for the student. Rewards are also closely linked to the value associated with the task. A task with substantial rewards will attract greater value in the student's mind.

2.4 THE ROLE OF PLANNING IN SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Goodman et al. (2011) proposes that extrinsic motivation is based on rewards that are gained from external authorities whereas intrinsic motivation is the motivating force within human beings.

A study was conducted with university students and the variables as well as the relationship between effort and academic performance are indicated below. (See figures 2.1 and 2.2): -

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Total IM	254	20.85	2.450
Total EM	254	19.31	2.816
Total EFF	254	18.35	2.988
GPA	254	62.176	11.559

Note: IM = Intrinsic Motivation; EM = Extrinsic Motivation; EFF = Effort;
GPA = Academic Performance

Table 2.1: Descriptive statistics of variables in the study

Goodman et al., (2011)

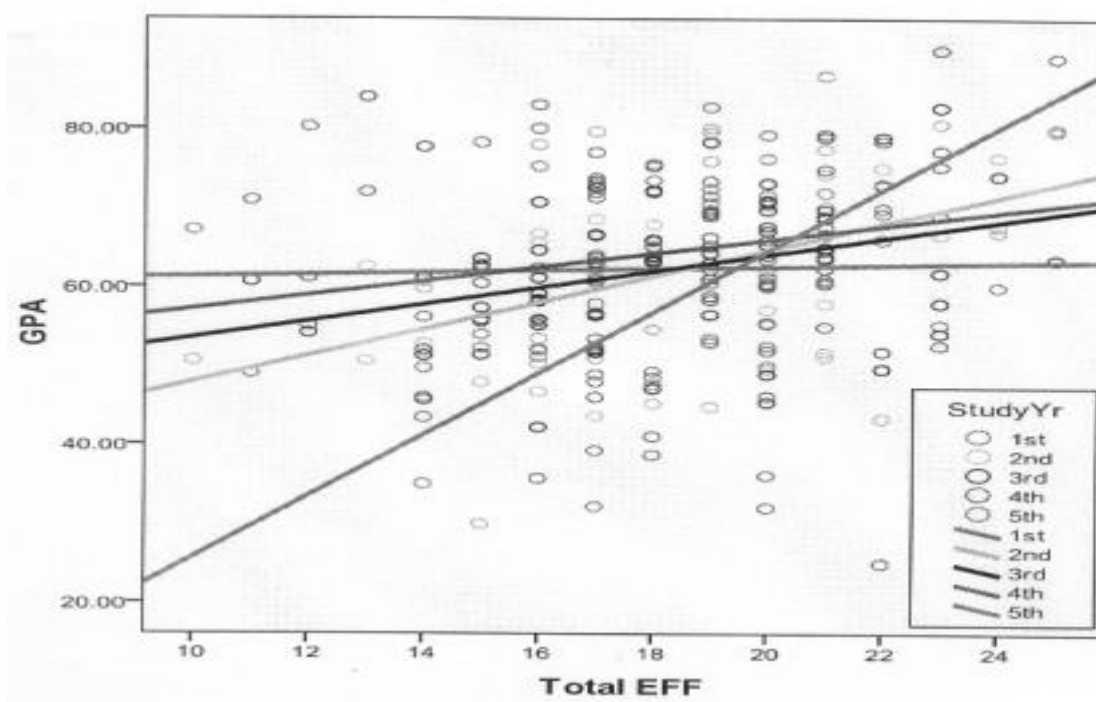
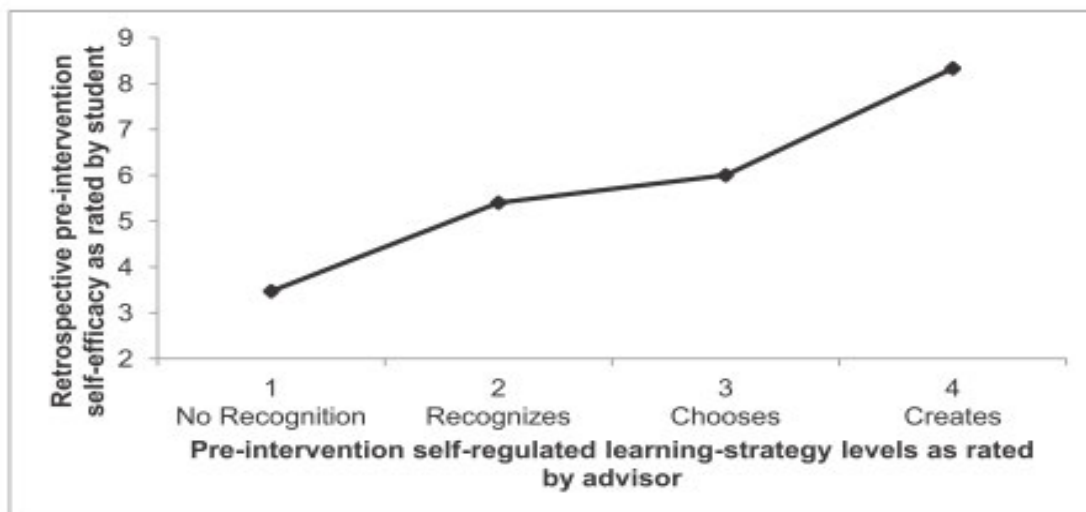


Figure 2.2: Relationships between effort and academic performance

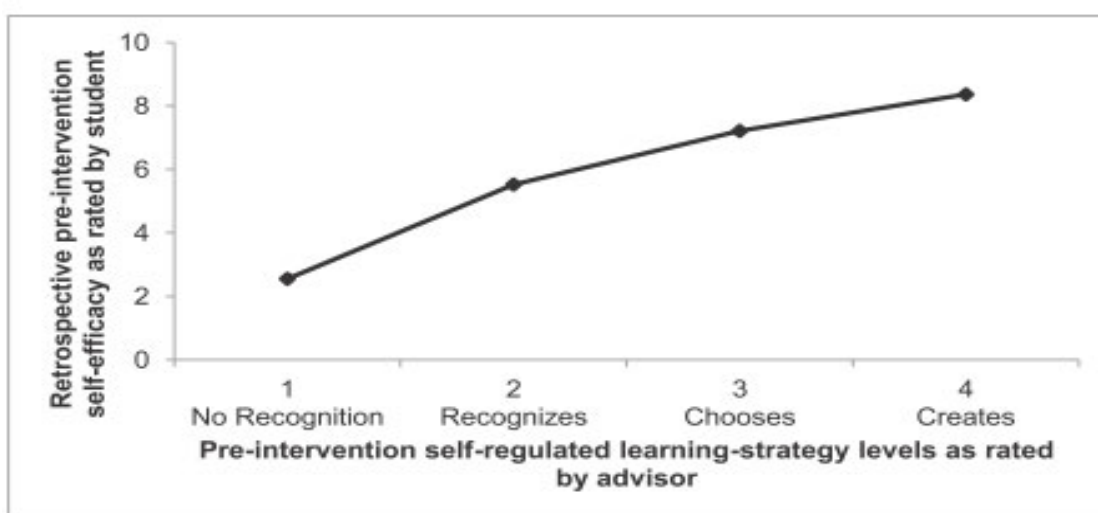
Goodman et al., (2011)

Erlich and Russ-Eft (2013) make reference to a study which stated that students participating in the academic advising process experienced higher levels of self-efficacy in academic planning. The study involved community college students participating in an academic advising session.



Erlich and Russ-Eft, (2013)

Figure 2.3: Pre-intervention self-efficacy and self-regulated learning for an associate degree



Erlich and Russ-Eft, (2013)

Figure 2.4: Pre-intervention self-efficacy and self-regulated learning for general education

Johnson (2011) suggests that after facilitators have adjusted attitudes in the classroom students will be willing to adopt a change in their perception. Planning is an essential skill in the postgraduate space and contributes towards academic success. Universities assist with the planning process by providing students with an academic planner at the start of the academic

year. Students are informed in advance of the lecture start dates as well as the examination period. It is done with a view to allowing students sufficient time to plan ahead for their studies.

Endedijk, Vermunt, Meijer and Brekelmans (2014) suggest that one of the tasks of postgraduate studies is to develop students' conceptions and skills necessary for life-long learning within their profession. Being a professional is not only about acquiring the required qualifications but rather it involves being committed to continuous development within a profession. It gives rise to the concept of self-regulated learning since most professionals will no longer enjoy the support of a university. Professionals are required to guide themselves. In doing so, reference can be made to active versus passive regulation. Active regulation indicates that students guide their own learning. Passive learning implies a huge reliance on external regulation, for example, a lecturer. In addition, reference can be made to prospective versus retrospective regulation. In the former, there is a high level of planning and goal setting whereas the latter leans towards a lack of goal setting and an unplanned approach towards studies in general. Obtaining an undergraduate degree provides an entry-level qualification for most professions. However, those individuals that wish to advance in their careers will embark on further studies. Many students will study and work at the same time which requires that they have exceptional motivational and self-management skills. The presence of the lecturer is diminished as the qualification levels are amplified. As such, it requires that students primarily engage in independent studies and manage the work-life commitment.

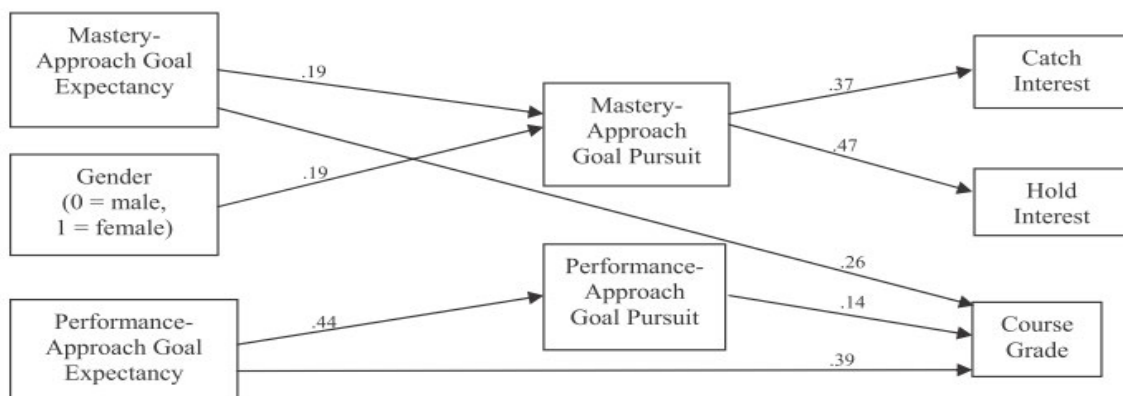
Magidson, Roberts, Collado-Rodriguez and Lejuez (2014) postulate that evidence suggests that personality traits may be changeable. Conscientiousness is considered to be a personality trait that is highly pertinent to motivation, values, achievement and persistence. Conscientious individuals have a propensity to valuing achievement and identify a greater number of values that they would like to attain. It is indicative of a goal-directed approach and subsequent attainment of the pre-determined goals. Having an academic conscience implies that students are aware of their short-and long-term academic goals and are working consistently to achieve these goals.

2.5 THE VALUE OF TASK DIVISION IN STUDENT'S SELF-MANAGEMENT

Emotion has been identified as an important indicator of classroom goal structure. Turner, Meyer and Schweinle (2004) believe that emotional constructs are important in motivation and a positive classroom will result in positive outcomes.

Senko and Hulleman (2013) state that achievement goal theory deals with mastery and performance goals as well as the pursuit of competence and improving one's own skill level. In order to complete a task successfully, it becomes important to break the task down into smaller parts. In doing so, the task almost seems smaller, and a planner can be drafted to complete each section over a period of time which will alleviate the stress associated with poor time management.

A study conducted at a United States University tested the correlation between university students' expectations of achieving mastery approach and performance-approach goals, the extent to which they pursue these goals, and their interest as well as academic achievement. Students that have a mastery approach are keen on mastering and understanding the content of the module whereas students that have a performance approach are focused on obtaining the best grade for their course. In a performance approach, content is usually retained through rote learning until the examination and may be devoid of any real understanding of the content.



Senko and Hulleman, (2013)

Figure 2.5: Path model indicating the goal antecedents and goal consequences

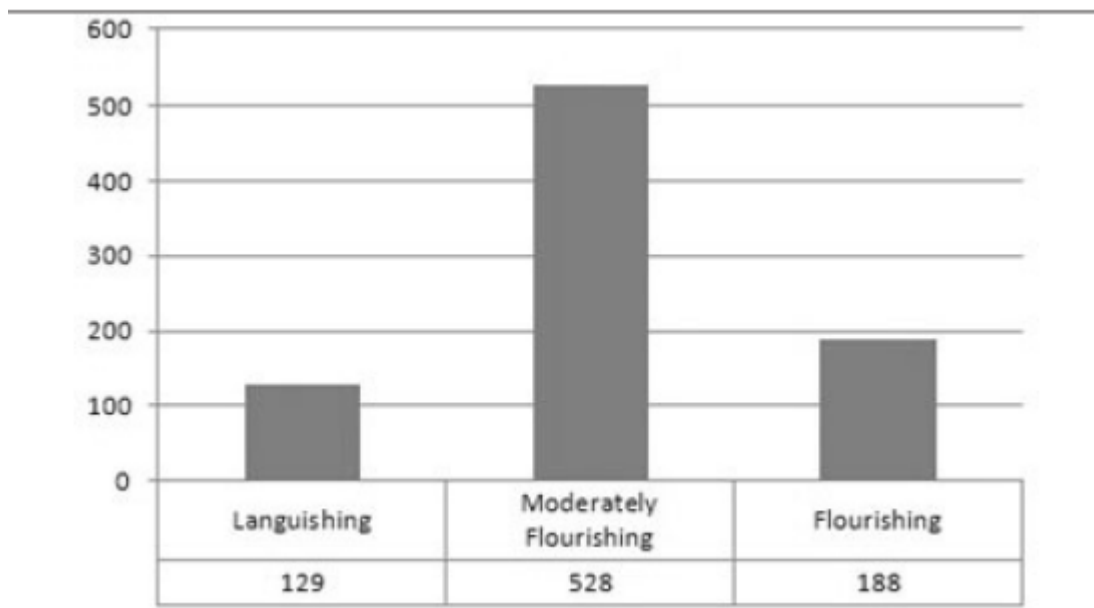
Dirksen (2012) believes that it is important to determine a goal then break it down into relevant sub-divisions. Once it has been broken down, it is easier to then decide on unique strategies to achieve these chosen objectives. A massive task will seem daunting until students are able to unpack the various components and tackle those accordingly. Van Zyl and Rothmann (2012) refer to a study conducted to determine the flourishing of students and the inter-linked relationship between positive psychological constructs and academic performance. ‘Flourishing’ is seen as superior levels of emotional, mental and social well-being. In the study, the relationship was investigated and it was discovered that flourishing should be promoted to enhance academic performance. Flourishing should be included as part of a student workshop in tertiary institutions as it creates an enabling mechanism for academic advancement. Information on the characteristics of participants is provided in the table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2: Characteristics of participants

<i>Characteristics of Participants</i>			
Item	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	252	29.8
	Female	591	69.9
	Missing values	2	0.2
Age	17 to 20 years	449	53.1
	21 to 30 years	361	42.7
	30+ years	25	3.0
	Missing values	10	1.2
Race	White	242	28.6
	African	559	66.1
	Indian	13	1.5
	Coloured	24	2.8
	Other	5	0.6
	Missing values	2	0.2
Language group	Afrikaans	198	23.4
	English	86	10.2
	Sepedi	36	4.3
	isiZulu	75	8.9
	Sesotho	244	28.9
	Setswana	82	9.7
	isiSwati	9	1.1
	isiTsonga	12	1.4
	Tshivenda	5	0.6
	isiNdebele	5	0.6
	isiXhosa	52	6.2
	Other	13	1.5
	Missing values	28	3.3
Educational level	1st year	232	27.5
	2nd year	274	32.4
	3rd year	227	26.8
	Honours	84	9.9
	Masters	18	2.1
	Doctoral	5	0.6
	Post-Doctoral	1	0.1
	Missing values	4	0.5

Note. N=845

Van Zyl and Rothmann, (2012)



Van Zyl and Rothmann, (2012)

Figure 2.6: Distribution of languishing and flourishing participants

According to the results of the study, only 188 students were seen as flourishing or achieving their full academic potential. However, the more concerning aspect is that there are a fair number of students who are languishing in their studies and need immediate academic intervention.

2.6 THE EFFECT OF GOAL SETTING ON SELF-MANAGEMENT DURING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo (2012) suggest that self-determination theory is applied when humans need to feel autonomous, competent and related to others. When there is autonomous motivation, individuals are self-motivated whereas controlled motivation is externally regulated. Tollefson (2000) describes attribution theory as a situation which enables students to hold their lack of effort accountable for their specific academic failures; whereas Senko and Hulleman (2013) suggest that achievement goal theory is based on achieving either performance or master goals. Performance goals include trying to outperform peers whereas master goals focus on developing an individual's own skills. Tollefson (2000) states that goal orientation refers to the achievement of performance goals with the assistance of positive affirmations from others and learning goals are achieved when individuals gain new knowledge and are prepared to accept failure along the way.

Friederichs, Oenema, Bolman and Lechner (2015) state that self-determination theory (SDT) studies behavioural motivation and has been most useful when investigating physical activity (PA). Self-determination involves students taking control of their academic progress. There is limited reliance on a lecturer and there is accountability for lack of performance as well.

In an additional study by Unlu and Dettweiler (2015), it was noted that self-determination theory represents a broad framework for the study of human motivation. Empirical data confirmed that human motivation is derived from three basic psychological needs, namely the opportunities to experience autonomy, competence and relatedness. Autonomy is the universal need for individuals to be the drivers of their own their own lives whereas competences lean towards gaining a mastery of knowledge through both experience and education. In addition, Unlu and Dettweiler (2015) describe relatedness as the human desire to connect, interact and care for one another. Students want to experience independence during their tertiary studies. The level of freedom that is provided at tertiary level is meant to provide a framework within which students attain their goals without the presence of strict rules and regulations.

Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo (2012) state that self-determination occurs when we are motivated by different factors in trying to achieve our goals. Individuals are certainly motivated by different factors. It is, however, of fundamental importance for all students to have an academic compass in the form of goals. In the absence of goals, it is nearly impossible to gauge one's performance as there is no specified standard for comparison. Students are therefore encouraged to set their own goals and continually evaluate whether these goals have been attained.

2.7 THE IMPACT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON SELF-MANAGEMENT

Postlethwaite and Haggarty (2002) suggest that students are well-versed concerning the enabling and disabling factors to learning. Teachers should clearly communicate their intentions as situations differ in each classroom. Therefore, teachers who display a passion for their profession create an environment where students do not feel intimidated about making mistakes as mistakes can be seen as a learning opportunity instead. Meece, Anderman and Anderman (2006) suggest that in the drive to achieve higher grades, some students who are not academically inclined may experience a lack of motivation as they are not able to meet the required standards.

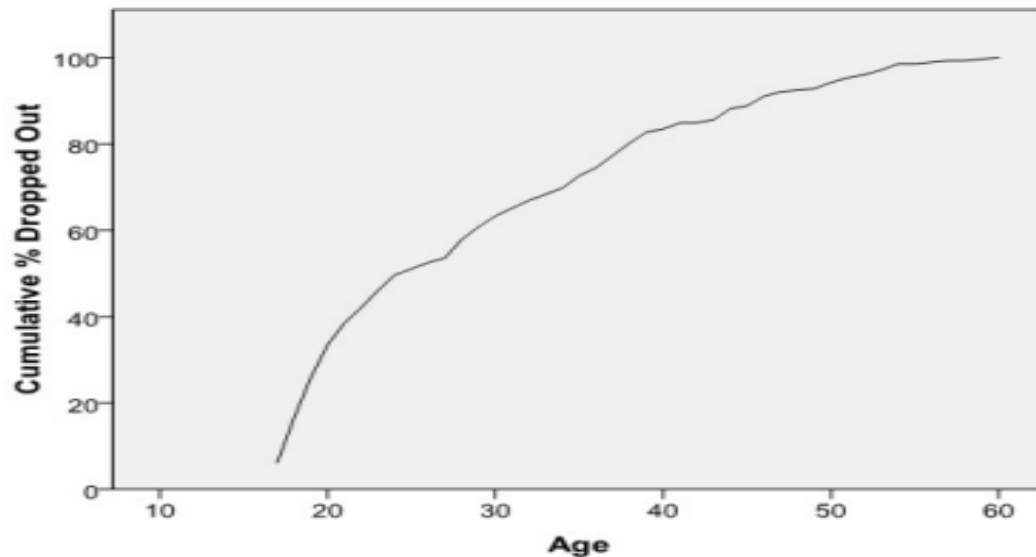
The acquired needs theory by McClellan states that some needs are acquired as a result of life experiences e.g. achievement, affiliation and power. In catering for the individual needs of students, lecturers have to factor in the influence of the various life experiences of their students. These experiences will undoubtedly influence not just their learning patterns but also their self-perception and propensity to learn.

Whannell (2013) maintains that academic staff have a substantial influence with younger students and academic achievement helps to create an academic identity. However, there should still be a greater commitment from the academic staff to offer the same level of support that was promised during the orientation programmes.

Contrary to the current norm, there needs to be a higher degree of monitoring and evaluation with postgraduate students as many are returning to the classroom after a considerable break from the academic space. In addition to becoming acquainted with operational aspects, postgraduate students need to be offered more academic support. Students embarking on undergraduate studies are assumed to require a greater need for monitoring and evaluation as it is their first exposure to the tertiary space after having been in high school for five years.

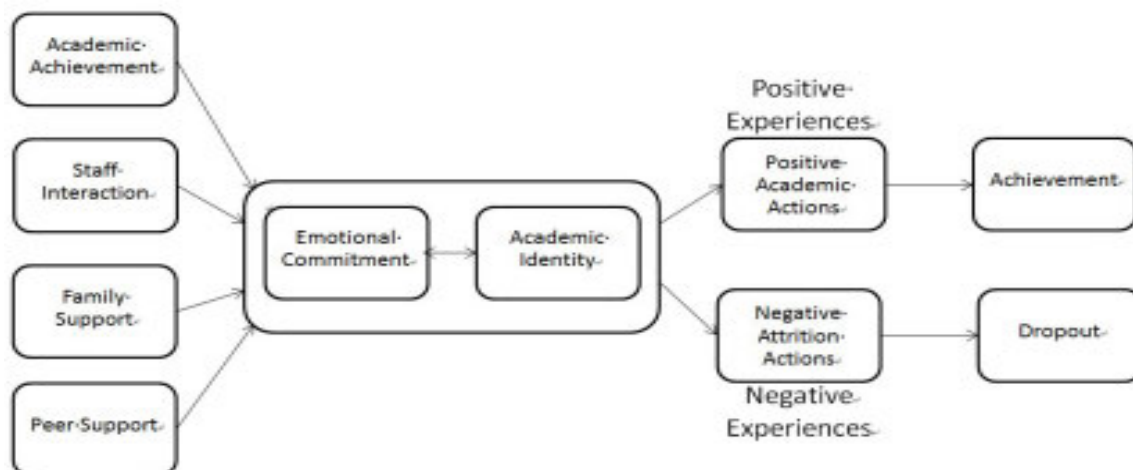
As such, they are familiar with a solid structure and teachers that will constantly follow up with them on their performance or lack thereof. However, whilst there are rules provided to tertiary students upon registration, non-compliance with the rules is not constantly reinforced. It is only when students contravene a rule that action is taken against them.

Many students might not even have looked at the code of conduct documents and were therefore unaware that a rule was being broken. The diagram below indicates the correlation between age and the dropout rate. Older students have a greater tendency to dropout as compared to the younger students.



Whannell (2013)

Figure 2.7: Cumulative percentage frequency attrition



Whannell (2013)

Figure 2.8: Theoretical model for the role of academic identity in achievement and attrition during bridging programme transition

Figure 2.7 indicated that the drop-out rate is higher with older students. Younger students seem more inclined to continue with their studies. In addition, the model on academic identity highlights the impact of positive and negative experiences on their academic output. There are many factors that contribute to their emotional commitment which in turn shapes their academic identity and as such determines their academic achievement.

Lam, Schenke, Conley, Ruzek and Karabenich (2015) believe that student progress reports are a common technique to determining the students' overall experience in the classroom. It can

be argued that the fundamental goal of education research is to understand the impact that the classroom has on student learning and behaviour. In order to achieve this goal, it is required that elements of the classroom environment are effectively measured. Educators emphasise certain learning goals which determine the various types of classrooms. A mastery-focused classroom is designed to achieve understanding and encourages learning from mistakes. On the other hand, performance-focused students aim to perform better than others or at the very least to appear less competent than others. Appearing less competent than others, is a classic example of performance avoidance. Classrooms are known to be different along these dimensions and have cognitive, affective and behavioural implications. The classroom culture is created by the lecturer and is based on what is perceived as being most important to the module.

Gaier (2015) highlights that people seek to make sense of their environment through the attribution theory. Essentially, people seek to answer and understand why. Attribution theory can be helpful in assisting teachers in understanding why students behave in a certain way. The underlying premise of the attribution theory is perceived cause. It is important to understand why something was said or done. Gaier (2015) states that attributions can simply be defined as “perceived causes of outcomes”. In working with students, lecturers may often be prone to arriving at pre-conceived conclusions of students’ backgrounds based on their behaviour. The triggers that are causing such behaviour also needs to be examined. Complete understanding of triggers can inform the strategies that need to be implemented in order to deal with the behaviours.

2.8 METACOGNITION AND MOTIVATION

Rakes and Dunn (2010) define motivation as a process on which individuals embark and maintain activities directed at achieving goals whilst (Onyekuru and Njoku, 2015) postulate that metacognition is the control that people may have over their thinking and well as their awareness of their own thinking and learning activities. When students are aware of their thinking processes, they are able to can craft their own goals and determine their own attention span. It is important for each individual student to know how to learn and which strategies are effective. Metacognitive skills and abilities are developed over years at a different rate in each individual. It has been noted that individuals with high levels of metacognitive skills have an equally high level of academic achievement. Undoubtedly, good metacognitive skills are critical success factors for academic performance. When students are aware of their strengths

and limitations, they will be able to regulate their own behaviour accordingly. Metacognition involves thinking about one's own thinking. In doing so, individuals will gain a better understanding of why they think in a certain way.

