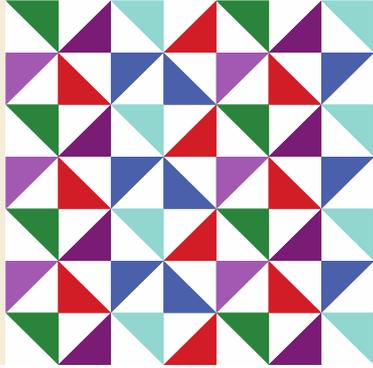


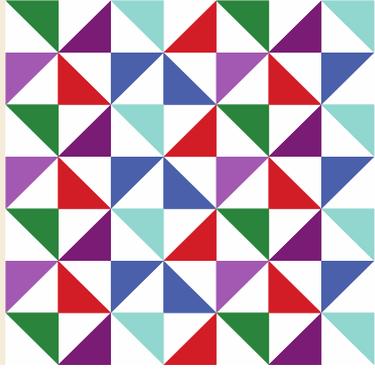
CHALLENGES OF TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MIDLANDS CENTRE

Senzo Ntuli &
Fathima Haffajee



INTRODUCTION

- The majority of South Africans are still to attain a decent standard of living. Most people are still poor; they are still served by low quality public services and institutions (Sennett, Finchilescu, Gibson & Strauss, 2013).
- In DUT, the majority of students that register are from the lower Living Standards Measure (LSM) categories and are drawn from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- National university dropout rates are (50%) high by international standards (HESA, 2013). When compared to African countries like Nigeria (20%), and Ethiopia (35%).
- DUT first year drop-out rate
 - 2013-19%
 - 2014-30%

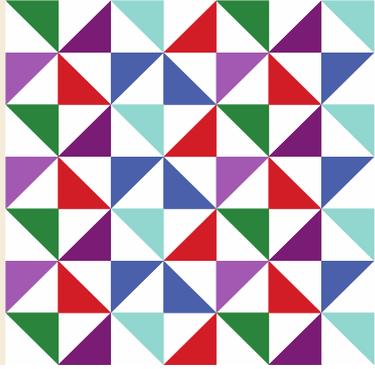


Aim of research study

- This study aims to explore transition challenges experienced by first year students at DUT within first three months of university.

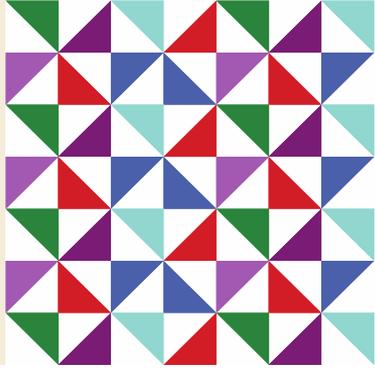
Objectives

- To investigate language and social adaptation challenges that first year students face.
- To investigate technology usage challenges that first year students face.



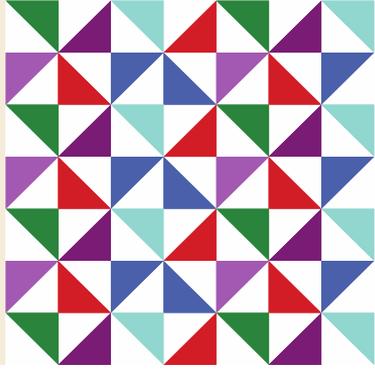
LITERATURE REVIEW

- Low graduation rate in South African universities has long been a cause for concern (van Zyl, 2014).
- Transition from high school to university has been viewed as a major factor in understanding challenges that first year students confront (Benner, 2011 & Setlalentoa, 2013).
- Students are motivated to learn and have a positive attitude but lack skills e.g. study skills, adapting to lecturing pace, and academic writing at university.
- Most students lack confidence in their English abilities (Anderson et al, 2013)



LITERATURE REVIEW CONT....