Lazaroui, (2015) described Vroom's expectancy theory as being dependent on four distinct presumptions. Firstly, individuals enter a situation with pre-determined demands and past experiences. Secondly, a person's behaviour is guided by their own preference. Next, individuals have a clear idea of what they need from an organisation. Lastly, individuals will choose those duties which will afford them the best end results on a personal level. Applied to a tertiary context, this means that students enter University already knowing what they require and will conduct themselves in their preferred manner. Next, students would have a precise idea of what they expect from a University and will look at doing those activities that would fetch them the highest personal gain.

In addition, Lazaroui, (2015) states that McClelland's theory of motivation is based on an individual's need for accomplishment, power and association whilst Herzberg pointed out that individuals have two distinct set of needs namely motivation and hygiene. Motivation is made up of performance, accomplishment and recognition whereas hygiene could entail a connection with peers. In other words, individuals want to prevent being uncomfortable as well as advance themselves psychologically. Students enter into University with pre-determined goals and accomplishment may be seen as one of the most important aspects to remaining motivated. Achievement has a direct impact on sustained motivation. Both McClelland and Herzberg have outlined the importance of motivation in relation to achievement.

Cerasoli and Ford (2014) emphasise that intrinsic motivation describes the inner drive to challenge one's self and grow within one's particular area of expertise. It has been proven that intrinsically motivated students have a greater likelihood of completing the tasks that were allocated to them and will attend classes to challenge themselves further. It is further argued that there should be a positive link between performance behaviours and mastery goal orientations. Individuals exhibiting mastery goal orientations are inclined to develop competence and attain mastery within their field. A passing criterion is not adequate: instead, these individuals wish to obtain a detailed understanding of the material. Research has confirmed that students who are self-motivated and driven; attain a higher degree of academic success. These students are not reliant on external forces to influence their motivation or behaviour patterns.

Arguedas et al., (2016) suggest that emotion awareness looks at viewing the emotions that students display during the process of learning. A quasi-experimental study was done with high school students which revealed that an emotional awareness in conjunction with deliberate teaching strategies results in improved performance. It also assisted teachers since they were conscious of the student's emotional state and the feedback given to students was more effective. At a University level, this could assist with teaching and learning strategies.

In a study conducted with German University students (Wach, Karbach, Brunken and Spinath, 2016) realised that academic self-concept, achievement motivation and the motivation for choosing subject-specific interest are the distinct motivational variables that affect effort. Personality variables are neuroticism and conscientiousness. These are the aspects which determine the personality type of individuals.

Matsushima and Ozaki (2015) conducted a similar study with university students which focused on how students viewed their individual differences in identity. The results of the study revealed that academic attitude has two distinct parts, namely academic motivation as well as the motivation to attend classes. It was further discovered that differences in psychosocial identity and self-identity accounted for significant differences in the students' attitudes towards classes, academic motivation and lecture self-evaluation. The study confirmed that around 70 per cent of the students attend 90 per cent of their lectures. However, despite the impressive attendance, students still spent less time on studying, preparing for lectures or reviewing their lecture notes and study material. The findings of this study indicate that psychosocial development plays a pivotal role in academic motivation. Whilst attendance is not a guarantee of academic success, regular attendance is encouraged to ensure that students are being assisted with the module content. Figure 2.9 indicates the various subscales that were used in the study.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SUBSCALE SCORES (N=109)

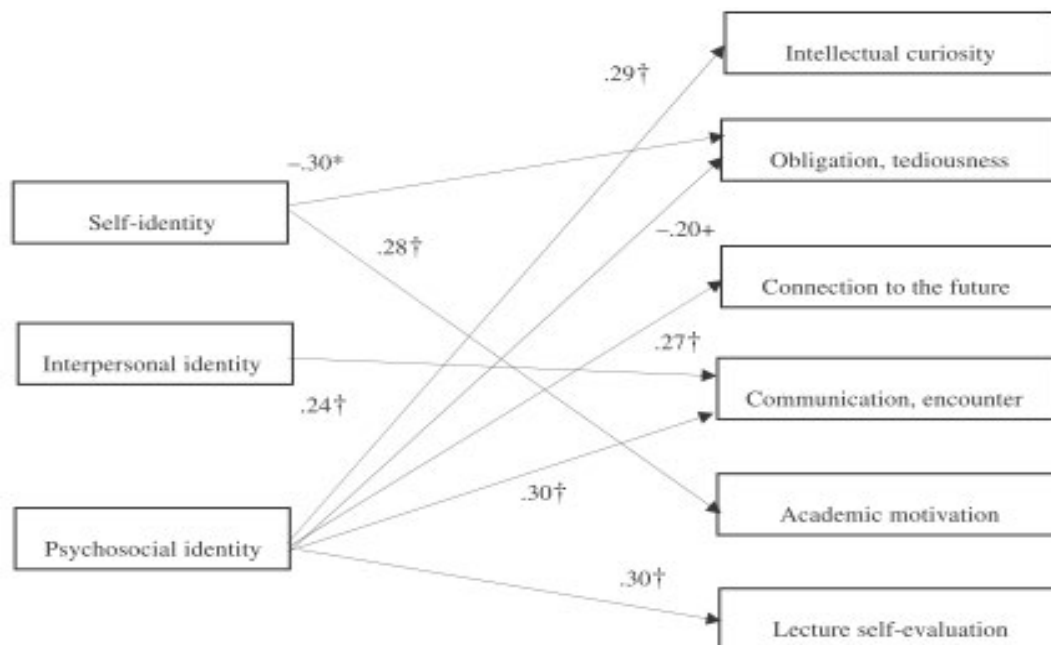
Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Self-sameness, continuity									
2. Self-identity	.48†								
3. Interpersonal identity	.64†	.34†							
4. Psychosocial identity	.47†	.68†	.39†						
5. Intellectual curiosity	.28†	.24†	.17	.35†					
6. Obligation, tediousness	-.35†	-.45†	-.29†	-.44†	-.25†				
7. Connection to the future	.31†	.22*	.19	.33†	.84†	-.24*			
8. Communication, encounter	.34†	.30†	.37†	.44†	.73†	-.34†	.66†		
9. Academic motivation	.23*	.35†	.07	.32†	.50†	-.43†	.54†	.52†	
10. Lecture self-evaluation	.23*	.32†	.10	.36†	.65†	-.33†	.68†	.57†	.63†

* $p < .05$. † $p < .01$.

Matsushima and Ozaki, (2015)

Figure 2.9: Correlations between subscale scores

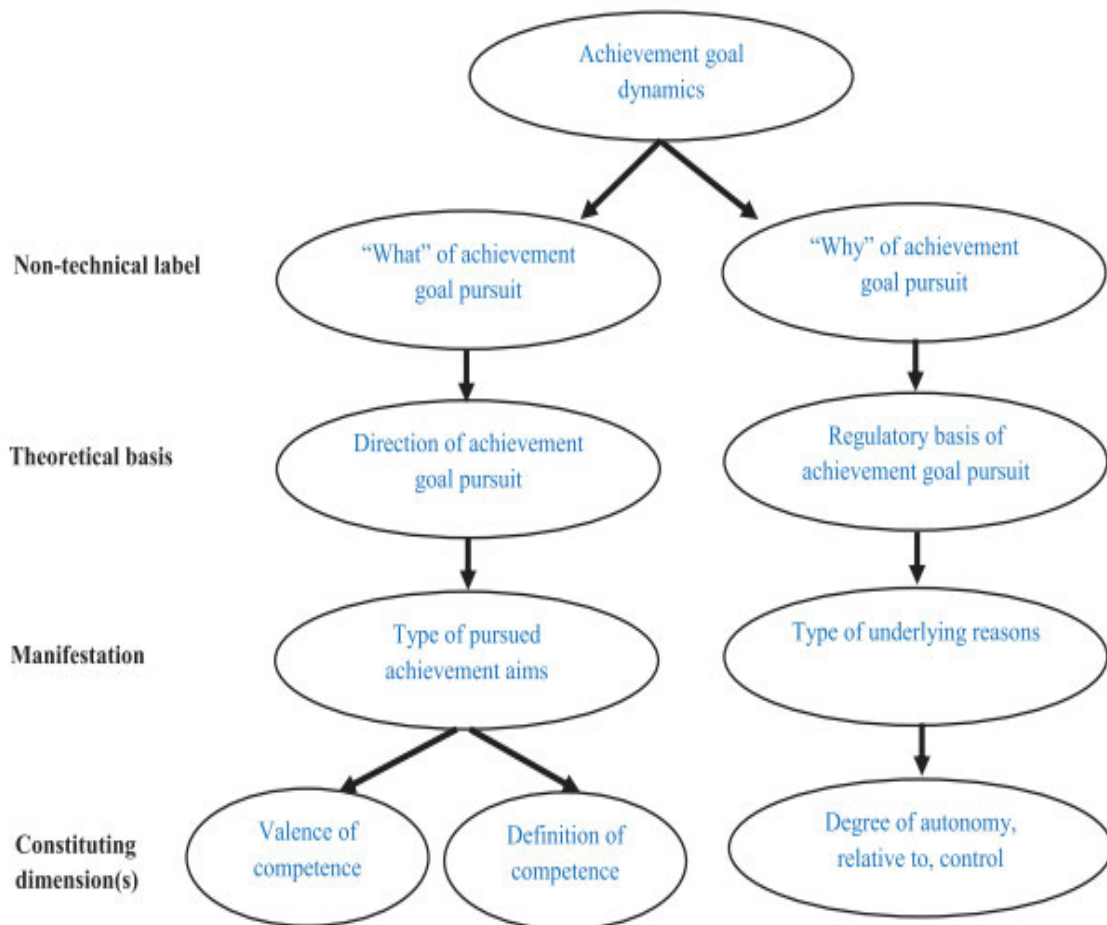
Figure 2.10 indicates how various identities are linked to individual traits. Individuals with a strong self-identity are seen to have academic motivation whereas those with interpersonal identity are seen to be good communicators. The most advanced of all identities is a psychosocial identity which encompasses a multitude of personality traits, as follows:



Matsushima and Ozaki, (2015)

Figure 2.10: Attitude toward classes, academic motivation, and lecture self-evaluation

Vansteenkiste, Lens, Elliot, Soenens and Mouratidis (2014) highlight that the latest development defines achievement goals strictly as aims. Students feel a sense of pressure when the goal pursuit is controlled externally, and attainment of the particular achievement goals may be hampered. However, when students' goal pursuit is independently controlled, they have completely accepted the goals and regard it as both rewarding and challenging. The figure 2.11 below indicates the various aspects to be considered in achievement goal dynamics:



Vansteenkiste et al., (2014)

Figure 2.11: Critical features of achievement goal dynamics

Table 2.3 below highlights the various types of competence as well as the orientation towards achieving the competence:

Table 2.3: The type of reasons underlying different types of achievement goals

		DEFINITION OF COMPETENCE		
		Task-based	Self-based	Other-based
VALENCE	Approach oriented	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to master the requirements of the task out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to master the requirements of the task out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to do better than before out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to do better than before out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to do better than others out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to do better than others out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)
	Avoidance oriented	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid not mastering the requirements of the task out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid not mastering the requirements of the task out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid doing worse than before out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid doing worse than before out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)	<u>Autonomous Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid doing worse than others out of challenge, excitement, or personal significance <u>Controlled Reasons</u> Attempting to avoid doing worse than others out of internal pressure (e.g., guilt, ego-concerns) or external pressure (e.g., demanding expectations)

Vansteenkiste et al., (2014)

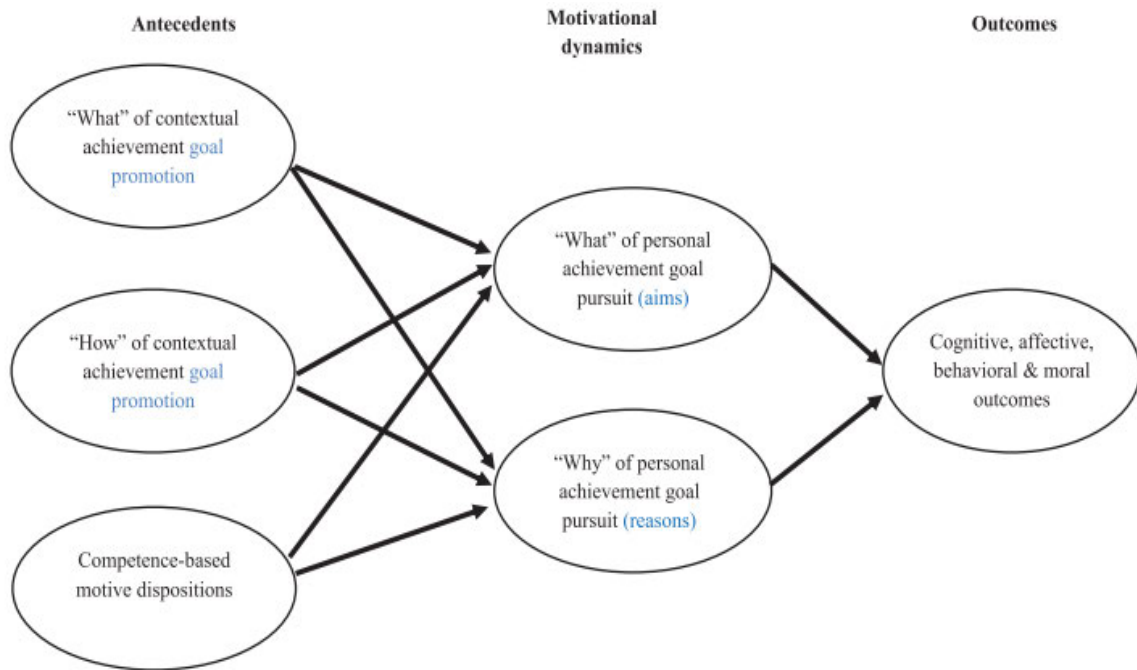
Approach oriented

Task-based competence is centred on whether an individual is able to complete a task. A student with self-based competence wants to do better based on his or her personal goals. Other sources of competence can be seen as more competitive as individuals now want to do better than their colleagues.

Avoidance oriented

Avoidance-based competence is avoiding mastering the content due to a perceived challenge. Self-based competence is a fear of doing worse owing to internal pressure. Other sources of competence can be seen as more psychological as students are now concerned with their ego as well as demanding expectations from superiors or colleagues.

The figure 2.12 below indicates the questions individuals will ask themselves when pursuing goals:



Vansteenkiste et al., (2014)

Figure 2.12: The proposed model combining the what and why of personal achievement goal pursuit

Chang, Zhi-Feng Liu, Sung, Lin, Chen and Chang (2014) investigated how Internet self-confidence assisted in achieving heightened academic achievement. Students were then motivated to draft their own learning goals and aspired to achieve the same. Social cognitive theory was used to examine the impact on Internet self-confidence on motivation for students at an online college. A total of 87 college students who enrolled for an online course were selected. The findings indicated that students who are more confident in their Internet abilities outperformed those that have a weaker understanding of the Internet. In addition, students did not rely on external motivators but were largely reliant on their own abilities to complete the tasks based on their solid understanding of the Internet.

The study also indicated that males have a stronger degree of confidence with the Internet as compared to females. However, females were more willing to participate in the online discussions in preparation for the final examination. Males did not engage as actively in the online discussion forum. It is advised that educators consider the various psychological characteristics of online students and support them accordingly.

In a technology-driven age, being adept with the Internet has now become a necessity. Universities are making more use of online platforms to engage with students and as such, students are expected to know how to navigate their way in the online space.

Online discussions are now being provided to allow students the opportunity to engage with other students as well as the lecturer in charge of the module. Students often feel less intimidated to pose questions in the online space as opposed to raising those questions in the lecture venue.

According to Kellerman, (2014) Maslow's hierarchy of needs has been studied for years in order to determine the basic needs of humans. There are five different sets of needs namely physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem and self-actualisation. Human beings need to have their basic physiological needs met before they can move up the needs pyramid. In addition, research has been done to establish the relationship between real and virtual space and human needs.

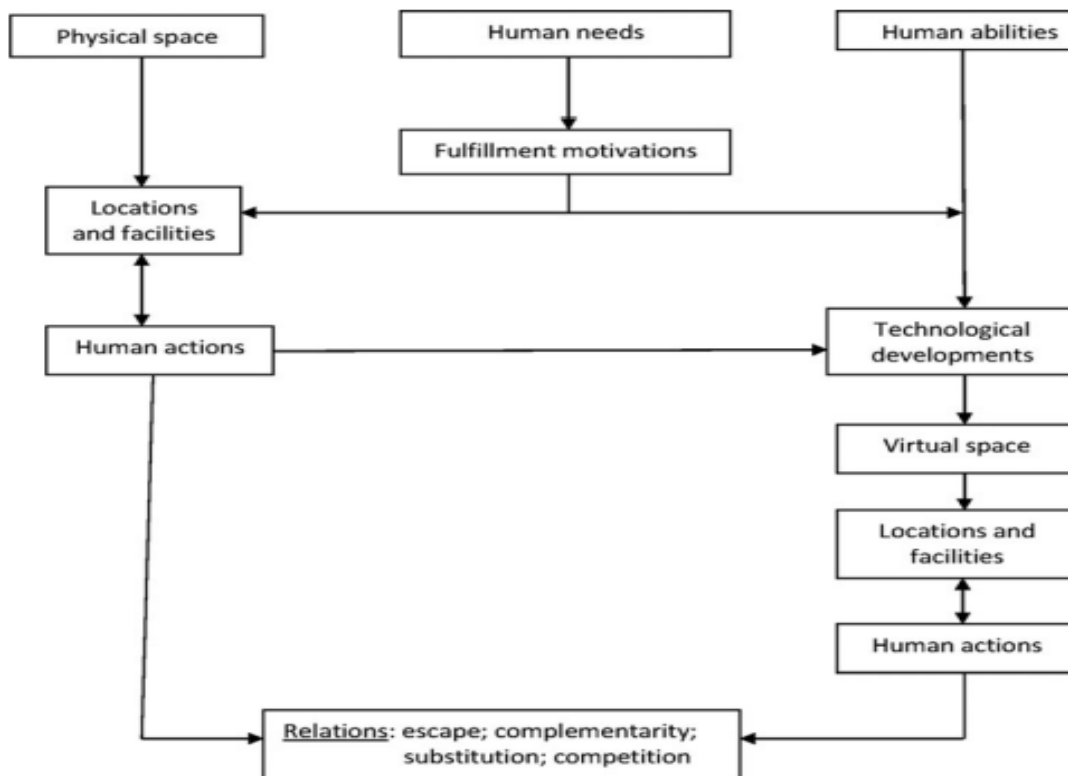
Physical space is known to all however virtual space is now being incorporated with the aid of social networking and the Internet. Human beings may now start looking towards the virtual space for the satisfaction of their needs. There is a prevalence of instant gratification in the virtual space.

Figure 2.13 on the next page highlights Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Figure 2.14 illustrates human needs and both the physical and virtual space whilst Figure 2.15 looks at the hierarchy of needs in relation to both spaces. Ultimately, the needs of individuals are evolving and likewise the demands from students will be changing as well. These changes need to be factored into the teaching and learning strategies.



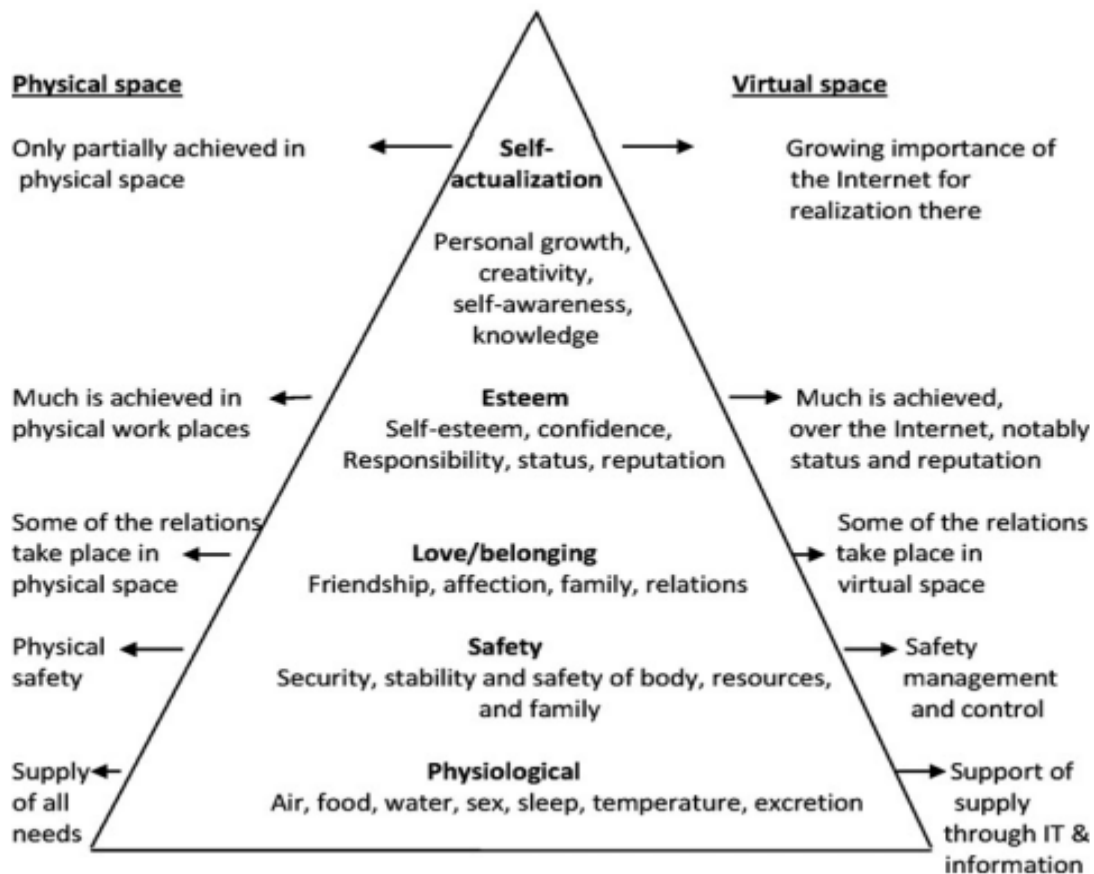
Kellerman, (2014)

Figure 2.13: The hierarchy of human needs



Kellerman, (2014)

Figure 2.14: Human needs and “double space”



Kellerman, (2014)

Figure 2.15: Hierarchy of needs and “double space”

2.9 CONCLUSION

The existing literature has confirmed the link between motivation and academic performance. There was also evidence to suggest that the lecturer plays an important role in motivating students to perform their best. Some students create their academic identity through their performance in the various modules. In addition, students are driven by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Studies conducted at various tertiary institutions indicated a direct correlation amongst prioritisation, planning, task division, goal setting as well as monitoring and evaluation on academic success. When students have a positive view of themselves, it will impact on their academic studies as well. The following chapter outlines the research methodology that was applied to the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Plano Clark and Creswell (2008) assert that a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology is an integrated approach in the field of social sciences. Pragmatism involves emphasising the usefulness of research and helps to maintain the advantages of qualitative research. Plano Clark and Creswell (2008) state that triangulation can be a useful method for the analysis of data when making use of mixed-methods research as it makes best use of the strengths of one method to offset the weakness in another method. It has also been stated that research designs provide an important road map on how to conduct the research. Onwuegbuzie and Combs (2011) confirmed that a mixed analysis converts both research approaches into a single study. Prior to deciding on a mixed-method research design, it is important to consider the reasons for conducting a mixed-method analysis, the history behind mixed methods, the number of various data types and types of data analysis that will be used, the timing schedule of the mixed analysis, the priority of analytical components as well as the number of analytical phases. The five main purposes of combining quantitative and qualitative data are: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion. The term *qualitising* is often used when quantitative data is converted into qualitative data for the purpose of analysis.

Bhattacharjee (2012) states that explanatory research is conducted in areas where new inquiry is expected and the goals of the research are to investigate the scope or extent of a particular phenomenon, to generate preliminary ideas on the phenomenon and to determine whether it is worth investigating the particular phenomenon. The selected research method must provide adequate rigour, reliability and validity in order for the results to be applied to a specific field. Explanatory research is also particularly useful when trying to explain a phenomenon or trying to explain cause and effect. Students were asked to participate in a survey which aimed to identify the value of their own self-management patterns in relation to their postgraduate studies. This chapter details the population and sample that was selected, the research instrument that was used as well as the ethical considerations of the study. It was important to ensure that reliability and validity was maintained and that data was correctly analysed and managed after the results were obtained. The study limitations were also derived after the analysis of the survey results was concluded.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Explanatory research was used for the purpose of this study. According to Salkind (2012), this type of research outlines the features of an existing phenomenon or trend. Dhawan (2010) believes that the researcher needs to identify precisely what he or she wants to measure as well as efficient techniques in order to obtain this information. The fundamental purpose in conducting this research is to examine the role of self-management in postgraduate studies. In addition, the study was conducted with current Master of Commerce Students. The nature of explanatory research is to explain a phenomenon and is especially useful when trying to examine cause and effect. In this study, the students needed to explain the role that they believed self-management played in their postgraduate studies at UKZN.

The adopted approach used in this study was a mixed methods approach which is made up of both qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research helps to generate insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human behaviour as well as represents the views and perspectives of participants in a study. Yin (2010) asserts that qualitative methods are appropriate when studying people's feelings or opinions. Subsequently, this view was reinforced by Salkind (2012) who maintained that the aim of qualitative research is to assess human behaviour within various contexts as it occurs. Data collection occurs within the participants' natural settings in trying to further examine the phenomenon. Information generated from qualitative research will be subjective in nature as it is based on opinions and beliefs.

In addition, Salkind (2012) highlights the level of effort and complexity required to conduct qualitative research. Owing to the highly individual and personalised nature of qualitative research, it becomes possible to gain a deeper insight into the feelings and emotions of participants. Punch (2014) states that quantitative research is research in which the data is represented in numerical form. Quantitative research is able to present reality in terms of the variables, measures the variables and examines the relationship between these variables.

By adopting a mixed-methods approach, the strengths of qualitative and quantitative research designs can be harnessed to provide more rigour. For the purpose of this study, a survey design was used. Vogt, Gardner and Haeffele (2012) suggest that surveys are a common choice as a research instrument as they provide substantial evidence with a minimal cost factor involved. In selecting whether to use a survey research design, it is important to determine whether data can be more effectively obtained directly from the respondent and whether the survey questions

will best answer the research questions being posed. It is also important to consider whether respondents will provide both accurate and reliable information. A researcher must know how the answers will be utilised and most importantly an adequate response rate is also essential in making the research credible.

Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2014) emphasise that a tailored design becomes important when trying to minimise the survey errors and a customised survey should be designed around a particular situation. Therefore, a tailored design refers to adapting survey procedures based on the topic being investigated and the respondents who are required to participate in the survey.

3.3 STUDY AREA

The research was based at the UKZN Westville campus. UKZN Westville is one of the four campuses, and it is the centre responsible for facilitating the Master of Commerce in Management degree at the School of Management, IT and Governance. Therefore, it made sense to base this study at the hub of the Commerce Department. Respondents were students currently enrolled for the Master of Commerce degree and registered at the Westville campus. Each respondent was required to access a survey via a link and enter his or her responses. The survey was administered by Survey Monkey. Respondents gave their consent to participate in the survey prior to commencing with the survey. Details of the research and its aims were provided on the first page of the study. Details on how to contact both the researcher and the supervisor were also provided on the questionnaire. After the study had been conducted, there was greater insight into the self-management patterns of Master of Commerce Students in the School of Management at the Westville campus.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION

Salkind (2012) asserts that the population is the larger group whereas the smaller subset chosen from the population is called the sample. The research population was the Master of Commerce coursework students in the School of Management, IT and Governance who were registered at the Westville campus. The size of the population was 35 students. Only part-time students were selected for the purpose of the study as the study aimed to examine the challenges faced by students pursuing this mode of study. It can be argued that these students may need to apply a higher degree of self-management as they often need to juggle the demands of both a job and family life. It was envisioned that a multitude of self-management ideas and strategies would

emerge from the responses, as everyone would have a different approach in mind. As a result, this would contribute to the existing literature on self-management.

3.5 STUDY SAMPLE AND SIZE

The accessible population were Master of Commerce coursework students registered at UKZN Westville as they displayed the characteristics that the study wished to examine. The required characteristics were displayed by the participants as they were on the part-time model of the course delivery. Students were accessible as they were on the Westville campus for lectures during the week. They were, however, required to complete the online survey via Survey Monkey. By allowing them to complete the questionnaire online, it did not infringe on their academic time. Salkind (2012) suggests generalisable results are those that can be applied to different populations with the same features in different settings. The results of this study can be applied to part-time students at universities.

Whilst Vogt et al., (2012) believe that the basis of survey sampling is reliant on the research questions being asked, Dhawan (2010) states that the research must consider the type of universe, sampling unit, source list, size of the sample, parameters of interest, budgetary constraint and sampling procedure when developing a sampling design. Dillman et al. (2014) add that surveyors need a list that contains proposed members of the target population. The proposed study made use of qualitative and quantitative research methods and as such made use of both probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

Prior to commencing with mixed-method sampling, as per Plano Clark et al., (2008) researchers need to have a good understanding of the typical probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The method of convenience sampling was used for the qualitative portion as Creswell (2012) asserts that this type of research targets a very specific group of participants and will as such reflect their perceptions. The process is centred on the convenience in obtaining the particular sample. For the quantitative aspect of the study, cluster sampling was used. Salkind (2012) explains that the target population as well as the respective elements is already grouped into sub-populations. A list of the various sub-populations is often available and can often be obtained upon written request. It is important to also remember that the selected respondents had to be representative of the total population of Master of Commerce students.

Salkind (2012) states that a population is a collection of potential respondents who may be included in the study and a sample is a smaller set of that population. UKZN has four campuses and the sample was the total number of units or individuals that needed to be studied. From all the students registered for the degree of Master of Commerce, it was only those who were following the part-time mode at Westville who were included in the sample. In total, 10 students were chosen for the qualitative aspect and 22 for the quantitative aspect which provided a representative sample of the Master of Commerce students. The chosen sample was based on the population of Master of Commerce Students. The total population was 35 students and therefore the desired sample was 32. In addition, 10 students were seen as adequate for the qualitative aspect of the study as rich data could be obtained through the interviews. For the quantitative aspect of the study, 22 students would provide sufficient closed ended responses to ensure validity in the study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

As suggested by Dhawan (2010), structured interviews make use of a set of pre-decided questions and standardised methods of recording. Punch (2014) describes structured interviews as a situation where the respondents are asked a set of pre-determined questions, the categories of which have also been decided in advance. Respondents have minimal room for variation: however, it does make for the results to be more standardised. However, unstructured interviews lack standardisation and are more open-ended. In doing so, the researcher will gain a better understanding of people's behaviour. Respondents are allowed to openly express their views on a certain topic. In doing so, more clarity was gained on the topic. Owing to time constraints, it was not possible to pilot the surveys and as such this may present a limitation in the study results. A survey invitation was sent to postgraduate students at UKZN by means of a link through Survey Monkey. Whilst interviews were not used for this data, the two different types of surveys allowed for the collection of both statistical and rich data. Surveys were used owing to a geographical limitation in terms of access to the required sample. This study made use of questionnaires as they allowed for the collection of open-ended and closed-ended information and focused on key questions. Interview questions dealt with students' views on self-management in general with a view to self-efficacy and a few motivational theories as well.

Salkind (2012) maintains that the privacy of respondents should be upheld at all times and participants should not be harmed in any way during the study. The data collection instrument needs to be aligned to the objective of the study and should clearly outline the purpose of the study to participants.

In drafting the questions for the qualitative survey, open-ended questions were used with caution as Dillman et al., (2014) believe that a limit on open-ended questions motivates respondents to answer. Similarly, when drafting closed-ended questions, Dillman et al., (2014) suggest that a menu of all possible alternatives be provided for the respondents. By providing all the possible alternatives or variables, respondents are not forced to think of answers, but they merely select from the options that have been provided. In doing so, they will be more inclined to want to participate in the survey. When designing a web survey, respondents can be requested to participate by means of a QR code or a shortened URL. Personalising a survey invitation can also assist in gaining the attention of possible respondents. When sending out a survey link or QR code, it is of crucial importance to check the wording and research details that are included.

3.7 DATA MANAGEMENT

Students were invited to participate in a survey that had already been set up on Survey Monkey. The qualitative survey contained more open-ended questions, allowing for the collection of data-rich information whereas the quantitative survey consisted of more closed-ended questions. A link was e-mailed to the selected group of qualitative respondents. Gatekeeper's permission was obtained from the University to place regular notices on UKZN's notice system to invite respondents to participate. Reminders were sent out at regular intervals to remind students to participate in the survey. The criteria for participation in the survey as well as details of the survey were provided in the notice. Students were also encouraged to contact both the researcher and the supervisor in the event of questions about the research process. Students needed to give their consent to participate in the survey and then complete the relevant questions. Upon completion, the answers were stored on Survey Monkey's database and as such the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were ensured. The paid option on Survey Monkey conducted trend and data analysis from the survey and as such, this data was used in the analysis of the survey findings.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. After the surveys had been completed, themes started emerging which provided insight into trends in respect of self-management. This type of analysis clearly identified the various data into themes which allowed for further discussions on the topic or selected theme. Similarly, Bhattacharjee (2012) adds that content analysis is the systematic analysis of the context of a text and in particular sentiment analysis occurs when people's opinions or attitudes about a phenomenon are exposed. Through this type of analysis, findings can be easily categorised and trends identified and explained. In this way, it was easy to identify the various factors that come into play with self-management at postgraduate level.

As suggested by Plano Clark et al., (2008), the main purposes for conducting mixed-method analysis were triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion whilst Punch (2014) believes that the combination of the two research approaches namely qualitative and quantitative research will allow for greater knowledge on the research topic as it will combine strengths and minimise weaknesses in each research approach.

As stated by Plano Clark et al., (2008), there are many techniques with which to conduct mixed-method data analysis. Quantitative data can be converted into qualitative data and vice versa for the data analysis process. For the purpose of this study, data was analysed by using data transformation. According to this technique, one data type was converted to another so that both sets of data could be analysed using one technique. For example, quantitative data could be converted to qualitative data by identifying the central themes that emerge from the surveys and discussing these results via thematic analysis. The purpose of conversion was to ensure that both sets of data were analysed concurrently and the results were presented jointly. After the survey cut-off date had been reached, the data was collated and quantitative research was converted to qualitative research and analysed as such. In doing so, a range of themes was determined, and a collective view of the research results was also provided.

3.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Plano Clark et al., (2008) believe that the aspect of validity is relevant when discussing quantitative research and state that research validity has four main types, namely: statistical conclusion, internal, construct and external validity. Punch (2014) emphasises that internal validity refers to the internal regularity of the research whilst external validity refers to the

generalisability of the research. Similarly, Vogt et al., (2012) assert that whilst validity refers to the appropriateness of coding, reliability refers to the consistency of coding.

In order to improve the validity measures of a study, it is important to examine the different types of validity and their specific requirements. When discussing statistical conclusion validity, the appropriateness of the analysis methods must be considered. Construct validity can be seen as the core of validity as it deals with the coding of data and the concepts that emerge from there must be true and correct based on the field being studied.

Salkind (2012) believes that high levels of both reliability and validity are indicators of good measurement practices. Reliability is achieved when a test is repeatedly conducted and reveals the same results each time. Reliability can be improved by increasing the number of items or observations, eliminating items that are not clear, providing standardised conditions in which a test is conducted, moderating the degree of difficulty, minimising the effect of external events, standardising instructions and maintaining consistent scoring procedures. As described by Salkind (2012), validity is achieved when the instrument that is used in the research measures what is actually meant to measure and it refers to the results of a test. Internal validity was achieved by ensuring regularity of the research and reliability was achieved by getting a sample appropriate to the population size thereby achieving a higher degree of confidence.

As defined by Bhattacharjee (2012), reliability can be seen as the extent to which the measure of a theory or construct is consistent or reliable. The central idea around reliability is consistency and not accuracy. In order to increase the extent of reliability, it is suggested that data collection techniques that have less reliance on researcher subjectivity should be chosen, e.g. a questionnaire that has questions to which the respondents should know the answers to, and issues that respondents actually care about. In addition, it is important to be clear in the wording in order to avoid ambiguities or confusion.

Whilst following the guidelines may increase reliability, there is still room for error. The ways of estimating reliability are inter-rater, test-retest, split-half and internal consistency reliability. Inter-rater reliability refers to the measure of consistency between two observers of the same construct whilst test-retest reliability is an indicator of consistency between two tests given out at two different points in time to the same sample. Bhattacharjee (2012) states that split-half reliability is an indicator of consistency between two parts or halves of a particular construct whilst internal consistency reliability examines the consistency between different items of the same construct.

When measuring the reliability and validity of research, two sets of errors can be identified namely: random and systematic error. Random error refers to an unknown set of factors which may influence some observations but not others and systematic error refer to factors that affect all observations of a construct in a systematic manner and is applied to the entire sample. With random error, respondents who are in a good mood at the time may respond more positively to the questions being asked than those who are in a bad mood. Systematic error refers to a phenomenon that affects all respondents in that particular population. As indicated by Bhattacharjee (2012), an analysis of financial firms during a crisis will yield a result indicating a significant reduction in the turnover and overall performance of those firms.

When judging the rigour of interpretive research, Bhattacharjee (2012) makes reference to the concepts of dependability, credibility, confirmability and transferability. Dependability is measured when the results of the research are the same when another researcher conducts the research in the same setting using the same variables. In order to increase the levels of dependability, the researcher must provide details about the aspect being studied as well as its context. Credibility is achieved when a reader regards the results of a research as believable. In order to improve credibility, the researcher needs to indicate the extent of data triangulation across subjects as well as providing clear details of the methodological and theoretical decisions which will allow for an independent audit of data collection.

According to Bhattacharjee (2012), confirmability refers to a situation where the results that have been presented in a report can be confirmed by others. It is usually the participants who read through the results of the report and if they agree with the results, it can be concluded that the results were confirmable. Transferability refers to when the results that are obtained from one study can be applied to another setting. In order to improve the transferability aspect, researchers are required to provide a detailed description of the research context as well as the structures, processes and assumptions. It is only then that readers can decide whether the reported results can be applied to different settings. Respondents were given an outline to the research in the survey invitation and were also requested to direct their queries to the researcher. In doing so, the respondents were able to make an informed decision on their participation.

3.10 STUDY LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study lie in the fact that the study was conducted with a very small sample at the University. Furthermore, the sample of students that were selected were all

registered for the Master of Commerce degree. In addition, it became extremely difficult to encourage participation in the survey as this was meant to be voluntary. However, a larger number of respondents may perhaps have provided a more representative set of results. Students were regularly reminded to participate in the survey via the UKZN notice system as well as via e-mail. However, participation in the survey was at the sole discretion of the student. The limitations of the study lie in the fact that the study was limited to one university and one region. Furthermore, the questions may have been misinterpreted, and some respondents may not have answered honestly owing to fear of reprisals. Some respondents also submitted incomplete questionnaires, and the questions were also incorrectly interpreted. As such, this would have an impact on data analysis and data interpretation.

3.11 ELIMINATION OF BIAS

According to Salkind (2012), interview bias happens when the interviewer tries to influence the interviewee's response. This could be done through gestures or when the interviewer encourages either the approval or disapproval of a response. However, it is also noted that the interviewee may be inclined to provide the socially acceptable response which presents a bias. Interviewers must therefore be trained on how to conduct the interview. By using a survey, the interviewer bias was eliminated as the interviewer was not present at the time that the respondent was completing the survey. Therefore, respondents were at liberty to express their feelings on the questions that were posed without fear of providing an incorrect or unfavourable response. The direct responses from respondents were recorded which did reduce bias.

Bhattacharjee (2012) confirms that researchers are required to dispel any bias before embarking on the study. Text data can be analysed using open coding, axial coding or selective coding. For the purpose of this study, open coding was used as key concepts were derived from the textual data which had a direct link to the research that was conducted.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Punch (2014) states that research practices should be examined from a range of perspectives, namely: duties, consequences and virtues. Vogt et al., (2012) believe that obtaining consent is a fundamental aspect when conducting research as well as the sampling methods being used to recruit respondents. Respondents should also be protected from harm, and their privacy must be maintained. It must also be noted that using a mixed-methods research design can increase the consideration for consent as there may be more potential permission requirements.

Therefore, it becomes important to discuss the research plan in detail as well as the potential issues that may arise with the research. Respondents being researched need to have their dignity and privacy maintained regardless of the results of the research. As such Salkind (2012) suggest that ethical guidelines should be followed. Researchers must critically examine the ethical aspects of the research being conducted, risk must be minimised, ethical practices must be applied, the research must be re-explained to respondents upon their request, respondents must be allowed to withdraw from the research if they are not feeling comfortable, results of the work should be made available upon completion of the research, whilst harm should be avoided: it must be corrected if it occurs and all information on respondents must be kept confidential. A gatekeeper's letter was obtained from the Dean of the University of KwaZulu-Natal as well as ethical clearance from the Ethics Research Committee (ERC). In addition, students were allowed to make the decision on participation in the study after the aims and objectives had been clearly outlined. In keeping with research ethics, participants' privacy and confidentiality were maintained and informed consent was obtained. It was also crucially important that students were aware of the reasons for conducting this research. The reasons for conducting the research as well as a brief background of the research problem were provided on the survey invitation page. The confidentiality and non-disclosure aspects were also outlined on the survey invitation.

3.13 CONCLUSION

A mixed method analysis was used in order to gain more rigour with the study. However, a common limitation with using surveys is that respondents are not compelled to participate in the study. Nevertheless, there was a favourable response to the surveys and respondents provided a range of different concepts to be considered regarding postgraduate studies. The following chapter describes the collection and analysis of the data obtained from the surveys.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the data that was collected from the survey and interview is displayed in the form of diagrams and tables. This study made use of a mixed-method approach, and two sets of surveys were used. One had open-ended questions to allow for the collection of rich data and aimed to understand the opinions and feelings of individuals whereas the other looked at more closed-ended questions which assist in generating statistical data. In discussing the data collection and results, data from the quantitative approach is discussed first, followed by the qualitative approach. The total population was 35; therefore, based on the sampling table the required sample was 32. The quantitative portion required 22 and the qualitative needed 10 respondents. Surveys were sent out to respondents and there was an above average response to the survey.

For the quantitative portion, the total number of respondents was 18 and only 12 completed the survey in full. Therefore, there are limitations regarding that set of data. For the qualitative portion, the total number of respondents was 16 of which only 11 completed the survey in full. Limitations will also be present in this survey. The combined response rate was 97 per cent whereas the combined completion rate was 66 per cent. Both sets of data are represented separately in order to see the response rate and statistics relevant to the survey. Thereafter, the quantitative data is converted into qualitative data for the purpose of analysis and further discussion.

There was a definite difference between the number of respondents and the number of completed surveys. Respondents may have commenced with the survey and not realised the amount of time that was required for completion. Some of the respondents were colleagues in the M. Comm class and had indicated that there was a problem with their Internet connection. In addition, the percentage response rate for completion was poor. The poor response could be attributed to the fact that participation was voluntary and there was no remuneration attached. Reminders to participate in the survey were sent out via the UKZN notice system and many students may not have checked their e-mails.

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

4.2.1 Gender

Table 4.1: Gender (Quantitative survey)

Are you male or female?

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
Male	40 %	6
Female	60 %	9

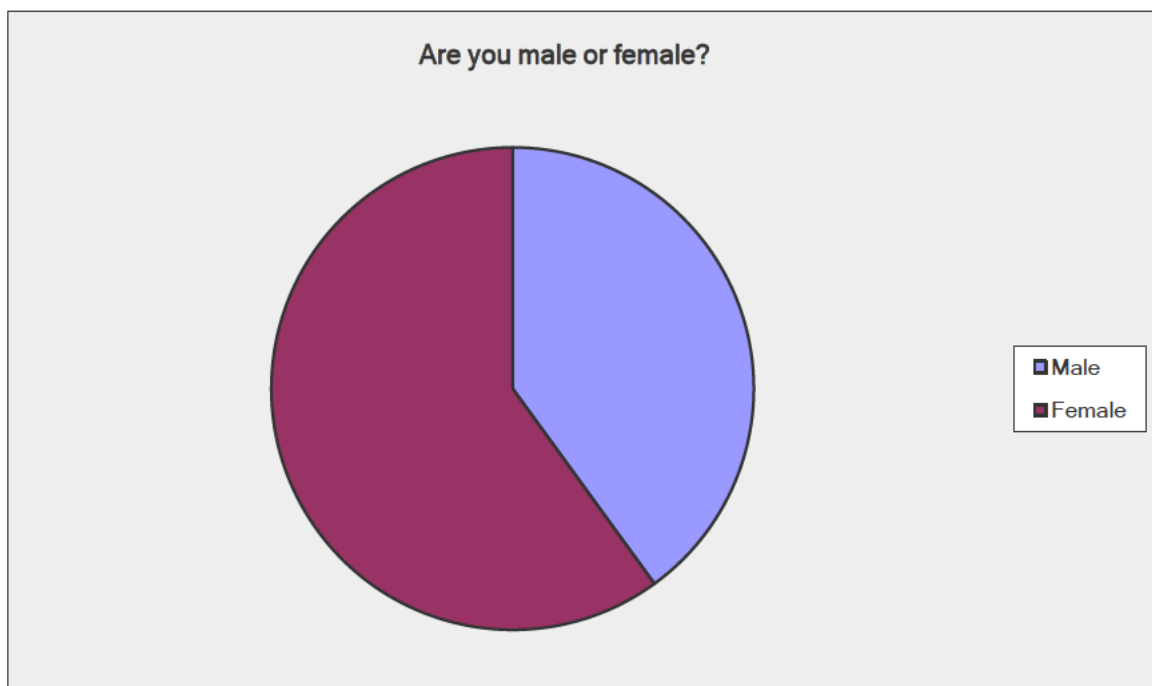


Figure 4.1: Gender (Quantitative survey)

4.2.2 Age

Table 4.2: Age (Quantitative survey)

What is your age?

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
18 to 24	26.7%	4
25 to 34	46.7%	7
35 to 44	20.0%	3
45 to 54	6.7%	1
55 to 64	0.0%	0
65 to 74	0.0%	0
75 or older	0.0%	0

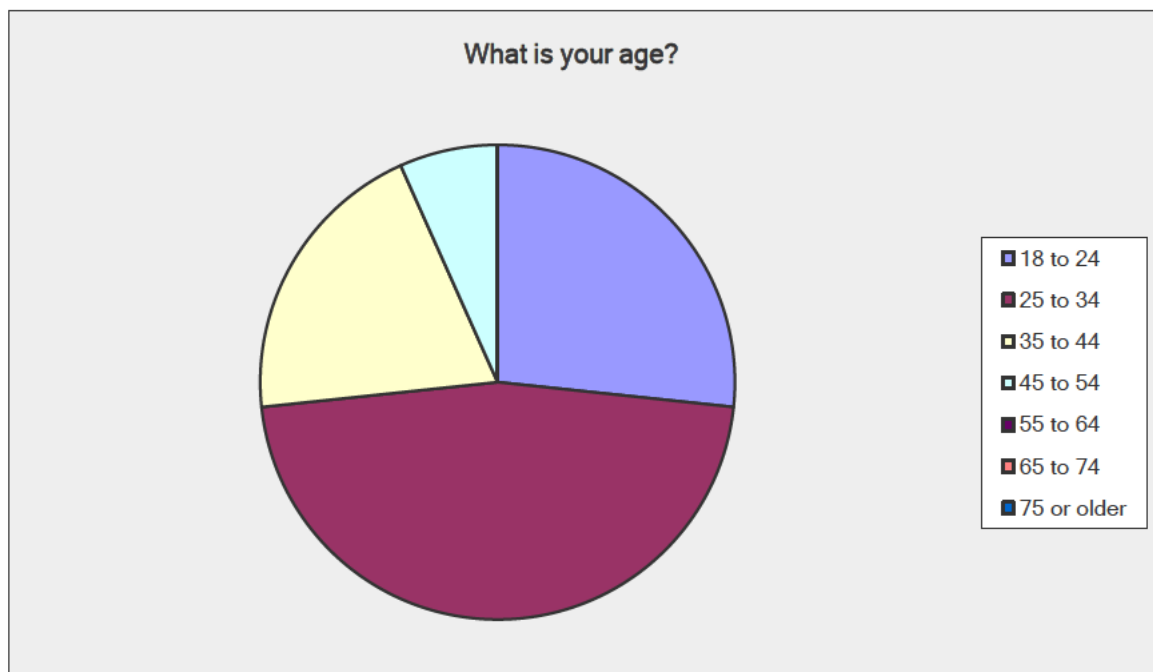


Figure 4.2: Age (Quantitative survey)

4.2.3 Student status

Table 4.3: Student status (Quantitative survey)

Are you currently enrolled as a Master's postgraduate student at UKZN?

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
Yes, full time student at UKZN	60.0%	9
Yes, part time student at UKZN	40.0%	6
No, I am not currently enrolled as a student at UKZN	0.0%	0

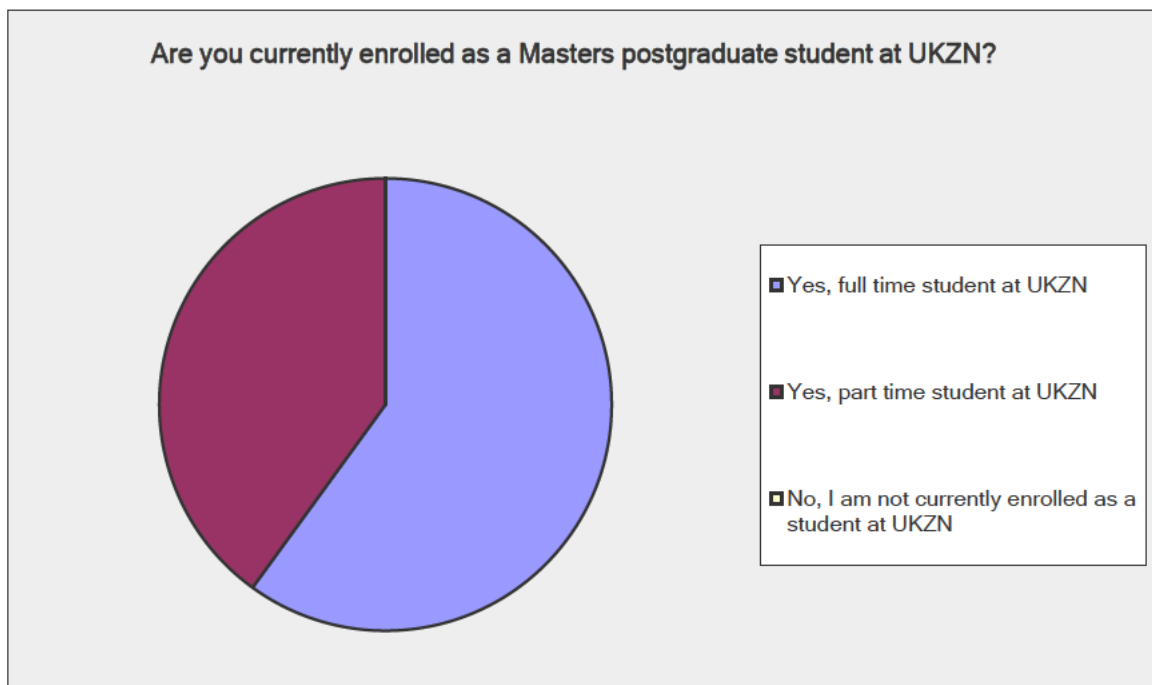


Figure 4.3: Student Status (Quantitative survey)

4.2.4 Course

Table 4.4: Course (Quantitative survey)

For which course are you registered?