- Students from previously disadvantaged schools continue to have less access to resources, such as libraries and laboratories (Sennett, Finchilescu, Gibson & Strauss, 2013).
- Disadvantaged schools are largely characterized by overcrowded classes, lack of basic material such as books, paper, and equipment (Petersen., Louw., Dumont, and Malope, 2010).



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ **Research Design**

Qualitative research design.

In-depth exploration of the perceptions and understandings of people (Cohen & Manin, 2013).

➤ **Sampling and sample**

30 first year students.

Convenience sampling method.

➤ **Data collection**

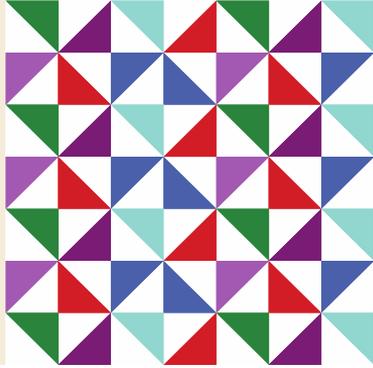
Two Focus groups

Interviews were conducted in IsiZulu language, transcribed, and translated into English languages

➤ **Data analysis**

Data that was collected, recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

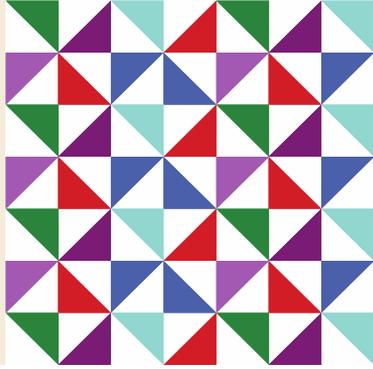
Content analysis was used to analyze data by systematically describing written, spoken or visual communication (Mayring, 2014).



KEY FINDINGS

ENGLISH USE AND SOCIAL ADAPTATION

- Students from rural areas experience difficulties being taught in English.
- Grapple with the complexity of a material in another language as previously taught everything in IsiZulu then translated to English
 - **F1P7:** *at our high schools everything that was taught in English was translated in IsiZulu, even physics was taught in IsiZulu*
- They are embarrassed to ask clarification
 - F1P5:** *raising your hand is a mission because you are scared that your English is bad and people are going to laugh at you. So you end up not understanding.*
- Adaptation to the new university environment is experienced both positive and negative by first year students
 - -positive- because of independence, meeting different people, and opportunity for growth
 - negative- because of independence, not spoon fed anymore, and financial constraints.
 - F2P1:** *for me I think it's both, what can I say, it's more like a challenge for me. It's like everything is exposed to me, like no one telling me what to do. There's no one begging me to go classes and do*



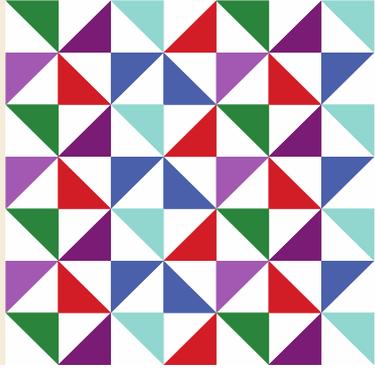
KEY FINDINGS CONT....

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- Rural high schools do not have advanced technology, therefore technology used at university is not familiar to first year students.
- Challenge of self-teaching.

***F1P5:** I do not know how to use a computer. At school we did not have libraries at home OF WHICH I DONT KNOW HOW TO USE A COMPUTER*

- They cannot access information **online** that they need to study.
-For example, emails, electronic notes, information through internet.
- F2P2:** *When you get here they say power a computer and you find that there is not enough time to teach people about a computer and how you even power it.*



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Universities should cater more intentionally for first year students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds through academic development programs.
- Computer and academic literacy should be prioritized for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Academic writing centres should develop programs to foster academic writing for these students
- Mentorship program can be useful for first year students to be acknowledged about services provided for them when they come to university

THANK YOU