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
Master of Commerce - Management	66.7%	10
Master of Commerce - Marketing	13.3%	2
Master of Commerce - Human Resource Management	13.3%	2
Other (please specify) M. Comm ISTN	6.7%	1

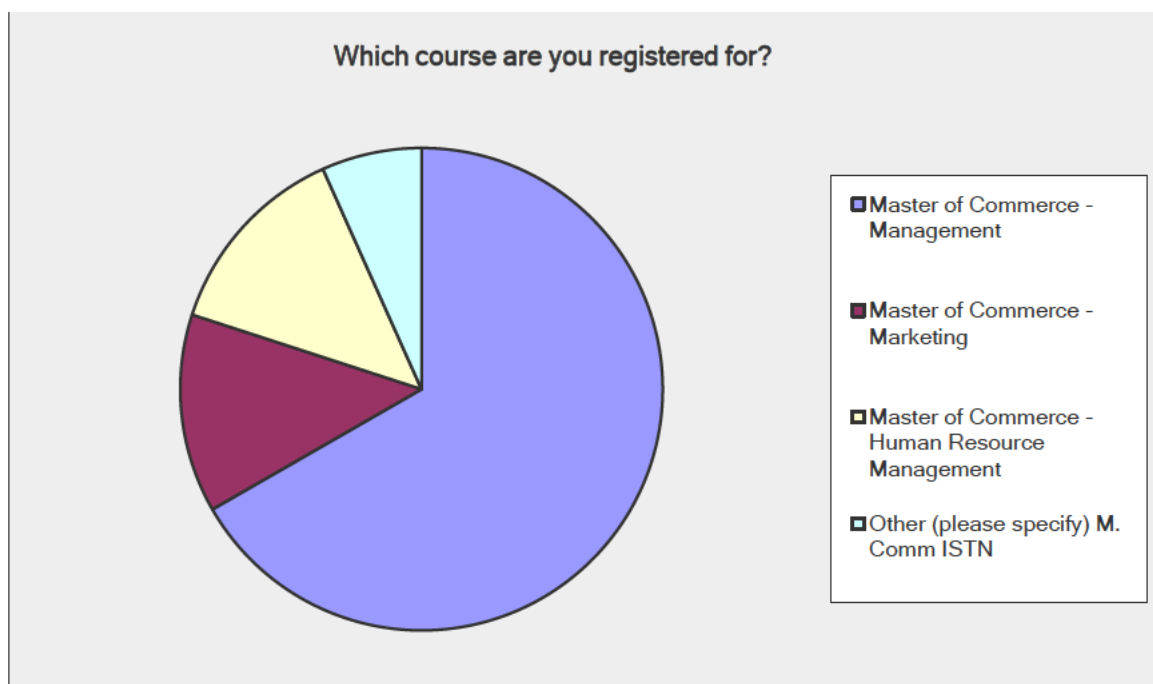


Figure 4.4: Course (Quantitative survey)

4.2.5 Faculty and campus

Table 4.5: Faculty and campus (Quantitative survey)

Indicate your faculty and campus.

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
CLMS - Westville	100.0%	15
CLMS - Howard College	0.0%	0
CLMS - Pietermaritzburg	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0

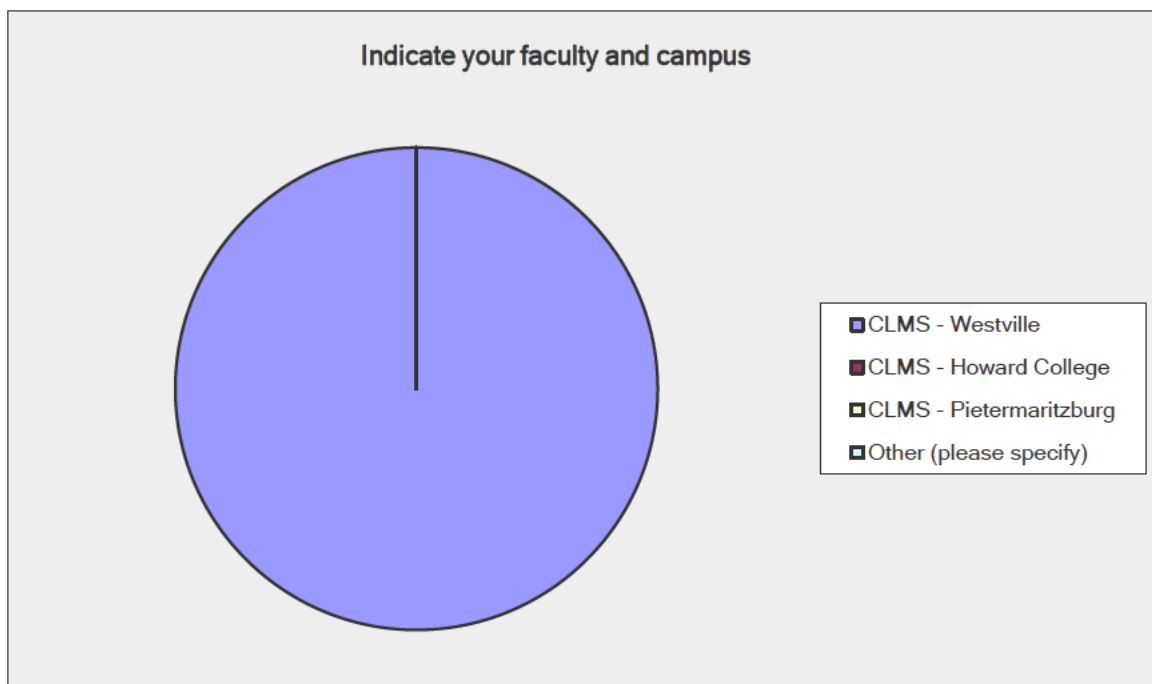


Figure 4.5: Faculty and campus (Quantitative survey)

4.3 RESULTS

4.3.1 Prioritisation

Table 4.6: Prioritisation – Organisation and structure (Response schedule – Quantitative)

Q.7 I am a highly organised and structured individual.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	3	1	5	4	3.77	13	5

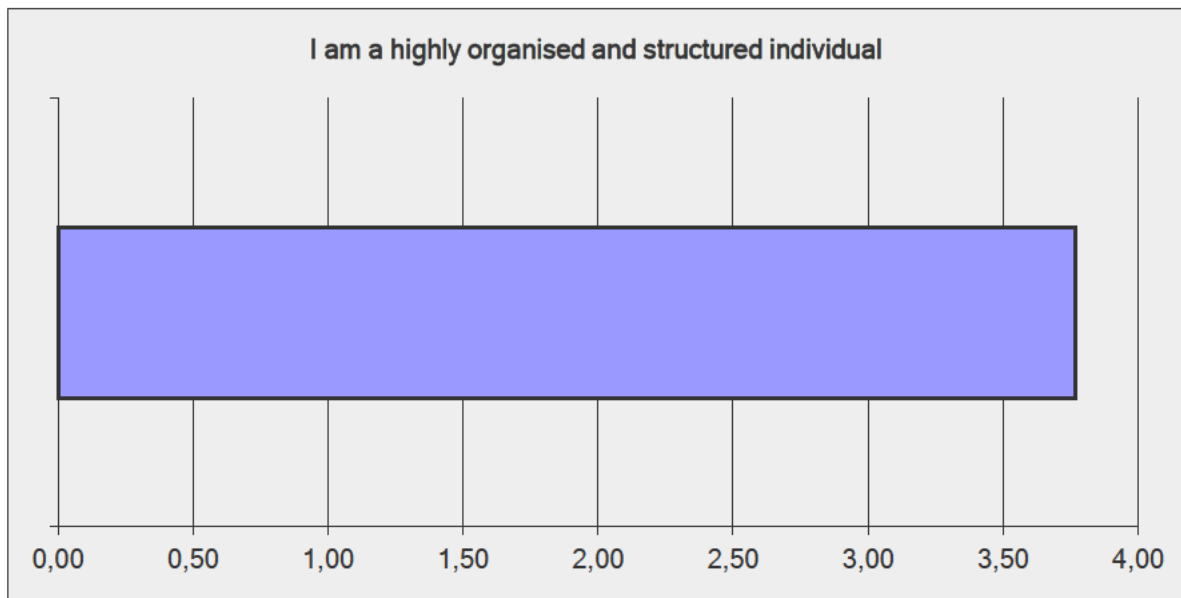


Figure 4.6: Prioritisation – Organisation and structure (Quantitative survey)

In total 9 agreed, whilst 3 did not agree and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 4 out of 13 did not claim to be highly organised.

Q8. I know how to prioritise the various commitments in my studies.

Table 4.7: Prioritisation – Commitments (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	3	8	2	3.92	13	5

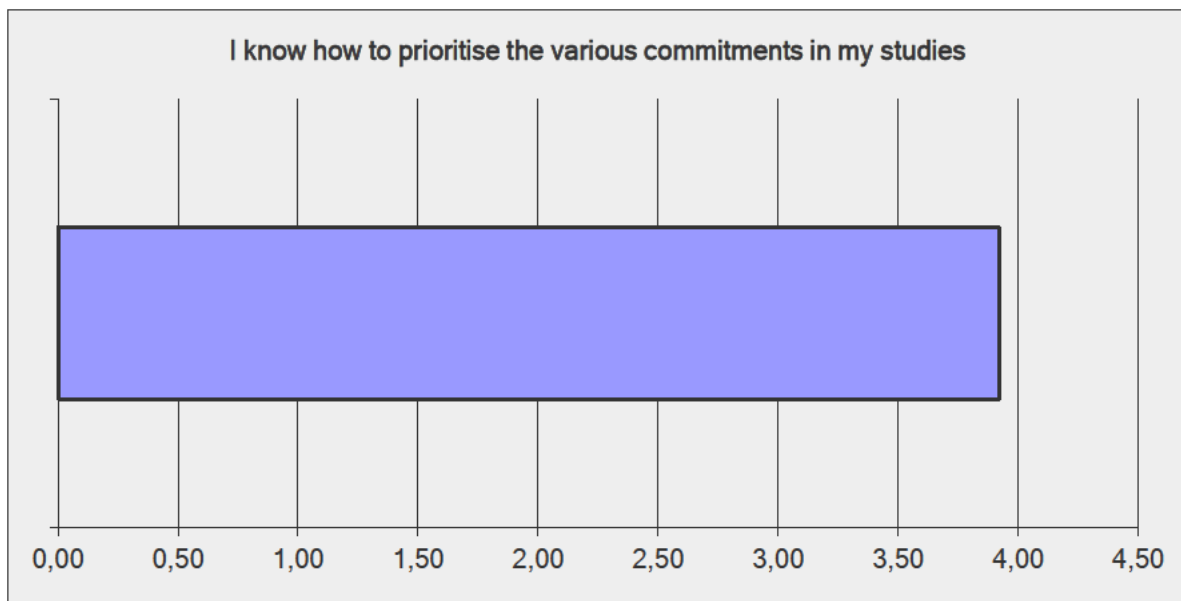


Figure 4.7: Prioritisation – Commitments (Quantitative survey)

In total, 10 agreed whilst 3 did not express an opinion. Thus 3 out of 13 did not claim to prioritise the various commitments in their studies.

Q9. I feel confident in my ability to manage the challenges of postgraduate studies.

Table 4.8: Prioritisation – Abilities (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	2	6	5	4.23	13	5

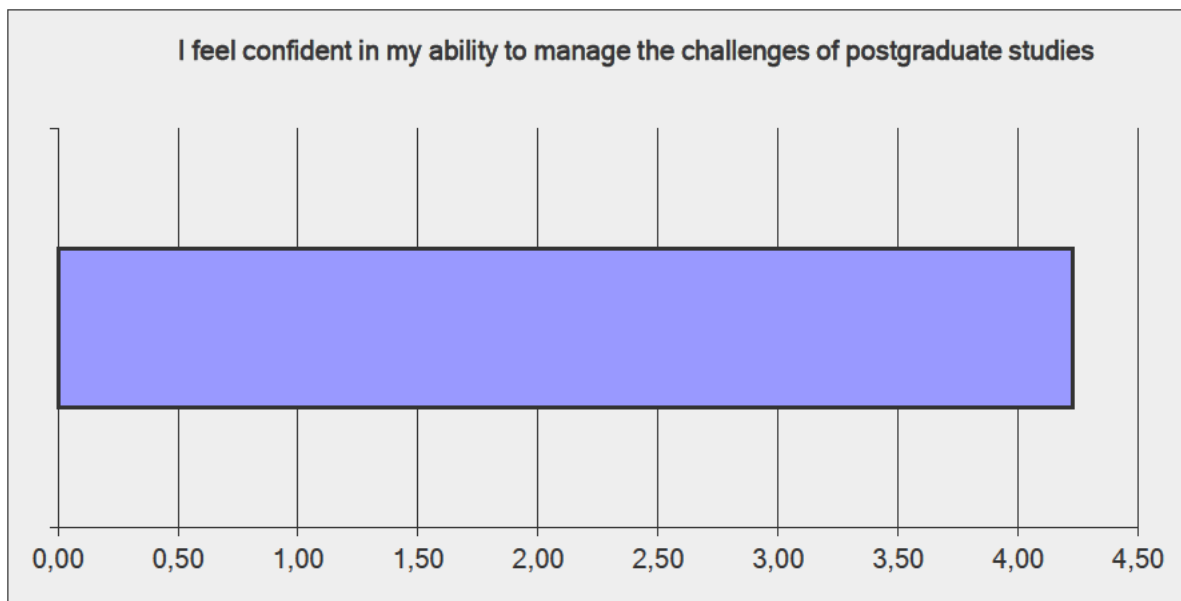


Figure 4.8: Prioritisation – Abilities (Quantitative survey)

In total, 11 agreed whilst 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 2 out of 13 did not claim to have the ability to manage the challenges of postgraduate studies.

Q10. Academics feature as the most important aspect in my list of priorities.

Table 4.9: Prioritisation – Academics (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	2	1	7	3	3.85	13	5

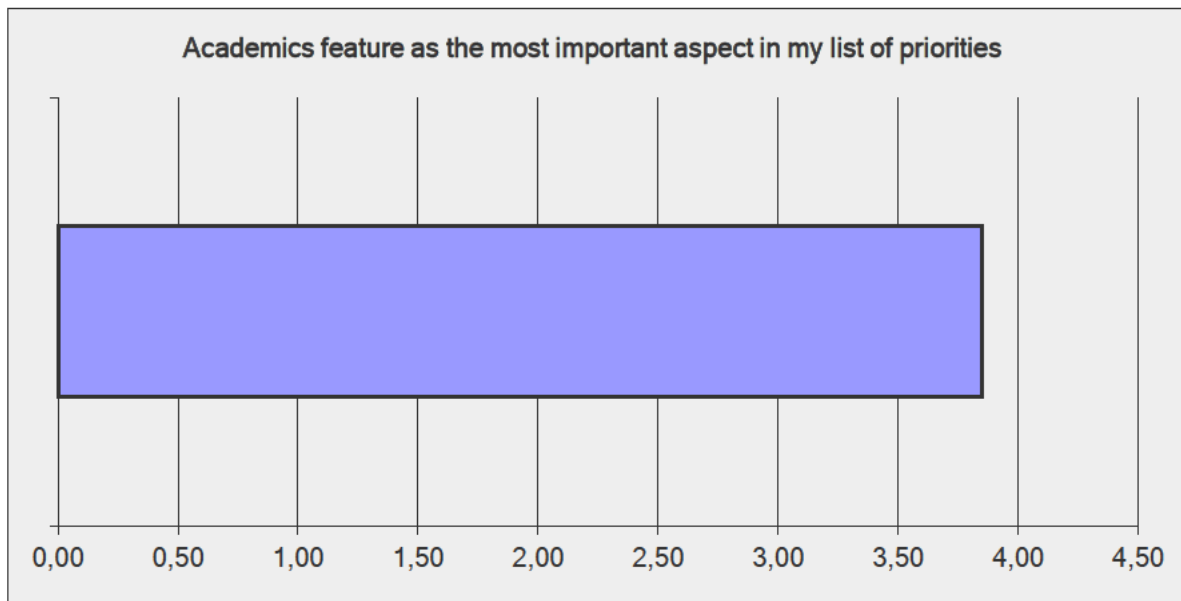


Figure 4.9: Prioritisation – Academics (Quantitative survey)

In total 10 agreed, whilst 2 did not and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 3 out of 13 did not claim that academics feature as the most important aspect in their list of priorities.

4.3.2 Planning

Q11. Assessments are done in advance of the due date

Table 4.10: Planning – Assessments (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	4	1	6	2	3.46	13	5

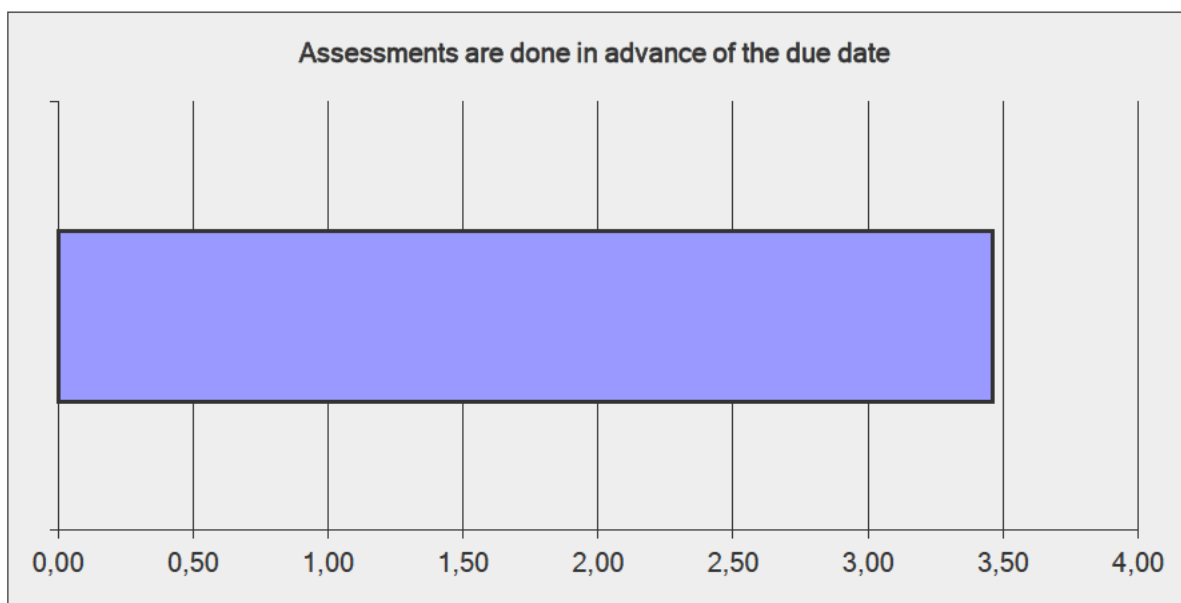


Figure 4.10: Planning – Assessments (Quantitative survey)

In total 8 agreed, whilst 4 did not and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 5 out of 13 did not claim that assessments are done in advance of the due date.

Q12. I adopt a systematic approach to lectures and the schedule of work.

Table 4.11: Planning – Systematic approach (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	2	3	4	4	3.77	13	5

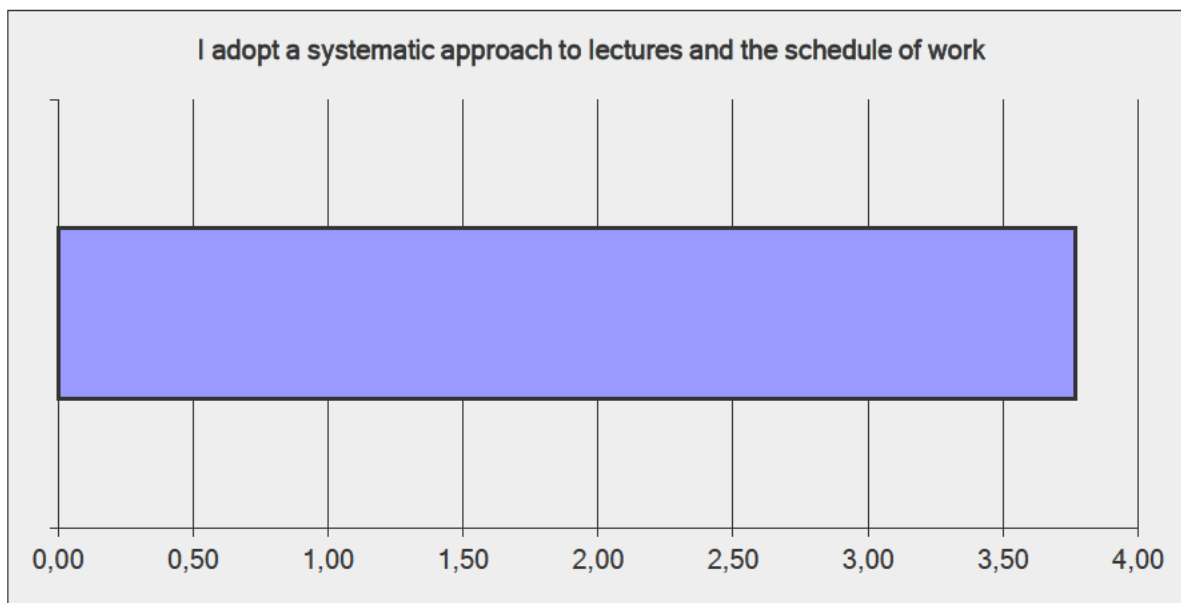


Figure 4.11: Planning – Systematic approach (Quantitative survey)

In total 8 agreed, whilst 2 did not and 3 did not express an opinion. Thus 5 out of 13 did not claim to adopt a systematic approach to lectures and the schedule of work.

Q13. I begin with examination revision at least two weeks in advance of the examination date.

Table 4.12: Planning – Examination revision (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
1	4	2	4	2	3.15	13	5

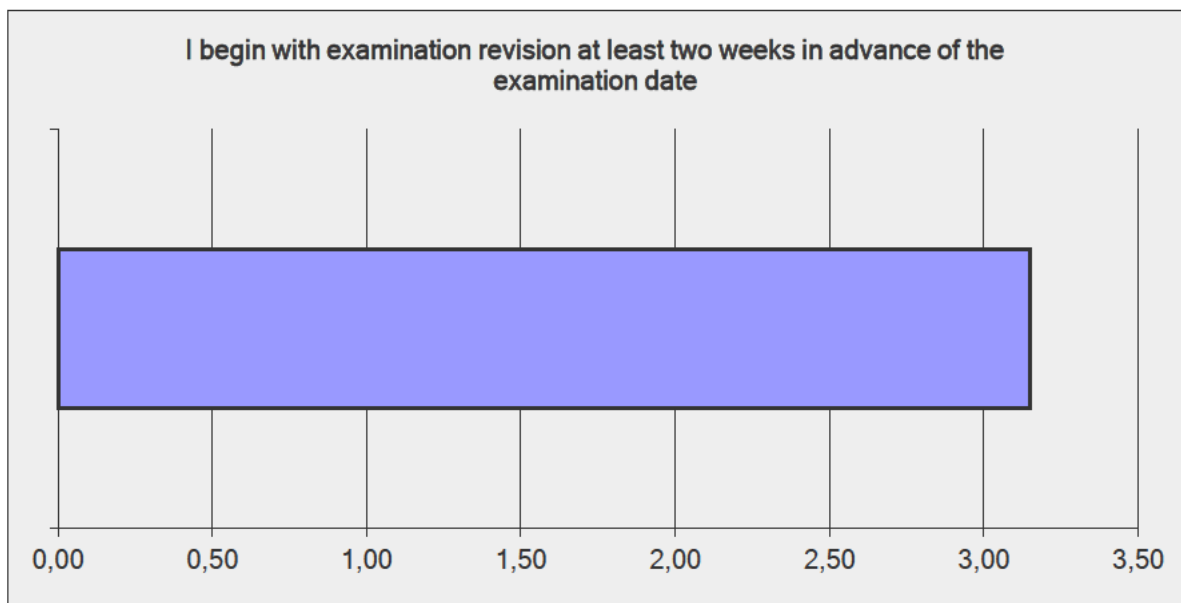


Figure 4.12: Planning – Examination revision (Quantitative survey)

In total 6 agreed, 5 disagreed and 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 7 out of 13 did not claim to begin with examination revision at least two weeks in advance of the examination date.

Q14. I have a balanced approach towards work and studies.

Table 4.13: Planning – Balanced approach (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	2	2	5	4	3.85	13	5

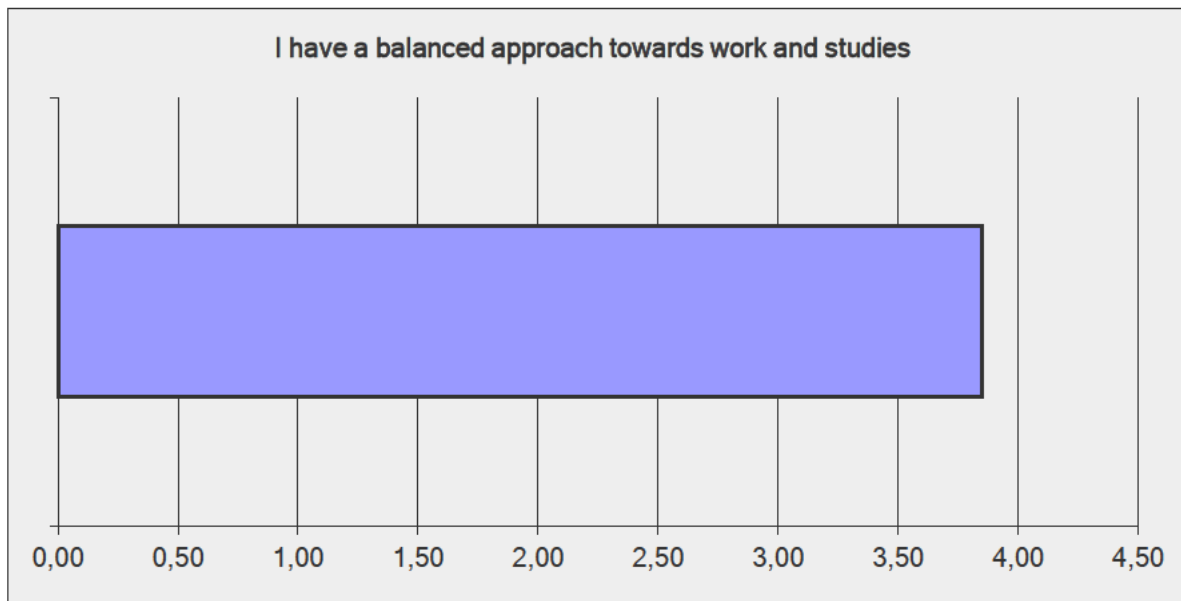


Figure 4.13: Planning – Balanced approach (Quantitative survey)

In total 9 agreed, whilst 2 did not and 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 4 out of 13 did not claim to have a balanced approach towards work and studies.

4.3.3 Task division

Q15. When given a task, I often divide the task into smaller divisions.

Table 4.14: Task division – Smaller divisions (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	2	1	8	2	3.77	13	5

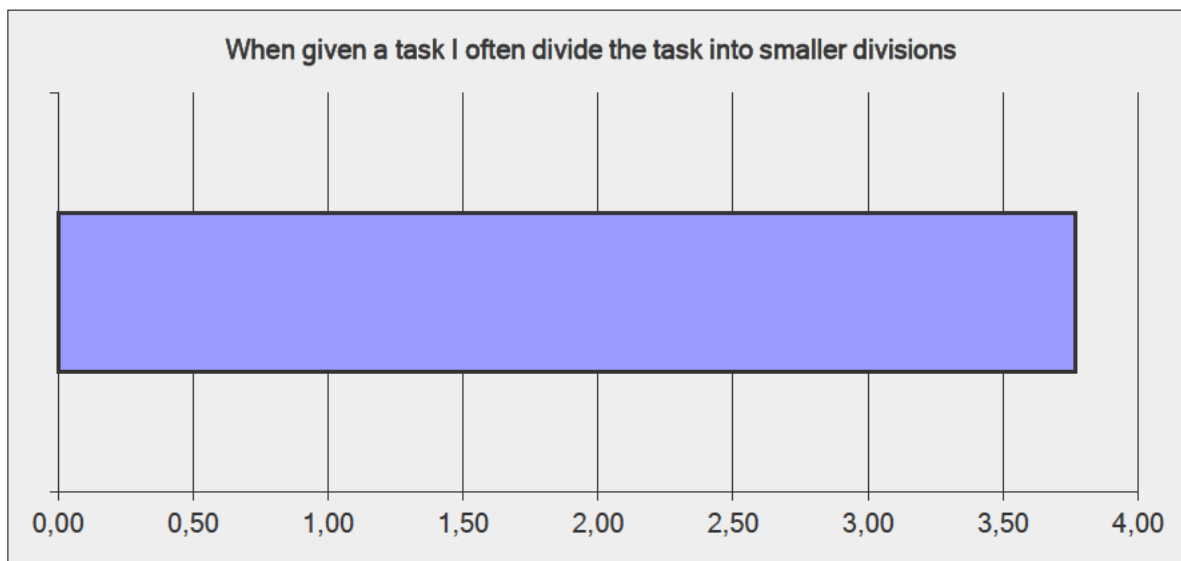


Figure 4.14: Task division – Smaller divisions (Quantitative survey)

In total 10 agreed, whilst 2 did not and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 3 out of 13 did not claim to divide the task into smaller divisions when given a task.

Q16. Where necessary, I am able to work in a group and complete the allocated task.

Table 4.15: Task division – Group work (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	2	7	4	4.15	13	5

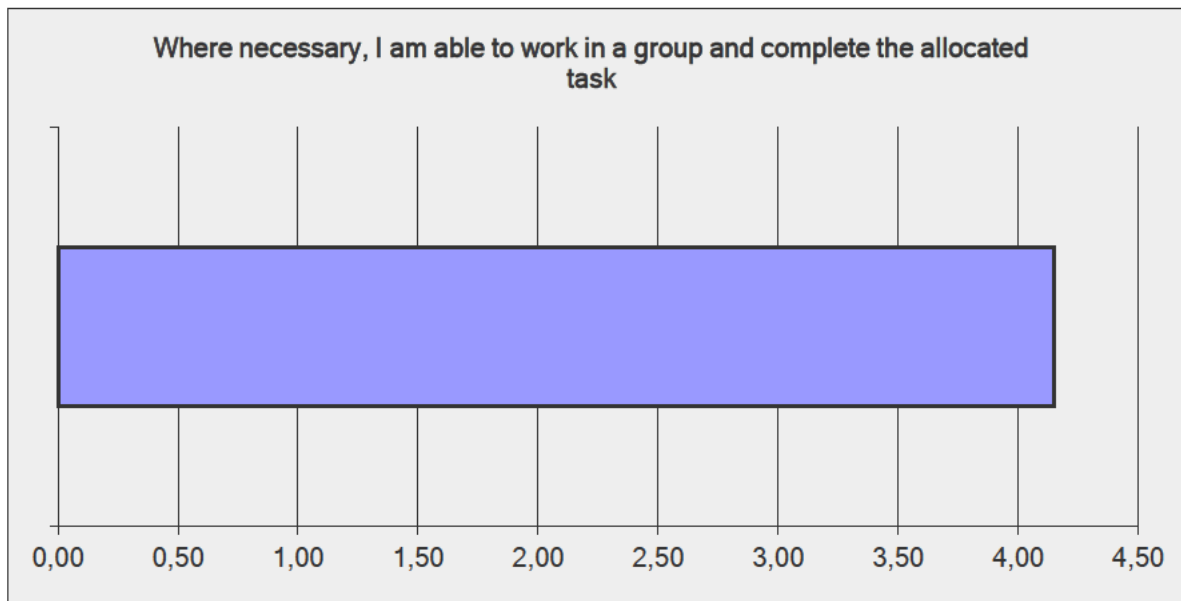


Figure 4.15: Task division – Group work (Quantitative survey)

In total 11 agreed, whilst 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 2 out of 13 did not claim to be able to work in a group and complete the allocated task where necessary.

Q17. Task division minimises the magnitude of an assessment.

Table 4.16: Task division – Assessment (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
1	0	1	9	2	3.85	13	5

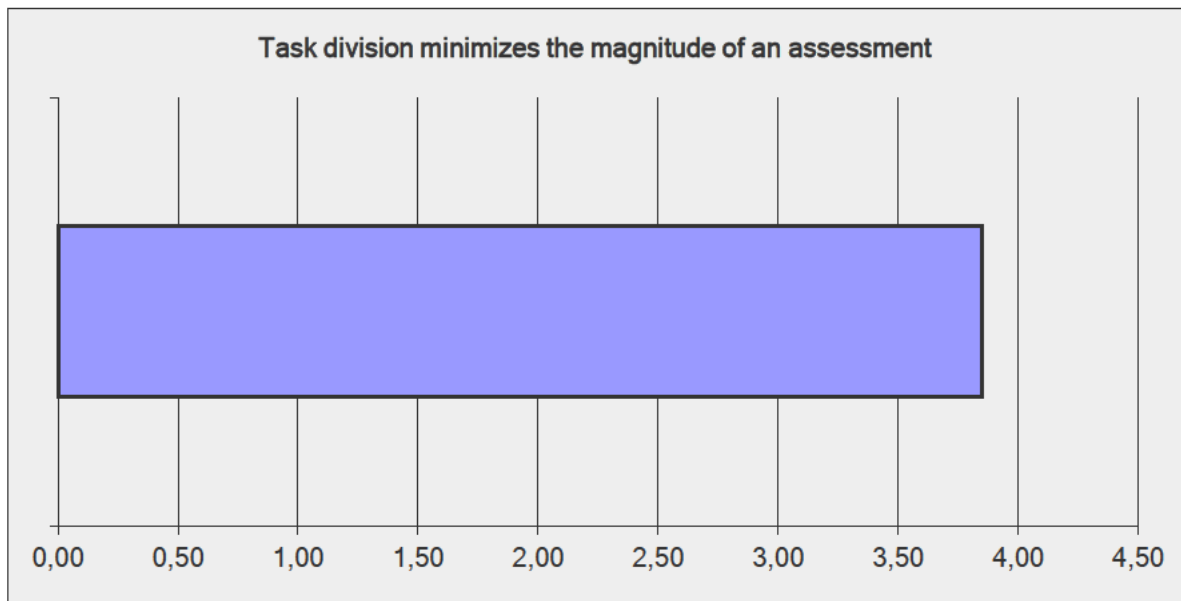


Figure 4.16: Task division – Assessment (Quantitative survey)

In total 11 agreed, whilst 1 disagreed and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 2 out of 13 did not claim that task division minimises the magnitude of an assessment.

Q18. I make use of a planner to ensure that task divisions are completed by the stipulated date.

Table 4.17: Task division – Planner (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
1	4	2	5	1	3.08	13	5

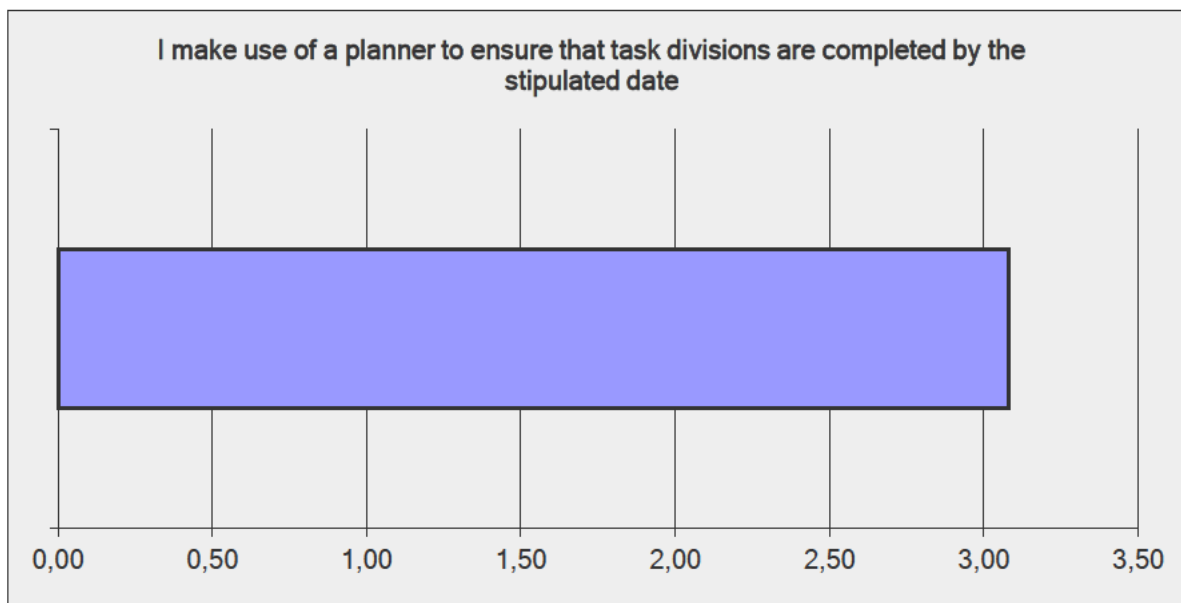


Figure 4.17: Task division – Planner (Quantitative Survey)

In total 6 agreed, whilst 5 did not and 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 7 out of 13 did not claim to make use of a planner to ensure that task divisions are completed by the stipulated date.

4.3.4 Goal setting

Q19. I consider myself to be a goal-driven individual.

Table 4.18: Goal setting – Individual (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	1	5	6	4.42	12	6

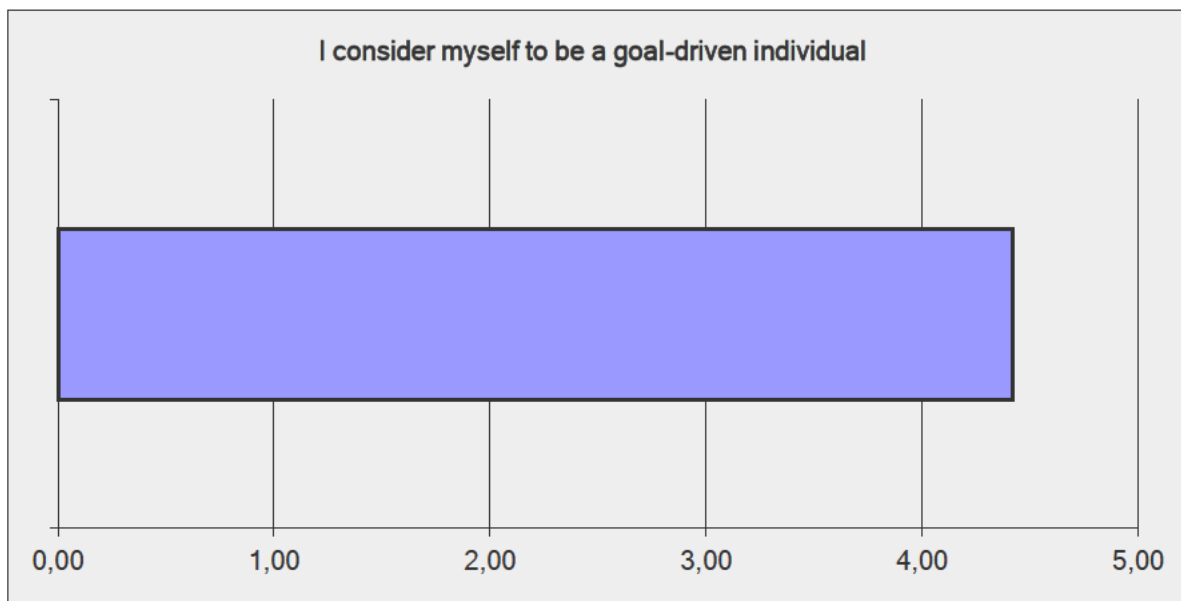


Figure 4.18: Goal setting – Individual (Quantitative survey)

In total 11 agreed whilst 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 1 out of 12 did not claim to be a goal-driven individual.

Q20. I rely on self-motivation rather than lecturer persistence to complete tasks.

Table 4.19: Goal setting – Self-motivation (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	1	5	6	4.42	12	6

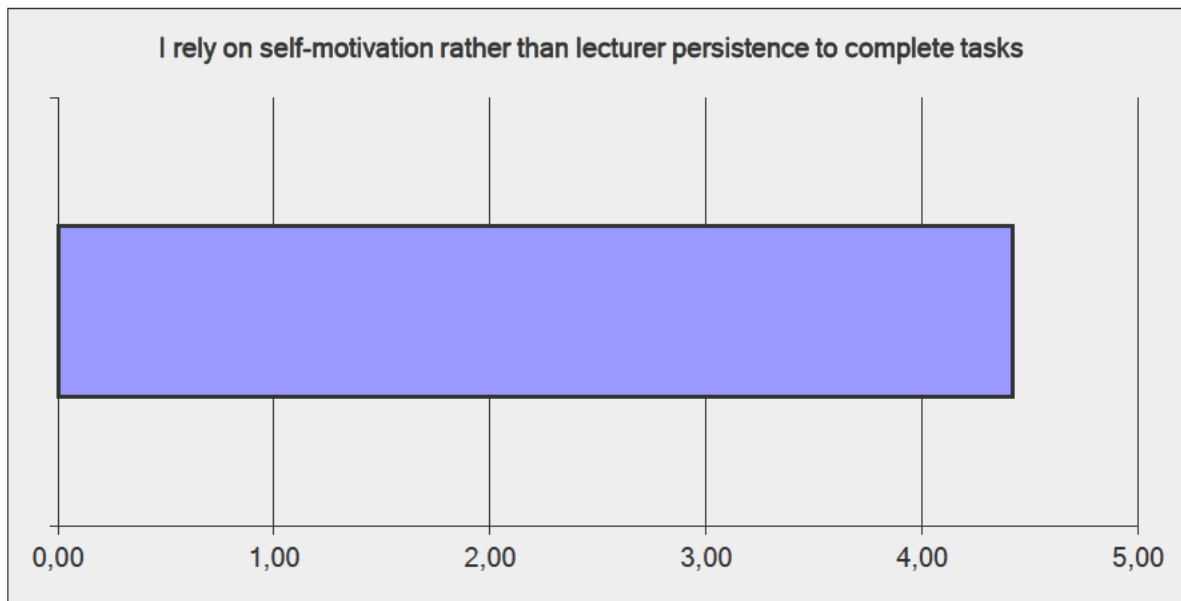


Figure 4.19: Goal setting – Self-motivation (Quantitative survey)

In total 11 agreed whilst 1 did not express an opinion. Therefore 1 out of 12 did not claim to rely on self-motivation rather than lecturer persistence to complete tasks.

Q21. My current registration is in line with the career goals I have decided for myself.

Table 4.20: Goal setting – Registration (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
1	0	0	3	8	4.42	12	6

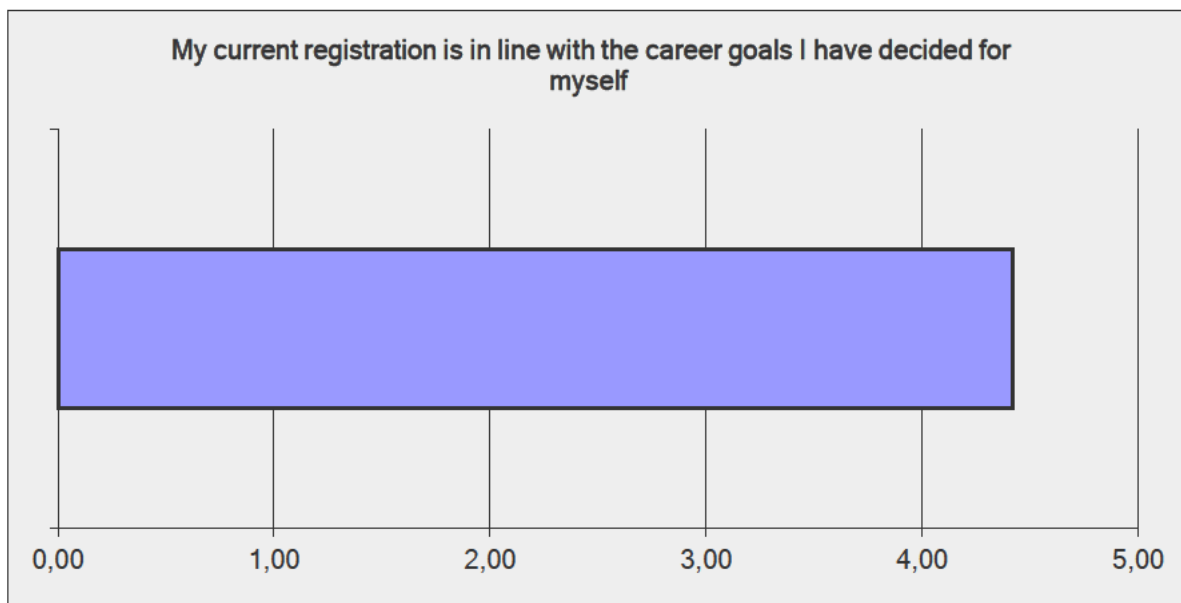


Figure 4.20: Goal setting – Registration (Quantitative survey)

In total 11 agreed whilst 1 did not. Thus 1 of out 12 did not claim that their current registration was in line with the career goals that they had decided.

Q22. I set my own goals and re-evaluate these periodically to ensure successful completion.

Table 4.21: Goal setting – Re-evaluation (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	0	2	8	2	4.00	12	6

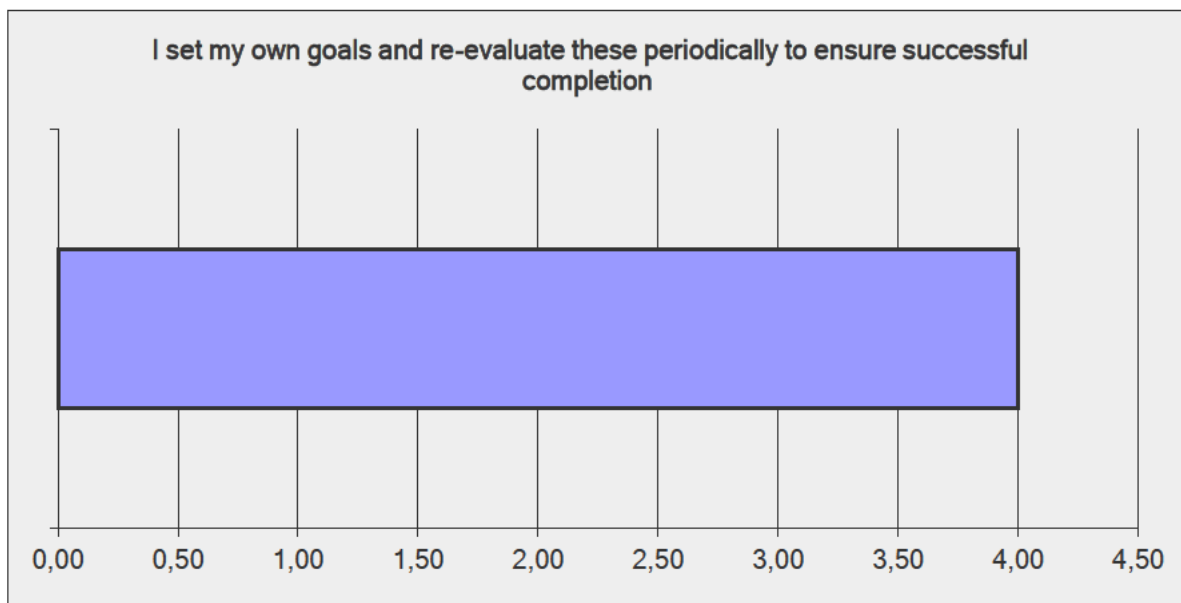


Figure 4.21: Goal setting – Re-evaluation (Quantitative survey)

In total 10 agreed whilst 2 did not express an opinion. Thus 2 out of 12 did not claim to set their own goals and re-evaluate them periodically to ensure successful completion.

4.3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Q23. I need someone to constantly monitor and evaluate my progress e.g. a lecturer.

Table 4.22 Monitoring and evaluation – Lecturer (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
2	4	1	3	2	2.92	12	6

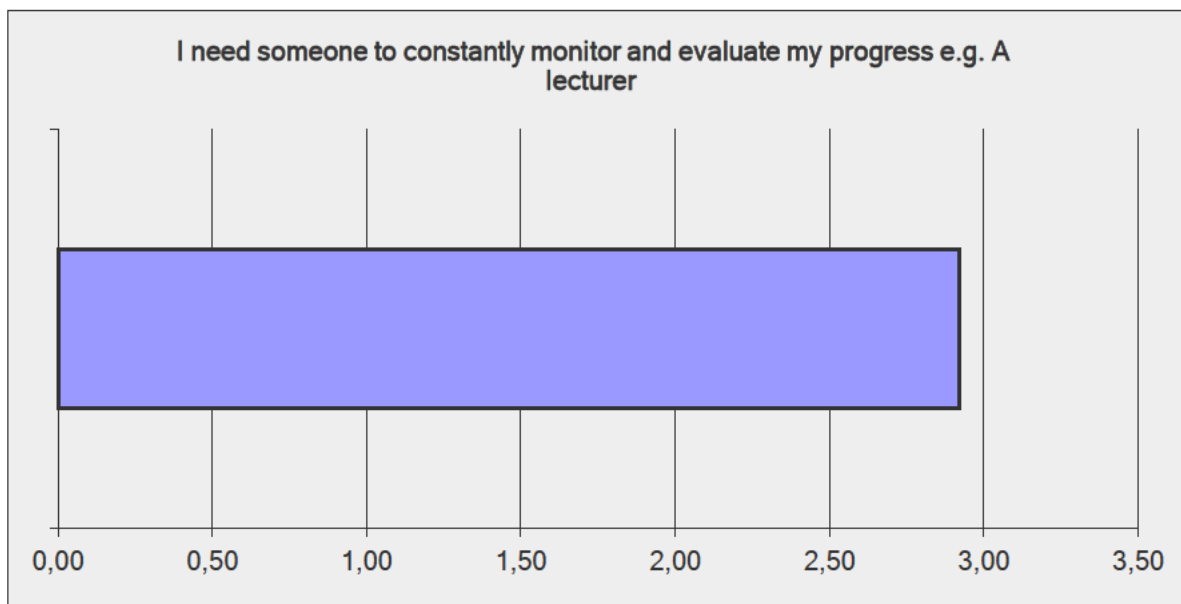


Figure 4.22: Monitoring and evaluation – Lecturer (Quantitative survey)

In total 5 agreed, whilst 6 did not and 1 did not express an opinion. Thus 7 out of 12 did not claim to need someone to constantly monitor and evaluate their progress.

Q24. Monitoring and evaluation are essential for academic success.

Table 4.23: Monitoring and evaluation – Academic success (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	2	0	6	4	4.00	12	6

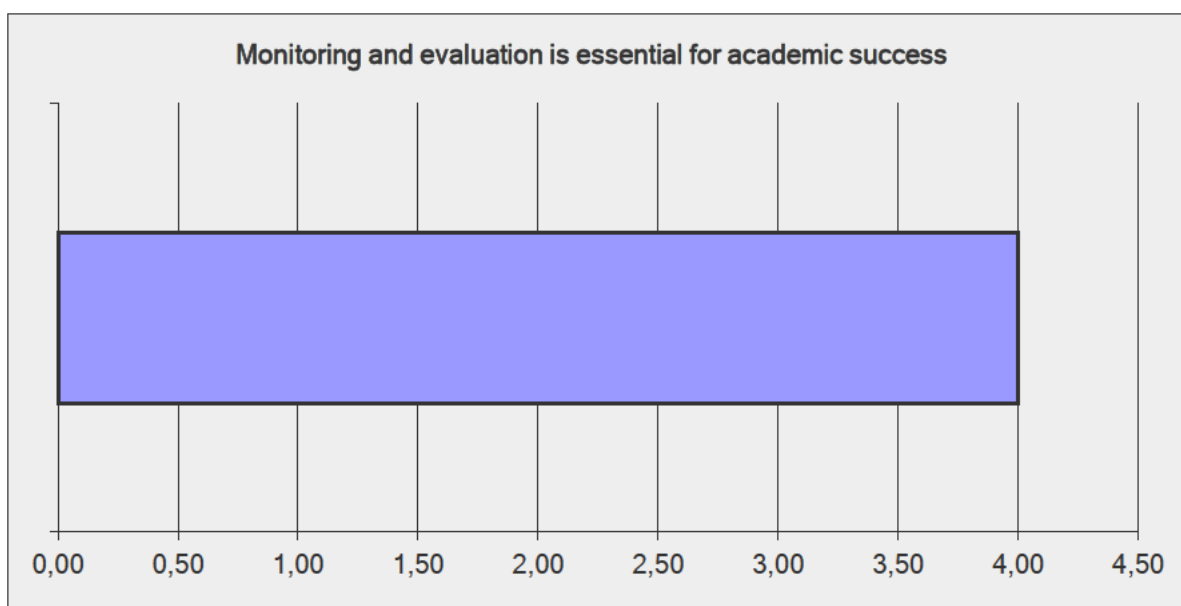


Figure 4.23: Monitoring and evaluation – Academic success (Quantitative survey)

In total 10 agreed whilst 2 did not. Thus 2 out of 12 did not claim that monitoring and evaluation is essential for academic success.

Q25. I often complete self-assessment tasks to ensure that I am on track with the module.

Table 4.24: Monitoring and evaluation – Self-assessment tasks (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
0	5	0	6	1	3.25	12	6

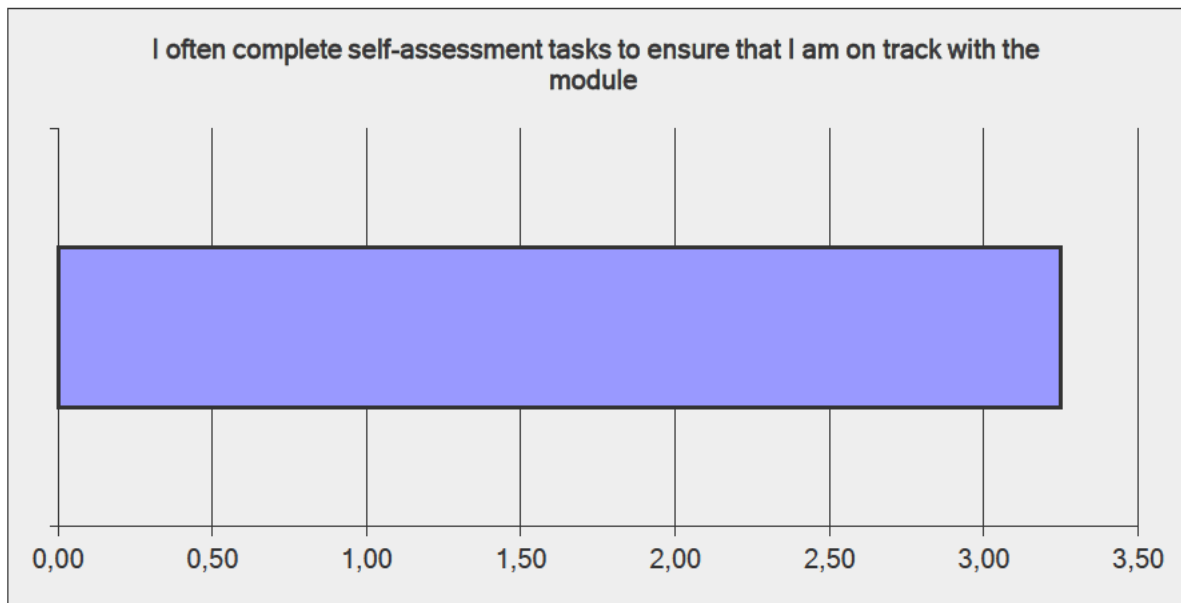


Figure 4.24: Monitoring and evaluation – Self-assessment tasks (Quantitative survey)

In total 7 agreed whilst 5 did not. Thus 5 out of 12 did not claim to often complete self-assessment tasks to ensure that they are on track with the module.

Q26. Monitoring is not a feature of postgraduate studies.

Table 4.25: Monitoring and evaluation – Postgraduate studies (Response schedule – Quantitative)

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	Average score	Total responses	Skipped
2	2	5	2	1	2.83	12	6

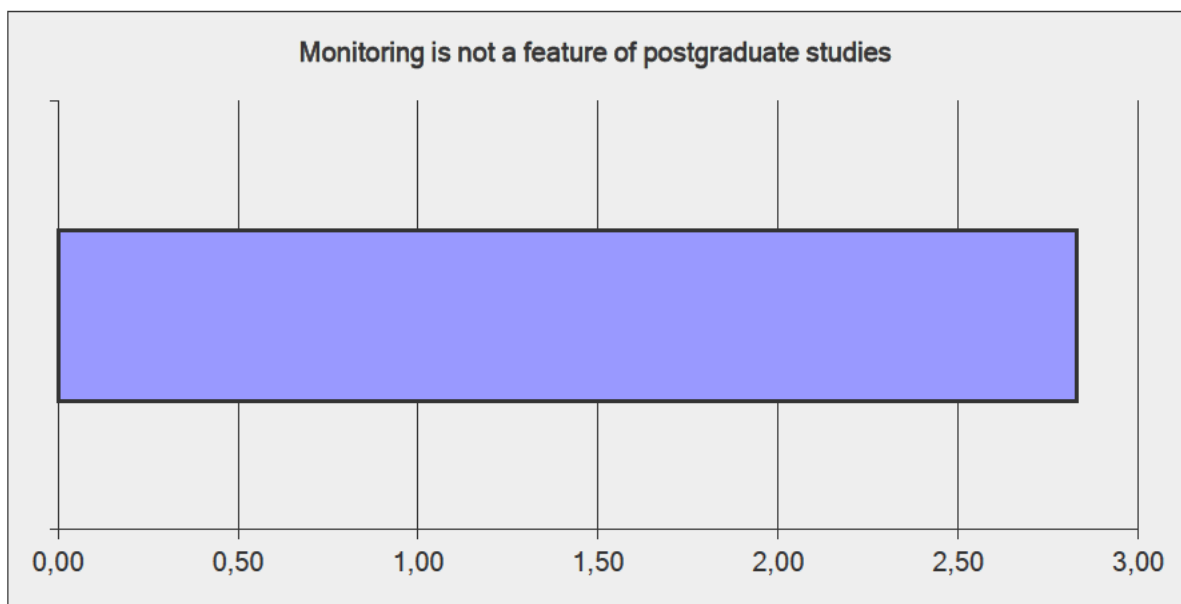


Figure 4.25: Monitoring and evaluation – Postgraduate studies (Quantitative survey)

In total 3 agreed, whilst 4 did not and 5 did not express an opinion. Thus 9 out of 12 did not claim that monitoring is a feature of postgraduate studies.

QUALITATIVE SURVEY

4.4 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

4.4.1 Gender

Are you male or female?

Table 4.26: Gender (Qualitative survey)

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
Male	33.3	5
Female	66.7	10

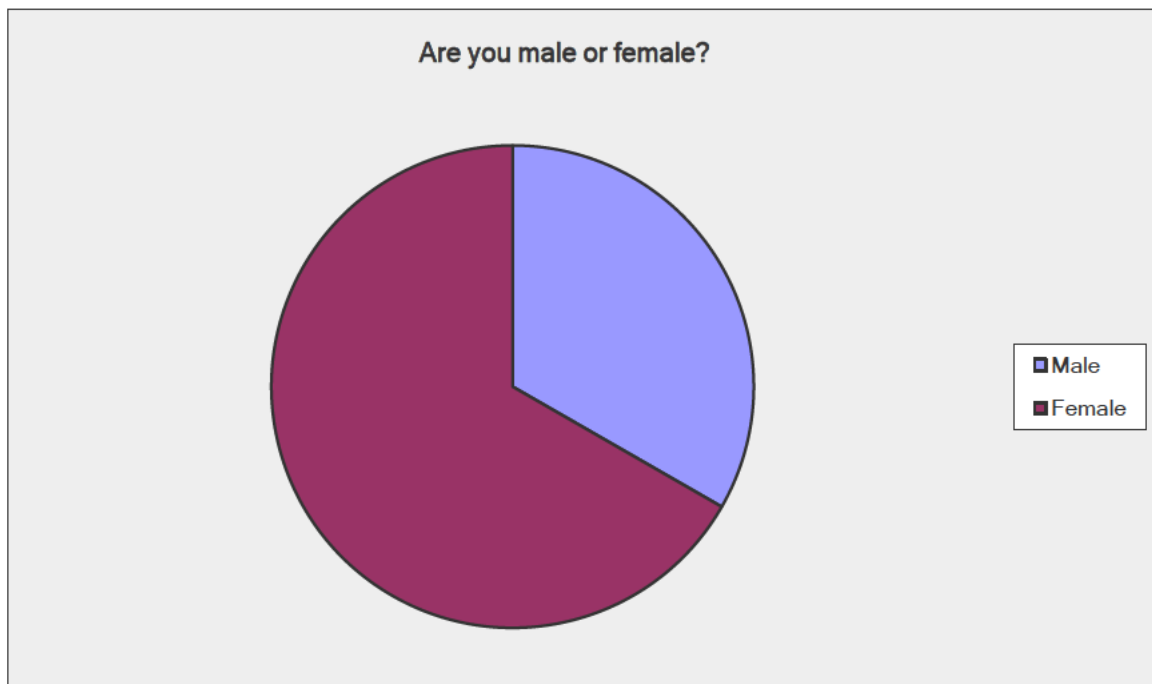


Figure 4.26: Gender (Qualitative survey)

The total number of respondents for this question was 15 out of the desired sample of 10 for the qualitative aspect which does provide a greater degree of confidence in terms of the results.

4.4.2 Age

What is your age?

Table 4.27: Age (Qualitative survey)

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
18 to 24	20.0%	3
25 to 34	40.0%	6
35 to 44	20.0%	3
45 to 54	20.0%	3
55 to 64	0.0%	0
65 to 74	0.0%	0
75 or older	0.0%	0

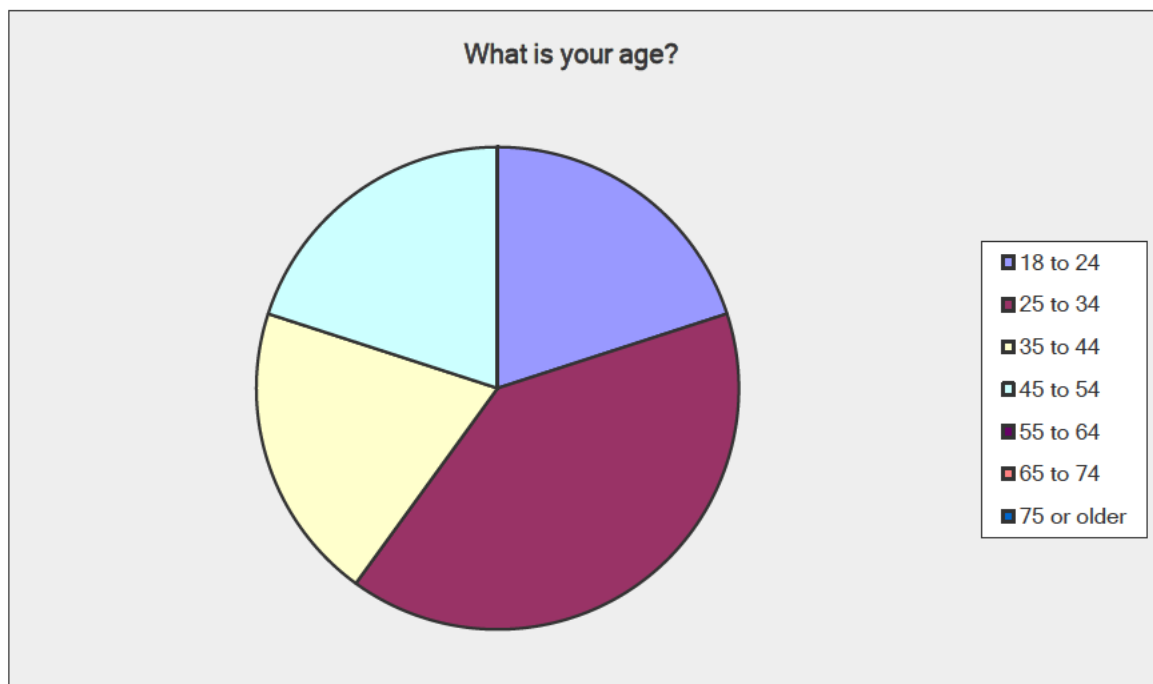


Figure 4.27: Age (Qualitative survey)

4.4.3 Student status

Are you a Master's postgraduate student at UKZN?

Table 4.28: Student status (Qualitative survey)

Answer options	Response percentage	Response count
Yes, full time student at UKZN	37.5%	6
Yes, part time student at UKZN	62.5%	10
No, I am not enrolled as a postgraduate student at UKZN	0.0%	0

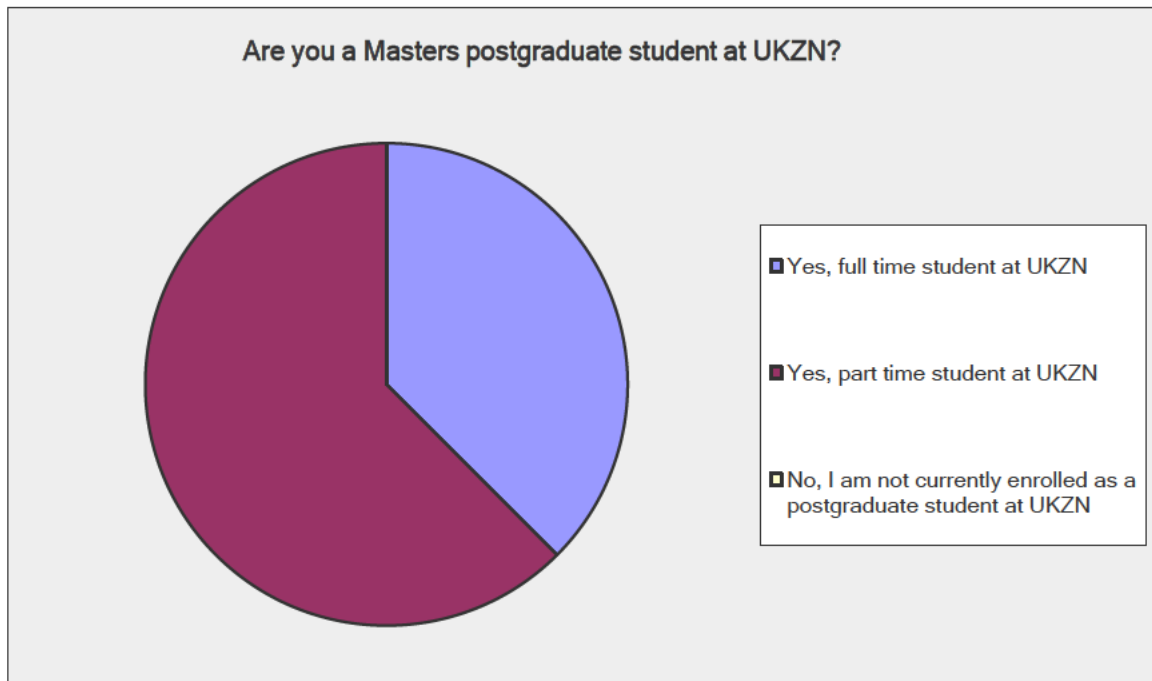


Figure 4.28: Student status (Qualitative survey)

4.4.4 Course

For which course are you enrolled?

15 students were enrolled for the Master of Commerce degree.

4.4.5 Faculty and campus

Indicate your faculty and campus.

15 students are registered at the UKZN Westville campus.

4.5 FINDINGS

4.5.1 Prioritisation

Q7. How does prioritisation influence students' self-management during postgraduate studies?

8 students responded to this question. The first respondent believed that it was important to self-manage as most learning at a postgraduate level takes place beyond the classroom. Respondent 2 stated that it helped one figure out what was important and placed emphasis on the tasks at hand. Respondent 3 believed it was everything and you had to be disciplined to take on extra work. Respondent 4 stated that it helped to keep priorities in order so there was a known goal. Respondent 5 asserted that without prioritisation of time, studies would fail. Respondent 6 agreed that prioritisation was an essential component of postgraduate studies as the actual course content expects a lot of tasks to be completed during a single semester. Respondent 7 stated that it was very influential as it affected completion within a specified timeline. Respondent 8 believed that it helped to complete your postgraduate degree on time.

4.5.2 Planning

Q8. What is the role of planning in students' self-management during their postgraduate studies?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that without planning your studies won't be a success. Respondent 2 believed it helped to set your own goals and follow them through. Respondent 3 stated that planning allowed for students to set out their tasks with a deadline in mind. Respondent 4 asserted that planning each aspect of the studies is crucial to the success of the studies. Respondent 5 believed that planning allowed for the student to have a set schedule of activities to perform in order for tasks to be completed within a specific time frame. Respondent 6 stated that it involved being able to plan, organise and prioritise effectively and efficiently. Respondent 7 stated that it gave an outlay of what could be achieved in a reasonable space of time. Respondent 8 stated that planning was important when trying to reach a particular objective. Respondent 9 stated that planning is pivotal in order to reach ultimate success.

4.5.3 Task division

Q9. To what extent does breaking activities into small components influence students' self-management during their studies?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that smaller tasks create a greater sense of accomplishment. Respondent 2 believed that dismantling activities assisted in understanding the content. Respondent 3 stated that it was important to take on small activities and work slowly towards it. Respondent 4 asserted that breaking down the task enabled the individual to work towards small targets and then piece everything together as a final product. Respondent 5 stated that project management was needed to ensure that milestones and timelines were achieved. Respondent 6 believed that by breaking activities into small pieces it would enable students to have a deeper understanding of what was required. Respondent 7 confirmed that it made activities manageable. Respondent 8 stated that it helped to open up your mind and to share ideas with others. Respondent 9 believed that it helped to achieve more cognisance of the study material.

4.5.4 Goal setting

Q10. How does goal setting influence students' self-management during their studies?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that it motivated them. Respondent 2 confirmed that it motivated them and allowed them to monitor their progress. Respondent 3 believed that goal setting created determination and focus. Respondent 4 argued that a strong focus on completion of the qualification would drive achievement of individual milestones. Respondent 5 stated that goal setting was important and very effective when followed. Respondent 6 believed that it served as a direction and indication of the steps that needed to be taken. Respondent 7 confirmed that objectives to goals brought the student closer to achieving them. Respondent 8 stated that all students at a postgraduate level had goals in mind. Respondent 9 believed that goal setting provided a sense of direction in your studies.

4.5.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Q11. To what extent do monitoring and evaluation influence students' self-management during their studies?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that reflection is important to ascertain whether the method or tasks being completed would result in the goal being achieved. Respondent 2 said that checking on their progress and subsequent testing would help to evaluate their progress. Respondent 3 said that this was vital as all students needed guidance and direction. Respondent 4 confirmed that it allowed for there to be a process whereby monitoring allowed self-management to be positive. Respondent 5 asserted that failing to monitor and evaluate progress would result in missing deadlines and overall failure of the students. Respondent 6 believed that by monitoring and evaluating and individual would be able to identify their strong points and weaknesses. Respondent 7 said that it determined progress. Respondent 8 stated that it was where you could prove to yourself that you were in the right field. Respondent 9 believed that it provided them with a clear indication of whether or not they would reach their goal.

4.5.6 Challenges and strategies in postgraduate studies

Q12. Describe any personal challenges that you experienced during your postgraduate studies.

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that it was a challenge to manage time for work and studies. Respondent 2 believed that challenge was with the small gap between exam dates. Respondent 3 asserted that working and studying at the same time was a challenge. Respondent 4 confirmed that after being retrenched and then starting a new job posed a challenge to the timeous completion of his studies. Respondent 5 said that the challenges were time and self-management as well as prioritisation. Respondent 6 stated that miscommunication and the interruption of protests resulted in no classes and less usage of facilities. Respondent 7 stated that juggling work and school was a challenge. Respondent 8 stated that time management and finding suitable research articles posed a challenge. Respondent 9 believed that the protest action on campus had posed a challenge as classes were missed and subsequently contributed to poor academic performance and non-completion of studies.

Q13. With reference to question 12 above, what strategies did you employ to overcome these challenges?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 said that they had to self-manage and do extra work. Respondent 2 stated that they had to ensure they received enough rest and a shift in focus also kept them elevated. Respondent 3 stated that having a plan of action and prioritising work was an effective strategy. Respondent 4 confirmed that they started to work more efficiently. Respondent 5 started re-focusing on goals and priorities. Respondent 6 confirmed that they set earlier deadlines for themselves. Respondent 7 stated that they dedicated themselves to work hard and pass the exams. Respondent 8 set time apart to focus exclusively on studies. Respondent 9 prioritised their studies and used the Howard Campus library to complete the research proposal.

4.5.7 The role of the lecturer

Q14. What is the role of the lecturer (if any) in student success and subsequent throughput rates?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that lecturers should monitor and encourage. Respondent 2 stated that the lecturer must show dedication and support by means

of notes, videos and examples. Respondent 3 believed that the lecturer was the subject matter expert. Respondent 4 said that the lecturer played an absolutely essential role in the success and throughput rates for part time students. Respondent 5 stated that a good foundation and understanding could be provided by the lecturer. Respondent 6 believed the role of the lecturer was minimal at a master's level. Respondent 7 believed that the lecturer was there to unpack the theory into practical knowledge. Respondent 8 confirmed that the lecturers did play a role in terms of guidance, advice and knowledge on a particular subject. Respondent 9 confirmed that lecturer support would result in a phenomenal throughput rate.

4.5.8 Motivation

Q15. Describe the role of motivation as a contributing factor towards postgraduate studies.

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 believed that it was important to be motivated during postgraduate studies or else students would fall behind. Respondent 2 confirmed that motivation in postgraduate studies was everything to completing the course. Respondent 3 confirmed that they were highly motivated to complete their M. Comm degree. Respondent 4 stated that motivation from peers, lecturers and family played a major role. Respondent 5 cited intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as the driving forces behind completing their studies. Respondent 6 confirmed that motivation was imperative. Respondent 7 confirmed that without motivation the degree would have remained incomplete. Respondent 8 believed it was essential as it encouraged them to continue with the degree. Respondent 9 confirmed that self-motivation contributed to the attainment of goals and subsequent achievement.

4.5.9 Self-management in postgraduate studies

Q16. Are there any additional comments that you would like to share on the topic of self-management in postgraduate studies?

9 students responded to this question. Respondent 1 stated that there should be a manner to share effective tools. Respondent 2 believed that tutors were required to assist students especially with Masters' studies. Respondent 3 had no comment. Respondent 4 believed that the University needed to do more to ensure that supervisors were equipped to handle the competing demands of working students. Respondent 5 opted not to answer. Respondent 6 had no further comments to make. Respondent 7 added that timing of events was paramount. Respondent 8 concluded by stating that self-management needed to be instilled into all

postgraduate students. Respondent 9 confirmed that self-management was of extreme importance when achieving pre-determined goals.

4.6 MIXED-METHOD DATA ANALYSIS

4.6.1 Demographics

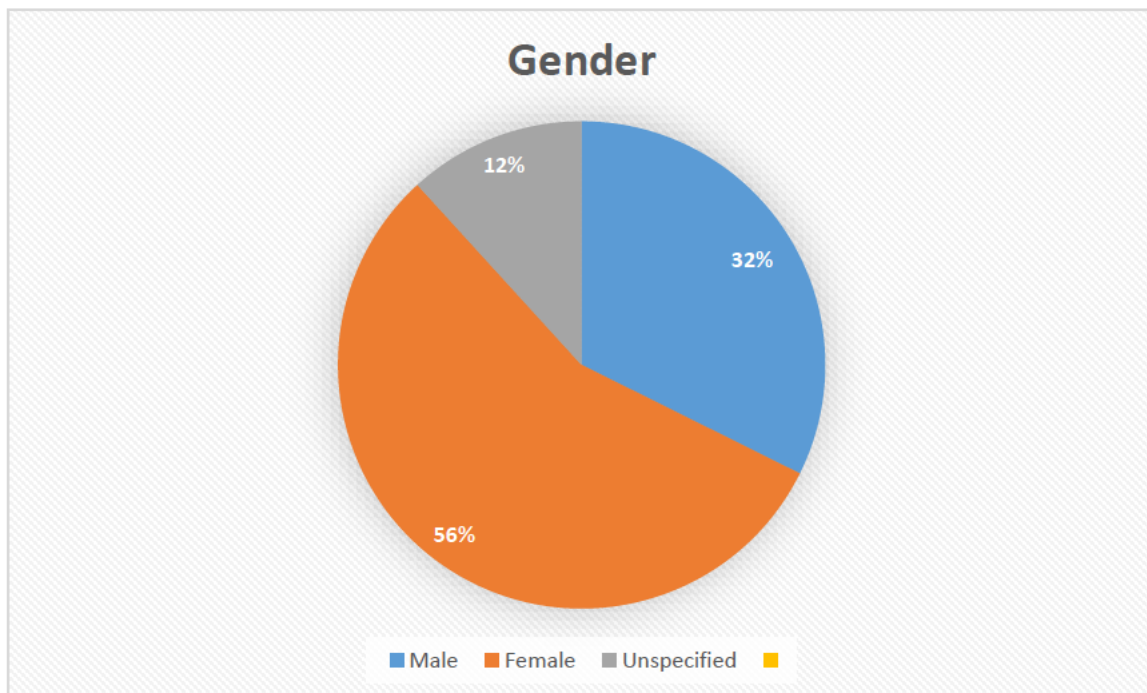


Figure 4.29: Gender (Mixed methods)

The survey respondents comprised 11 males and 19 females whilst four individuals remained unspecified. From this it can be deduced that females were the dominant respondents for the survey.

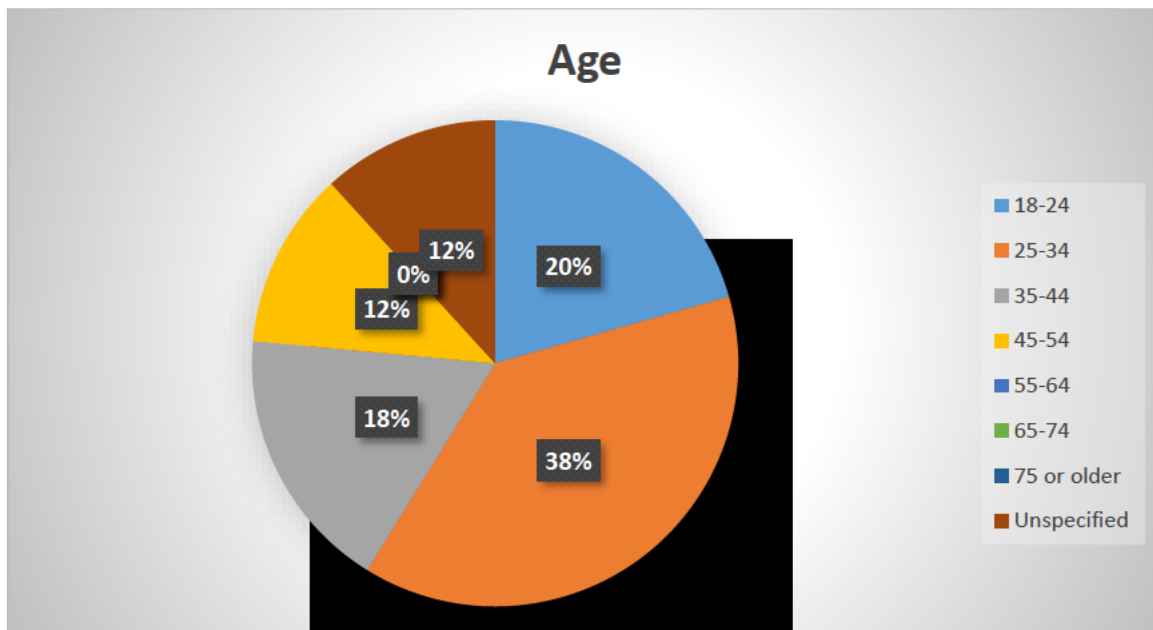


Figure 4.30: Age (Mixed methods)

In the age category of 18-24 there were seven respondents, in the category of 25-34 there were 13 respondents and in the category of 35-44 there were six respondents. In the next category of 45-54 there were four respondents whilst four respondents did not specify their age category.

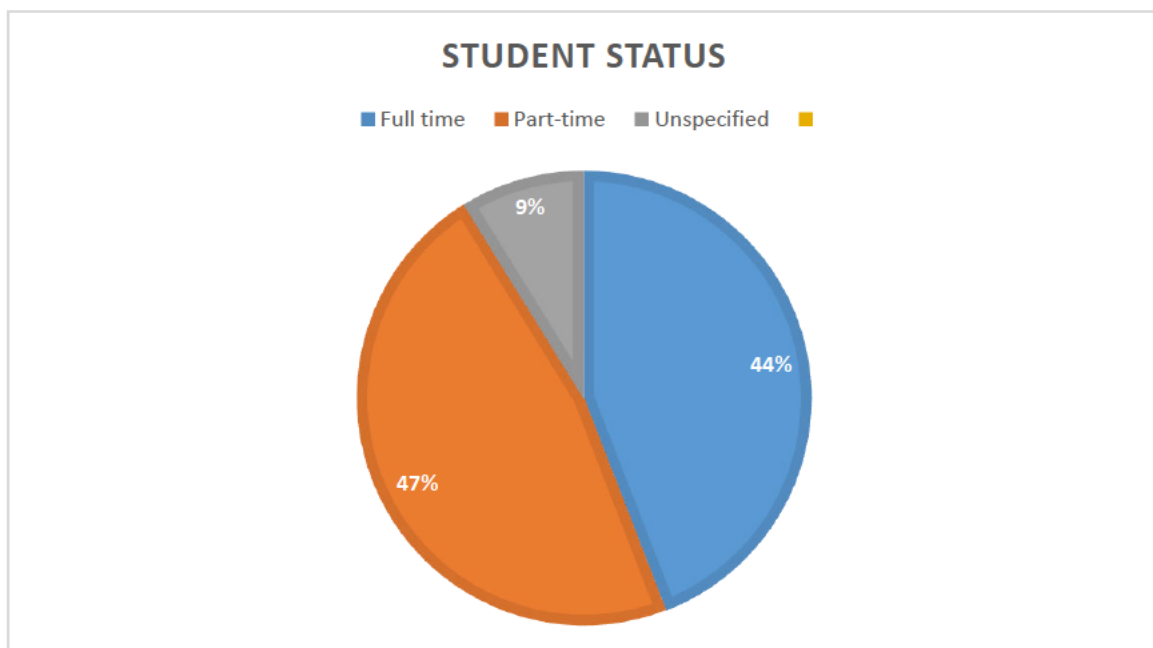


Figure 4.31: Student status (Mixed methods)

There are 15 full-time students, 16 part time and three that did not specify their status.

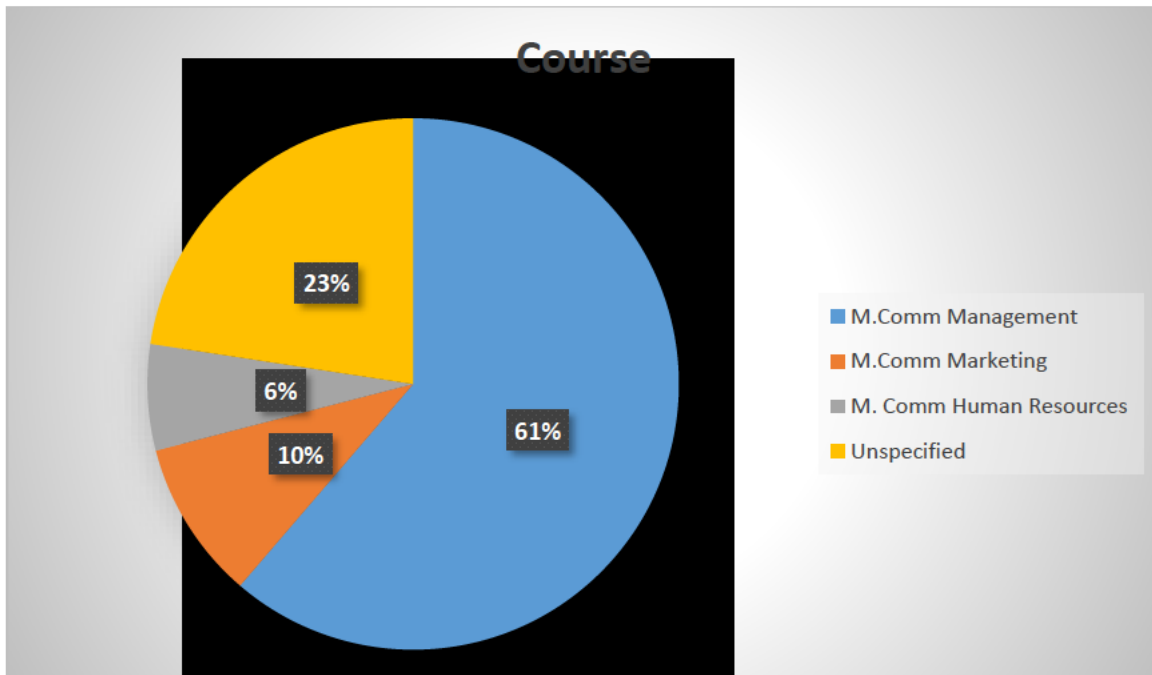


Figure 4.32: Course (Mixed methods)

Based on the results, 19 respondents are registered for M. Comm Management, three are registered for M. Comm Marketing, three are registered for M. Comm HR whilst seven respondents remained unspecified about their selected major for the M. Comm degree.

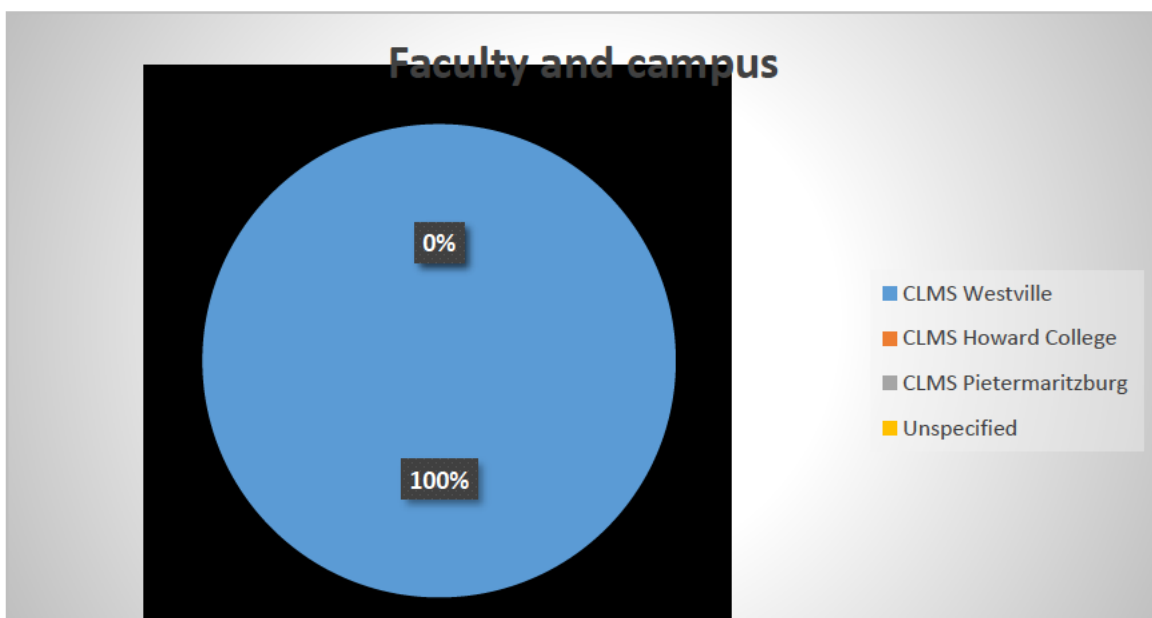


Figure 4.33: Faculty and campus (Mixed methods)

The results showed that 30 students are registered at CLMS Westville.

4.6.2 Thematic analysis

4.6.2.1 Prioritisation

Question: How does prioritisation influence students' self-management during postgraduate studies?

Tollefson (2000) believes that students will devote time and effort to a task if they believe that they can complete the task and if the rewards associated with completion are worth their while. If there is perceived value, the task will feature high on their list of prioritisation. There is consensus between the existing literature on prioritisation and the results that were obtained from the study. Students believe that prioritising has a significant impact on their studies.

Prioritisation is key to managing studies at postgraduate level and the views of the students supported that view. Respondent 1 stated: - "It is important to self-manage as most learning at a postgraduate level takes place beyond the classroom. Postgraduate studies revolve around research." An important statement was made by a student regarding postgraduate studies. The student believes that learning takes place beyond the classroom and postgraduate studies involve research. By referring to learning outside the classroom, we are drawn to the concept of notional hours per credits. For example, 12 credits are equal to 120 notional hours, and the required hours cannot be timetabled as lectures. Therefore, students are required to engage in active revision on their own to ensure that they are meeting the required standards for the module.

Prioritising can also provide direction and focus. Respondent 2 stated: "It helps one figure out what's important and places emphasis on the tasks at hand". Often when embarking on studies at this level, there are multiple tasks and activities that are due and require immediate attention. By prioritising, it becomes easier to focus on the tasks that require immediate attention.

Postgraduate studies also involve discipline. Students need to be self-disciplined as lecturers are not going to take responsibility in the event that students default on their attendance or performance. Therefore, a proactive approach is required on the part of the student. Respondent 3 had the following view on prioritisation. "It is everything, you have to be disciplined to take on extra work to understand exactly what you want to achieve".

Goal setting also factors into postgraduate studies and by prioritising, the approach that needs to be followed to achieve goals becomes clearer. Respondent 4 stated that “It keeps priorities in order so there is a known goal and there is a clear path on how it is to be reached”.

It is a known fact that part-time studies require a considerable amount of dedication as well as time management. Lectures are usually scheduled in the evenings and students are often required to juggle the responsibilities of a full-time job and as family as well. Respondent 5 supports this view by stating that “The complexities of part time studies are great. All facets of personal, academic and professional life need to be prioritized in terms of time. Studies being part time are energy sapping and are usually allocated time at the extremes of the day, when you are least productive. Without prioritisation of time, studies will fail”. Considering the aforementioned response, it would be a worthwhile activity to consider the productivity levels of students in the evenings versus scheduling lectures on a Saturday morning.

Assessments are given across the board for a range of different modules, each with its own requirements and deadlines. In this regard, Respondent 6 believes that “Prioritisation is an essential component of postgraduate studies as the actual course content expects a lot of tasks to be completed during a single semester”. Therefore, prioritisation will allow for time management and the ability to complete given assessment tasks in the required amount of time. A semester may seem like a short space of time to compress all the work that needs to be done for a Master’s level qualification: however, with proper time management it can be done. As stated by Respondent 7, “It is very influential as it affects completion within specified timelines” and Respondent 8 stated that “It helps to complete your postgrad on time”.

In addition, most students believe they are highly organised and structured. Therefore, they are able to prioritise the various commitments in their studies and manage the challenges in their studies since academic issues feature quite high on their list of priorities. At this level of study, it was discovered that students understand the complexities of and requirements for postgraduate study. Students are therefore able to balance the various commitments in their lives and ensure that they are fulfilling the requirements for studies at this level. There was a high degree of self-efficacy amongst the students who participated in this study indicating that the potential for academic achievement may be high as well.

4.6.2.2 Planning

Question: What is the role of planning in students' self-management during their postgraduate studies?

Onyekuru and Njoku (2015) postulate that awareness of self, promotes self-regulation. By having a greater knowledge of self, students will be able to plan accordingly to ensure that they meet their individual learning objectives. The results of this study reflect current literature on planning as students have confirmed the importance of planning. A few of the respondents had confirmed that they are aware of their limitations and have drafted strategies to minimise the threat of the limitation.

Planning is essential in all facets of life but more especially for postgraduate studies. Failure to plan may result in the task seeming insurmountable and unattainable. Respondent 1 believes that "To reach a particular objective, it is important to plan. Each student should have a plan and work diligently towards achieving their goals". Planning helps to achieve objectives and by each student having a distinct plan of action, it will ensure that they are on the right track to achieving their goals.

Respondent 2 stated that planning "...gives you an outlay of what can be achieved in reasonable time". There are multiple demands on our time, and students engaging in part-time studies whilst being committed to a full-time job experience the greatest strain on their time. By planning, students can pace themselves to achieve their goals within a specified time frame and assign reasonable allocation of their time to each aspect of their lives. In addition, Respondent 5 states that "Planning each aspect of the studies is crucial to the success of the studies".

Respondent 3 states "... being able to plan, organise and prioritise effectively and efficiently...". Planning is seen to be linked directly with organisation and prioritisation. The link between planning and prioritisation is confirmed by Respondent 6 who stated that "Planning allows for students to set out their tasks together with a deadline. Planning and prioritisation work together".

By planning, the efficiency of operations may be improved. It is commonly understood that a task that is done in haste may not be indicative of the quality of work that the individual is able to produce. Being pressurised for time also increases the chances of errors. Therefore, planning

is an essential aspect in studies. In support of the argument for planning, Respondent 4 believes that “Planning allows for me to have a set schedule of activities to perform in order for tasks to be completed in a specific time frame”.

Planning has also been extremely useful with goal setting. Respondent 7 believes that planning helps with “.... setting goals and following them through”. Having a plan of action assists in achieving the goals that one has set for oneself.

Respondent 8 states that “Without planning your studies, it won’t be a success”. From this statement, we can deduce that the respondent has committed him or herself to a plan but more importantly, believes those who do not plan will not be successful in their studies. The argument is supported by Respondent 9 who believes that “Planning is pivotal in order to reach your ultimate goal of success. A study plan is crucial to enhance self-management, and this contributes to effective time management”. Whilst lecture timetables are issued to students at the start of a semester, actual guidelines and assistance with a study timetable are often not provided. This requires that the students draft their own timetables and commit to them. The responsibility of commitment to a timetable or a planned course of action rests solely on the student him or herself. It is at this point that the students are required to have a heightened sense of self-awareness in terms of their study patterns and learning styles. In doing so, the student are then able to draft the most effective study plan for the academic goals.

Most students complete assessments ahead of the time and adopt a systematic approach to lectures and the schedule of work. Examination revision is done at least two weeks before the examination date and students have a balanced approach towards work and studies. The study revealed that the majority of students have an organised approach to their studies and commit themselves to an active revision and study programme. The respondents also confirmed that they are aware of the demands of a postgraduate qualification and therefore seek to maintain a balanced approach towards work and studies. It can be argued that this approach can be seen as the basis for a positive approach towards lectures, examinations and the course itself. Planning and time management are essential when trying to meet the requirements of the various facets in a student’s life. By working in advance and planning accordingly, the stress that is associated with last minute submissions can be avoided. In doing so, the overall quality of the final product may also be improved.

4.6.2.3 Task division

Question: To what extent does breaking activities into smaller components influence students' self-management during their studies?

Dirksen (2012) suggests that there is significance in determining a goal and then deciding on the various sub-tasks that should be performed to achieve the goal. Similarly, a huge task can be extremely daunting when looking at it in its entirety. Existing literature supports the concept of task division. The respondents of this study not only support task division but also indicated that there is a sense of accomplishment when completing the smaller sub-tasks. It motivated them to achieve the final goal.

Dividing a task into smaller sections can help to reduce the perceived magnitude of the work. Respondent 1 stated that “Smaller tasks create a greater sense of accomplishment and provide motivation. Breaking activities into smaller pieces creates the impression that progress has been made.” From this statement it can be deduced that students feel better about completing the smaller sub-sections which in turn motivates them towards achieving the final end result. The sense of achievement when completing the smaller tasks in turn provides the incentive for completion.

Respondent 2 believes that “Dismantling activities assists in understanding the content”. Often, students are given a task to complete and instead of highlighting the various sub-sections, they are more inclined to experience a sense of being overwhelmed by looking at the overall task. Respondent 2 has confirmed that looking at activities separately will assist the student in understanding the content as well as the expectations of the task. In addition, Respondent 9 believes that “When you break activities into smaller pieces one can achieve more cognizance of the study material. It can be overwhelming and challenging when you do not break activities into smaller pieces”.

Respondent 3 states that task division implies “...being able to carefully manage the workload. Taking small activities and working slowly on it to reach the end result.” Ultimately by breaking down the workload, the task sub-sections can be allocated over a number of weeks and as such, students will avoid the feeling of last-minute pressure.

Respondent 4 states that “Depending on the enormity of the activity, breaking down the task enables the individual to work towards small targets and then piece everything together as a

final product.” In doing so, there is greater accountability on the part of the students as they are responsible for compiling the final product. Not only will they be responsible for deciding on the particular sub-divisions, but execution will also be part of their responsibilities.

Respondent 5 equated task division to project management by stating that “Project management is needed to ensure that timelines and milestones are achieved”. Just as project managers work with different facets of a project plan, in the same way students are required to ensure correlation of the different aspects in completing the tasks. Respondent 6 also confirmed that “By breaking activities into small pieces, it will enable students to have a deeper understanding of what is required”.

Respondent 7 believes that “It makes activities manageable” when students engage in task division. Psychologically, students will have a greater sense of self-efficacy since the activities are perceived to be more manageable and goals seem more attainable. Respondent 8 offered a different perspective by stating that “It helps open up your mind and learn to share ideas with others”. Ideas on task division can be shared with other students in the class which will help to build a community of learning.

The majority of students break tasks into smaller divisions and, if necessary, are able to work in groups. Students also agreed that task division minimised the magnitude of an assessment and they also made use of a planner to make sure that tasks were completed by the stipulated date. At this level of study, students have confirmed that they have the capabilities to break tasks into smaller components and are comfortable working in groups. Undoubtedly, the magnitude of a task can be minimised when the various aspects are broken down into smaller parts. Group work can also assist in reducing potential fear around the task by providing an opportunity for like-minded individuals to network and discuss their concerns on the issue.

4.6.2.4 Goal setting

Question: How does goal setting influence students’ self-management during their studies?

One of the most significant theories which have contributed to goal setting is the self-determination theory. Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo (2012) acknowledge that whilst students have different motivators, there is an underlying academic compass which is referred to as goals. There is congruence with the existing literature and the responses from the study.

Students have confirmed that there is an underlying goal motivating them to continue with their studies. It was also discovered that goal setting helps students to assess their individual performance in the course.

The process of goal setting involves an adequate knowledge of self. Self-knowledge will allow students to set attainable goals that are in line with the students' capabilities. Respondent 1 believes that "All students at a postgraduate level have goals in mind. It is the very reason that I am enrolled for this course". Registration for a course indicates a distinct desire to achieve a specific goal either from a career or personal perspective. A Master's level qualification involves a deeper inquiry into the relevant subject area. Respondent 2 believes that "Setting goals helps one achieve the work or study during the time. Objectives to goals brings me closer to achieving them". Goal setting will assist by ensuring that work is completed within the specified time frame. It will also allow for a successful throughput rate as the basic model of postgraduate studies is based on independent study. This requires a high level of self-management and discipline. Respondent 3 supports this argument by stating that "It is a huge difference in terms of reaching your end results; by setting your goals you are able to define what targets you need to meet to achieve that goal. It serves as a direction and indication of the steps you need to take."

Respondent 4: "Goal setting is important and very effective when followed. It allows for there to be a known path to a goal that is set be it a long-, short- or medium-term goal." Setting goals is only effective once the plan is followed through meticulously. As stated by Respondent 5, "A strong focus on completion of the qualification will drive achievements of individual milestones". A qualification only holds weight upon completion therefore the drive to complete the course is directly linked to the perceived personal and professional benefits that it can yield upon completion.

Respondent 6 believes that "Goal setting creates determination and focus. It allows for a positive end result and something to work towards." Setting goals is indicative of students with a higher degree of discipline towards their studies. It also assists by allowing students to direct their energies and focus on a positive end result. In addition, Respondent 7 states that "It motivates them and allows them to monitor progress." and these sentiments were supported by Respondent 8 who also confirmed that "It motivates them."

Respondent 9 states that “Goals need to be formulated to give you a sense of direction in your studies. Goal setting is crucial in planning on where and what to study.” There is a direct link between goal setting and planning. It determines academic direction and directly influences career choice as well.

The majority of students consider themselves to be goal driven and rely on self-motivation rather than lecturer persistence to complete tasks. Students also stated that their current registration is in line with the career goals that they had outlined for themselves. To enhance accountability, many students set their own goals and re-evaluate these periodically to ensure that they are achieved successfully. Students have indicated that they craft their own goals during their studies and the lecturer does not play a defining role in terms of their motivation. In addition, students have thought carefully about the careers that they wish to pursue after the qualification has been attained and the selected course will assist in helping them progress within their specific fields. It is reassuring to know that most students conduct periodic re-evaluations of their goals to ensure that they are keeping in line with their overall goals.

4.6.2.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Question: To what extent do monitoring and evaluation influence students’ self-management during their studies?

Whannell (2013) suggests that academic staff play a critical role in creating academic identity for students. This view has been supported by the respondents who have indicated that they have expectations from their lecturers. In addition, students have also confirmed that whilst they perform their own periodic evaluation of their progress, the summative assessment and evaluation at the end of the semester helps them to determine their progress in the module.

Monitoring and evaluation are features of studies at any level. They ensure that students are on track with their studies. Respondent 1, however, believes that “Reflection is important to ascertain whether the method/tasks being completed will result in the goal being achieved.” In making this statement, the respondent has now shifted the responsibility of academic performance to the student. In doing so, it increases student accountability and also minimises the dependence on monitoring. In addition, the student confirms that reflection will assist in measuring whether the assigned tasks will assist in achieving the overall goals.

Respondent 2 stated that “Checking on my study progress is important, testing after will evaluate my progress.” It can be noted that students accept responsibility for monitoring their own progress and regard the subsequent testing process as a method to evaluate the effectiveness of their inputs. In addition, Respondent 3 has supported this argument by stating that “This is vital, as all students need guidance and direction. By monitoring and evaluating a student, this helps with self-motivation and confidence in their ability to do well.” However, Respondent 3 has assigned responsibility to the lecturer or supervisor. Whilst a fair amount of guidance is provided by the lecturer, the onus still rests with the students to monitor and evaluate their performance at periodic intervals. The respondent also believes that monitoring will assist with self-motivation which will in turn influence their academic performance.

Respondent 4 believes that “It allows for there to be a process where monitoring allows self-management to be positive.” Allowing students to monitor and evaluate their own progress, encourages them to practise effective self-management. Respondent 5 confirms that, “Failing to monitor and evaluate progress will result in missing deadlines and overall failure of the studies. Supervisors must play a role in this process.” In doing so the responsibility once again shifts to the supervisor. Monitoring and evaluation is practised more stringently at high schools than at tertiary institutions. It may be assumed that students at university are expected to have a reasonable level of self-management as well as self-efficacy.

Respondent 6 proposed that “By monitoring and evaluating an individual is able to identify their strong points and weakness and focus on finding solutions for their weaknesses.” In conducting regular monitoring and evaluation, students are able to determine the areas within their studies that require the most attention. In doing so, Respondent 7 believes that monitoring and evaluation “...determines progress”.

Respondent 8 further suggested that “It is where you prove to yourself whether you are in the right field”. By conducting regular checks, students can determine whether they are in fact in the correct field for their particular strengths and expertise. Respondent 9 stated that “Monitoring and evaluating enables me to get a clear understanding if I am going to reach my goal or not. Constant monitoring will determine if I have to change the goal or the timeframe of the attainability of the goal.” It is only when monitoring is done on a regular and consistent basis that assessments on the attainability of the goal can be made. There is also a stronger focus on the students’ accepting responsibility for attaining the goals as well their self-management practices.

The majority of students do not believe that they need someone to constantly monitor and evaluate their progress but have also stated that they believe monitoring and evaluation are essential for academic success. Most students complete self-assessment tasks to ensure that they are on track with the module and many were uncertain about whether monitoring is a feature of postgraduate studies. At postgraduate level, it was discovered that students do not require regular monitoring by supervisors as they consider themselves capable of conducting their own monitoring. However, there should be an element of monitoring and evaluation in undergraduate studies. Most students adopted a proactive approach by completing their own self-assessment tasks. Ultimately, there were different views on whether monitoring and evaluation should be seen as a feature of postgraduate studies. However, it can be deduced that monitoring and evaluation play a significant role in academic success and subsequent throughput rates.

4.6.2.6 Challenges and strategies in postgraduate studies

Question: Describe any personal challenges that you experienced during your postgraduate studies.

In this section, respondents were requested to provide individual details of challenges experienced during their postgraduate studies as well as the strategies that they employed to deal with them. Therefore, the responses and views presented are very subjective.

Respondent 1 believes that “The ‘fees must fall’ protest at UKZN was a major challenge for me as I had to miss classes and was unable to complete my coursework and research proposal”. The strike situation across all campuses was detrimental to the academic progress of students across all faculties. It was an unplanned crisis that reached violent proportions and students were also requested to avoid attending classes, often for a few days at a time, owing to the vandalism that was taking place on campus.

Respondent 2 stated “Small gap between dates of exams”. Based on this statement, it can be deduced that there was inadequate time to prepare for the examinations. Students who are juggling the commitments of work and a family would benefit from the additional study time between examinations. Respondent 3 supported this statement by saying that the challenge was “Managing time for work and studies.” Respondent 4 agreed that “Working and studying at the same time is a challenge as there has to be a balance between two priorities in one’s life.”

The work-life balance becomes difficult to maintain, and it becomes important for students to know how to prioritise the various commitments in their lives.

Respondent 5 believes that “After being retrenched and then starting a new job mid-cycle in my studies has hampered my efforts for timeous completion.” Time had to be allocated to the new job which took away some of the academic time.

Respondent 6 stated that the challenges were “...time management, self-management and prioritisation.” These are common challenges that were experienced by the majority of students whilst Respondent 7 states that “Miscommunication and interruption of strikes resulted in no classes and less usage of facilities.” As stated by the first respondent, the strikes had a negative effect on academics, and it was an event that was unplanned.

Respondent 8 further confirmed that “Juggling school and work has been a challenge especially when there is work to be done and submitted.” In order to assist with these challenges, it is suggested that universities should look at the assignment submission dates and perhaps synchronise dates amongst the various modules for that semester. There should be a sufficient gap between each assessment per module to allow students to pay their full attention to it.

Respondent 9 also agreed that “Time management and finding suitable research articles.” presented a challenge. Whilst the library assists with training in terms of finding suitable articles, a dedicated librarian for Master’s studies assisted students immensely in retrieving suitable articles.

Question: With reference to the question above, what strategies did you employ to overcome these challenges?

The responses in this section are also subjective and are not reflected in any existing literature. Respondents have shared their personal strategies for addressing challenges.

In response to the crisis of the strike, Respondent 1 said that “I had to prioritise on what was keeping me away from attaining my goal. I had to use the Howard campus library to proceed with my research proposal.” The students drafted their own academic recovery plan so as to ensure that they did not fall behind in their studies.

Respondent 2 said that their approach was to “.... dedicate myself and work hard to pass my exams” whilst Respondent 3 said that his or her technique was to “....set time apart to focus

on studies only.” Ultimately, it is about committing to a distinct programme of revision and consolidation in order to ensure that the content is understood.

Respondent 4 realised his or her own weaknesses and stated that “I am a procrastinator. Therefore, this posed as a challenge, and I set earlier deadlines for myself in order to not leave tasks for the last minute.” Owing to the knowledge of self, the respondent set deadlines that were in advance of the original deadlines to ensure that timelines could be met.

Respondent 5 said that “Refocusing on goals and priorities increased self-discipline and personal sacrifice.” Postgraduate studies require a higher degree of self-discipline as there is a vast amount of content to go through and the expectations are often a lot higher. Respondent 6 stated that he or she “... started to work more efficiently and set targets for myself”. It became a situation where the student started monitoring their own progress so as to ensure that the timelines were met. The argument was supported by Respondent 7 who stated” Self-management. I had to do extra work and work ahead.”

Respondent 8’s strategy was to get “... enough rest and shift in focus kept me elevated.” A shift in focus can assist by directing one’s efforts towards a particular goal or objective whilst Respondent 9 believed that “...having a plan of action and prioritising work” assisted in addressing the challenges experienced during postgraduate studies.

4.6.2.7 The role of the lecturer

Question: What is the role of the lecturer (if any) in student success and subsequent throughput rates?

Gaier (2015) believes that the attribution theory will be of particular use to the lecturer or teacher as it explains why students do the things they do. In trying to offer the most optimal learning experience for students, lecturers are now compelled to consider the drivers that motivate students. The existing literature on the role of the lecturer has stated that classrooms are characterised by the types of learning goals that are outlined by the lecturer. Lam et al. (2015) confirmed that the lecturer has a distinct role to play in shaping the learning goals for the class. Therefore, students will undoubtedly be inclined to align their academic goals to the goals of the classroom. The existing literature is supported by the results of the study as respondents have confirmed that they expect a level of expertise from the lecturer. The lecturer is there to guide the students and provide the necessary support.

Respondent 1 stated that “At a Master’s level it is very minimal. Lecturers can guide but I am more self-motivated.” Students confirmed that whilst lecturers are there for guidance, the actual attainment of goals and objectives is driven by self-motivation. This argument was supported by Respondent 2 who stated that “The lecturer is there to unpack the theory into practical knowledge and real-world experience.” There is a reliance on the lecturer to be the subject matter expert as re-iterated by Respondent 3 who stated that “Yes, guidance, advice and knowledge on a particular subject. Their expertise passed down to a student is important.” as well as Respondent 4 who expected “... a good foundation and understanding on a theoretical perspective of whatever the module is.”

Respondent 5 suggested that it is “... absolutely essential for part-time students. Coaching and mentoring with constant communication are key to the success of students in these programmes.” The lecturer is the first line of support in terms of their studies, and the communication aspect plays a vital role in terms of success.

Respondent 6 also believes that “The lecturer is the subject matter expert and plays a vital role in supporting and motivating students to complete their qualification” whilst Respondent 7 states that “They should monitor and encourage”. Respondent 8 suggests that there should be “...dedication and support with notes, videos and examples that helps to understand the subject.”

Respondent 9 believes that “At UKZN, the interactive nature of the lecturer will definitely assist in understanding the course material with a different perspective from yours and other peers. The lecturer support would enable the throughput rates to increase significantly. I understand this concept perfectly as I previously studied with UNISA and it was very difficult to study the text without the guidance of a lecturer.” Comparison was made between UKZN and UNISA in terms of lecturer support and it was clear that the support is much stronger at UKZN thereby assisting the students to reach their academic goals.

4.6.2.8 Motivation

Question: Describe the role of motivation as a contributing factor towards postgraduate studies.

Cerasoli and Ford (2014) made reference to intrinsic motivation which takes place when individuals are motivated by internal factors e.g. a feeling of achievement. There is congruence

between the existing literature and the results of this study as students have confirmed that they have the personal drive to succeed. Respondents also acknowledge that whilst there may be external support mechanisms, it is ultimately their own responsibility to keep themselves motivated during the course.

Respondent 1 stated that “Self-motivation contributes to the attainment of my goals and accomplishments. I have the personal drive to succeed.” The student realised that he or she has the personal motivation required to attain the goals that need to be attained whilst Respondent 2 stated that “Without motivation, I will not complete my postgraduate studies.” Respondent 3 stated that “It is essential as it encourages.” and Respondent 4 believes that “Motivation is imperative. Therefore, students are required to set goals and be motivated to work towards the end result of graduating with a recognised qualification.” Whilst there will be guidance provided by a lecturer, the final onus rests on the student to be self-motivated.

Respondent 5 suggested that “Intrinsic (achievement) and extrinsic motivation (better pay/professional competitiveness) have driven me to stick with studies.” Intrinsic motivators are more psychological and internal. They relate to what drives individuals internally to achieve whereas extrinsic motivators refer to those factors that are external motivators e.g. a promotion. Respondent 5 is motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically to achieve goals during the completion of this degree.

Respondent 6 highlighted that “Motivation from peers, lecturers and family played a major role.” Students expressed the view that the support aspect was pivotal to their academic progress. The encouragement provided by the various individuals provided the motivation to continue in their efforts.

Respondent 7 believes that “You have to be motivated in postgraduate studies otherwise you can fall behind, and it is very easy to lose focus. Motivation is key, it builds you, makes you and strengthens you through those difficult situations.” Respondent 8 stated that “Motivation in postgraduate study is everything to completing the course and how to contribute to the working environment.” In addition, Respondent 9 stated that “I personally am highly motivated to complete my M. Comm degree. It’s the reason that propels me to attend class on a regular basis”. The last three respondents confirmed the importance of motivation as a contributing factor towards academic success. Many recognised that they do have the personal motivation to follow through with their goals and complete the course.

4.6.2.9 Self-management in postgraduate studies

Question: Are there any additional comments that you would like to share on the topic of self-management in postgraduate studies?

Postlethwaite and Haggarty (2002) acknowledge that students have an awareness of the factors that assist with learning as well as the factors that hamper learning. Therefore, students need to identify both the enabling and disabling factors to learning so that they can manage the learning process accordingly. The results of this study have confirmed that whilst there were many challenges that were posed to the students, they were able to devise strategies to overcome these. There is congruence between the existing literature and the results of the study as students have acknowledged their role in the learning process. Students also believed that good self-management techniques are essential to the attainment of academic objectives. Students also expect additional support from both the lecturer and the university.

Respondent 1 stated that the “Timing of events is paramount. Being proactive will help guide and put one under less pressure.” Students need to take ownership of their studies by looking at the expectations of the course and planning accordingly. Respondent 2 supports this argument by stating that “Self-management needs to be instilled by all postgraduate students. It’s about discipline, focus, dedication and commitment. Without these attributes a student could lose focus.” The statement made by Respondent 2 implied that embarking on postgraduate studies requires that students have a strong degree of self-management.

Respondent 3 has shifted some of the responsibility to the university by stating that “I believe that the university needs to do more to ensure that supervisors are equipped to handle working students’ competing demands and to play a pivotal role in keeping students on track to completion.” The student believed that some of the supervisors did not have the adequate expertise to deal with supervision of postgraduate students. Whilst a feature of postgraduate study is independent research, some of the supervisors were completely removed from the supervision process and students were required to teach themselves without having an appropriate foundation. Respondent 4 stated that “There should be a manner to share effective tools.” The University makes use of Moodle which is a platform where the lecturer engages with the students and uploads notes. It is also a platform where students can raise their queries about the module. However, this platform was not actively used and perhaps this should be revisited going forward. Respondent 5 believes that “Tutors are required to assist students especially on Master’s.” It was stated that tutors could have played a major role in postgraduate

studies. It is often less threatening to consult with a tutor about queries as opposed to raising those queries directly with a lecturer. There were queries that ranged from administration to content and it was often difficult to get consensus on the matter.

Respondent 6 confirmed that “Self-management is of extreme importance when you want to achieve the goals that you have set out for yourself. Prioritising on both personal and professional areas of your life will enable you to attain your objectives and goals.” The final respondent confirmed that it is the responsibility of students to prioritise the various aspects in their academic lives to ensure that they give each aspect equal attention.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The survey results confirmed that whilst students have the appropriate levels of motivation and self-management for a postgraduate degree, there is still a considerable reliance on the support structures that can be provided by the lecturer and the university. It was also confirmed that planning, prioritisation and task division played an important role in academic success. The following chapter discusses the conclusions that were reached from the study and offers recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the main themes that emerged from the research are discussed. The research questions and subsequent objectives are also explored as well as the limitations and recommendations. The surveys were answered by 34 out of the 35 required respondents. However, only 23 respondents answered the survey completely. This places a limitation on the results that were collated: however, the total response rate was still a favourable 66 per cent.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A summary of the main themes and sub-aspects that emerged from both surveys have been indicated in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Themes and sub-themes

Main Theme	Sub-themes /Aspects
1. Prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model of postgraduate studies• Discipline and goals• Time management
2. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectives• Accountability
3. Task division	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accomplishment• Smaller activities• Project management• Group work
4. Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direction• Achievement
5. Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-reflection• Lecturer role in student success• Student confidence
6. Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lecture attendance• Throughput rates• Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
7. Postgraduate studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenges• Strategies

Main Theme	Sub-themes /Aspects
8. Self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus • Timing of events • Tutors • Supervisor competence • Methods for effective sharing of tools

5.2.1 Research questions

How does prioritisation influence students' self-management during the postgraduate studies?

As discussed by Tollefson (2000), the amount of time that students spend completing a task is directly linked to the perceived rewards they may obtain from it as well as whether the task is in fact attainable. Students have confirmed that prioritisation is a key feature of postgraduate studies and can also be regarded as a critical success factor. Many have also indicated that they make use of a planner to ensure that deadlines are met.

What is the role of planning in students' self-management during their postgraduate studies?

Onyekuru and Njoku (2015) refer to the concept of metacognition which is a process whereby individuals think about their thinking. Individuals need to have a good knowledge of self to be able to apply the correct techniques to their studies. Students have also stated that planning is critical to their study programmes as there is a range of commitments that require their attention.

To what extent does breaking activities into small components influence students' self-management during their studies?

Dirksen (2012) believes that students need to determine a goal and then divide it into relevant sub-divisions. The students have also stated that they feel less overwhelmed when the task is broken down into smaller sub-sections. In addition, the completion of smaller sub-sections kept students motivated to complete the final task.

How does goal setting influence students' self-management during their studies?

Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo (2012) emphasise that students are likely to feel a higher sense of motivation when there is autonomous motivation. Chang et al., (2014) also highlighted that increased Internet self-efficacy plays an important role in student confidence and subsequent performance. The University has also made substantial use of online engagement platforms e.g. Moodle to encourage students to gain confidence in the online space. Motivation can also be seen as a process whereby students embark on a particular course of action and complete the activities that are required to reach the final goal. Students have confirmed that they are self-motivated and whilst the lecturer is there as a guiding force, they also realise that they need to keep themselves motivated for the duration of the course. A planner has assisted greatly not only in maintaining their focus but also in assisting them to complete tasks within the required time frame.

To what extent does monitoring and evaluation influence students' self-management during their studies?

Whannell (2013) have confirmed that academic staff play a major role in creating the academic identity of students. In trying to understand the drivers behind student behaviour, it is also useful to look at attribution theory. By doing so, Gaier (2015) maintains it will create a clear picture for lecturers to understand why students behave the way they do. Lam et al., (2015) confirm that academic reports have historically been used as a basis to evaluate the students' understanding of the learning content.

5.2.2 Research objectives

The purpose of conducting the research was to investigate the role of self-management in postgraduate studies at UKZN. The objectives in conducting the research are discussed below:

To assess the influence of prioritisation on self-management during postgraduate studies

It was discovered that prioritisation plays a pivotal role in self-management. Students have acknowledged that they need to prioritise the various commitments in their lives in order to ensure their academic success.

To determine the role of planning in self-management during postgraduate studies

Planning was also seen to be a crucial success factor in the completion of postgraduate studies. Most of the students were in full-time employment and were also attending evening classes which placed a great deal of pressure on them. Some also stated that planning was crucial in postgraduate studies. It is almost impossible to achieve the pre-determined goals without a plan.

To establish whether breaking tasks into smaller components influences students' self-management during their studies

Students confirmed that by breaking tasks into smaller components, they felt a heightened sense of motivation. The achievement of the smaller tasks provided the incentive to work towards the bigger goal.

To determine the effect of goal setting on self-management during postgraduate studies.

Students set periodic goals for themselves to ensure that they were keeping in line with the requirements of the module. It was also stated by the students that goal setting is an important aspect as the registration for a postgraduate degree had to be linked to either a personal or professional goal.

To investigate whether monitoring and evaluation influences students' self-management during postgraduate studies

Whilst students confirmed that they looked to the lecturer for support, they did not rely on them for motivation. However, some students said that lecturers need to play a far more active role in the supervision process. Since students were inclined to approach them first prior to approaching anyone else, there was an expectation of subject matter expertise.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results obtained from respondents the recommendations are as follows:

- Universities need to examine the various support structures that can be provided to students.

- It is also imperative that faculties synchronise the due dates for various assessments across the different modules. In doing so, it will avoid the stress experienced by postgraduate students.
- Whilst the protests on campus presented a challenge, it would have been advisable for the universities to have looked at different methods of student engagement for example, Moodle. In doing so, the contact time during lectures would not have been compromised.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of the study are generalisable and can be applied to students pursuing postgraduate qualifications at other universities. Students were given an opportunity to provide their own views on each of the main themes in the research which led to the emergence of additional sub-themes. The findings have been conclusive in establishing the relationship between motivation and academic performance as well as the impact of self-management on achievement. In addition, students did acknowledge the importance of planning, prioritisation, task division and goal setting in achieving their academic goals. Monitoring and evaluation also played a major role in the evaluation of their progress. The lecturer was seen to have a pivotal role in shaping the classroom goals. Students reported a heightened level of self-efficacy for postgraduate studies but were also adversely affected by the unexpected protest on the campus. It is therefore suggested that alternative measures should be put in place in the event of a crisis.

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Appendix A – Research Proposal Acceptance



TO: Mrs Halisha Ramlall (Student Number: 974126064)
FROM: SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, IT & GOVERNANCE
DATE: 28 June 2016
SUBJECT: Approval of Coursework Masters Research Proposal

Title: The role of self-management in postgraduate study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Supervisor: Mrs Khadija Kharsany

This memo is to confirm that the Research Proposal Review Committee has accepted your Coursework Masters Research proposal submitted on 31 May 2016.

Please take note of the following suggestion/comment:

- Concerned about the sample size - it does seem too small.

Please note that the above comment/suggestion is intended to develop and strengthen your study, thus you need to consider them seriously. Your supervisor(s) will provide further guidance on how to factor the suggestions into your study.

Good luck with your studies, and we look forward to your successful completion. Please note that you must submit this letter with your application for Ethical Clearance.

Yours sincerely,

Ms HMG Muteswa

[Redacted Signature]
School of Management, IT & Governance
University of KwaZulu-Natal - Westville Campus



School of Management, IT & Governance- Research & Higher Degrees
Postal Address: Room M1-119, 1st Floor, M Block, Westville Campus, Westville, 3630
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 7013 Muteswahn@ukzn.ac.za Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

Appendix B –Gatekeeper’s Letter



16 September 2016

Mrs Halisha Ramlall (SN 974126064)
School of Management, IT & Governance
College of Law and Management Studies
Westville Campus
UKZN
Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mrs Ramlall

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper’s permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

“The role of self-management on postgraduate studies at UKZN”.

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample as follows:

- with a request for responses on the website. The questionnaire must be placed on the notice system <http://notices.ukzn.ac.za>. A copy of this letter (Gatekeeper’s approval) must be simultaneously sent to (govenderlog@ukzn.ac.za) or (ramkissoob@ukzn.ac.za). You are not authorized to distribute the questionnaire to staff and students using Microsoft Outlook address book.

Please ensure that the following appears on your questionnaire/attached to your notice:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
MR SS MOKOENA
REGISTRAR

Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 8005/2206 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 7824/2204 Email: registrar@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix C – Ethical clearance certificate



01 September 2016

Mrs Halisha Ramlall (974126064)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Ramlall,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1207/016M
Project title: The role of self-management on postgraduate studies at UKZN

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 29 July 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Khadija Kharsany
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymann@ukzn.ac.za / mohunn@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix D – Updated ethical clearance



17 March 2017

Mrs Halisha Ramlall (974126064)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Ramlall,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1207/016M
New project title: The role of self-management in postgraduate studies at UKZN

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 17 March 2017 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for period of 3 years from the date of original issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Khadija Kharsany
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4809 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymann@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix E – Editors Letter

Editing and Translation Services

██████████

Springfield

Port Elizabeth

6070

Mobile: ██████████

E-mail: r ██████████

Renée van der Merwe

B A Hons (Applied Linguistics)

SATI Accredited (1998)

09 January 2017

To whom it may concern

This serves to confirm that the dissertation by Halisha Ramlall has been submitted to me for language editing.

While I have suggested various changes, I cannot guarantee that these have been implemented nor can I take responsibility for any other subsequent changes or additions that may have been made.

Yours faithfully

██████████

Appendix F – Digital Receipt (Turnitin)



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: Halisha Ramlall
Assignment title: Research Dissertation
Submission title: Dissertation 2016
File name: FINAL_DISSERTATION_2016.docx
File size: 8.5M
Page count: 121
Word count: 23,744
Character count: 146,800
Submission date: 10-Jan-2017 08:45PM
Submission ID: 756134816



Appendix G – Originality Report (Turnitin)

Dissertation 2016

ORIGINALITY REPORT

8%	6%	2%	5%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	1%
2	allchildrenreading.org Internet Source	1%
3	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
4	Submitted to Southampton Solent University Student Paper	<1%
5	Submitted to University of Florida Student Paper	<1%
6	www.surveymonkey.com Internet Source	<1%
7	Vansteenkiste, Maarten, Willy Lens, Andrew J. Elliot, Bart Soenens, and Athanasios Mouratidis. "Moving the Achievement Goal Approach One Step Forward: Toward a Systematic Examination of the Autonomous and Controlled Reasons Underlying Achievement Goals", Educational Psychologist,	<1%

Appendix H – Quantitative Questionnaire

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

Masters Research Project

Researcher: Halisha Ramlall Cell phone: [REDACTED]

Supervisor: Khadija Kharsany Cell phone: +[REDACTED]

Protocol reference / Ethical clearance number: HSS/1207/016M

I, Halisha Ramlall am a Masters student in the School of Management, IT and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: **The role of self-management on postgraduate studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.**

The aim of this study is to:

- To assess the influence of prioritisation on self-management during postgraduate studies
- To determine the role of planning in self-management during postgraduate studies
- To establish whether breaking tasks into smaller pieces influences students' self-management during their studies
- To determine the effect of goal setting on self-management during postgraduate studies.
- To investigate whether monitoring and evaluation influences student's self-management during postgraduate studies

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, UKZN. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. It should take you about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your assistance in this study is highly appreciated.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature: Halisha Ramlall Date: 18 July 2016

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Masters Research Project

Researcher: Halisha Ramlall Cell phone: +27812703406

Supervisor: Khadija Kharsany Cell phone: +27824194400

CONSENT

I _____ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant

Date

This questionnaire consists of TWO COMPULSORY SECTIONS:

- Section A: **Demographic Questions**
- Section B: **Main Research Questions**

Instructions to complete questionnaire:

- **In the Demographic Section you may either tick (✓) or cross (X), or circle the answer of your choice.**
- **For Section B the Main Research Questions please cross 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 for each question.**
 - **1 being an answer to a statement that you “Strongly Disagree” with.**
 - **5 being an answer to a statement that you “Strongly Agree” with.**

Remember to answer ALL the questions as they are all important for the study.

Section A – Demographic Questions

1.

Male	Female
------	--------

2.

Age	
-----	--

3.

UKZN Postgraduate student	YES	NO
---------------------------	-----	----

4.

Course	
--------	--

5.

Faculty and Campus	
--------------------	--

Section B – Main Research Questions

- Please remember to choose an answer on the scale from 1 to 5 for Section B.
 - 1 being an answer to a statement that you “Strongly Disagree” with.
 - 5 being an answer to a statement that you “Strongly Agree” with.

Prioritisation

1. I am a highly organised and structured individual

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. I know how to prioritise the various commitments in my studies

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. I feel confident in my ability to manage the challenges of postgraduate studies

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Academics feature as the most important aspect in my list of priorities

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Planning

1. Assessments are done in advance of the due date

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. I adopt a systematic approach to lectures and the schedule of work

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. I begin with examination revision at least two weeks in advance of the examination date

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. I have a balanced approach towards work and studies

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Task division

1. When given a task I often divide the task into smaller divisions

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Where necessary I am able to work in a group and complete the allocated task

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Task division minimises the magnitude of an assessment

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. I make use of a planner to ensure that task divisions are completed by the stipulated date

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Goal setting

1. I consider myself to be a goal-driven individual

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. I rely on self-motivation rather than lecturer persistence to complete tasks

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. My current registration is in line with the career goals I have decided for myself

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. I set my own goals and re-evaluate these periodically to ensure successful completion

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Monitoring and evaluation

1. I need someone to constantly monitor and evaluate my progress e.g. A lecturer

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Monitoring and evaluation are essential for academic success

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. I often complete self-assessment tasks to ensure that I am on track with the module

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Monitoring is not a feature of postgraduate studies.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Thank you for your co-operation!

Halisha Ramlall

Appendix I - Qualitative questionnaire
RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE
University of KwaZulu-Natal
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent

Masters Research Project

Protocol reference / Ethical clearance number: HSS/1207/016M

Researcher: Halisha Ramlall Cell phone: + [REDACTED] 6

Supervisor: Khadija Kharsany Cell phone: + [REDACTED] 0

I, Halisha Ramlall am a Masters student in the School of Management, IT and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: The role of self-management on postgraduate studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The aim of this study is:

to assess the influence of prioritisation on self-management during postgraduate studies

to determine the role of planning in self-management during postgraduate studies

To establish whether breaking tasks into smaller components influences students' self-management during their studies

to determine the effect of goal setting on self-management during postgraduate studies; and to investigate whether monitoring and evaluation influence students' self-management during postgraduate studies

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, UKZN. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. It should take you about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your assistance in this study is highly appreciated.

Sincerely

Halisha Ramlall Date: 30 September 2016

Informed Consent

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have been informed about the study entitled the role of self-management on postgraduate studies at UKZN by Halisha Ramlall.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at [REDACTED]

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I _____ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant

Date

1. I hereby _____ to participate in this survey having understood the purpose of this study.

- Consent
- Decline

Section A: Demographic questions

This questionnaire consists of TWO COMPULSORY SECTIONS:

- **Section A: Demographic Questions**
- **Section B: Main Research Questions**

Instructions to complete questionnaire:

- **In the Demographic Section you may tick (✓) the answer of your choice.**

2. Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female

3. What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

4. Are you a Master's postgraduate student at UKZN?

- Yes, full time student at UKZN
- Yes, part time student at UKZN
- No, I am not currently enrolled as a postgraduate student at UKZN

5. For which course are you enrolled?

6. Indicate your faculty and campus

7. How does prioritisation influence students' self-management during postgraduate studies?

8. What is the role of planning in students' self-management during their postgraduate studies?

9. To what extent does breaking activities into small components influence students' self-management during their studies?

10. How does goal setting influence students' self-management during their studies?

11. To what extent does monitoring and evaluation influence students' self-management during their studies?

12. Describe any personal challenges that you experienced during your postgraduate studies.

13. With reference to Question 12 above, what strategies did you employ to overcome these challenges?

14. What is the role of the lecturer (if any) in student success and subsequent throughput rates?

15. Describe the role of motivation as a contributing factor towards postgraduate studies.

16. Are there any additional comments that you would like to share on the topic of self-management in postgraduate studies?