

CHAPTER 7

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY CONDUCTED AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 was concerned with the results and discussion of the qualitative study which involved conducting interviews with management to determine their roles, perceptions and expectations of staff development at MEDUNSA, with a view to further enhancing academic excellence. This chapter reports on the results of the quantitative investigation among academic staff in which self-administered questionnaires were applied to ascertain the needs and perceptions of respondents for training and development.

Firstly, demographic data are outlined and thereafter the responses to items in the questionnaire are explained. The corresponding number for each variable, for example, V11, V12 etcetera, as given in appendix A, is included in parentheses at the end of each variable as it is discussed in this chapter for easy cross-referencing with the self-administered questionnaire. Also, the cross-validation of responses with information extracted in the qualitative study is addressed. Finally, in the discussion section, the relevant objectives, outlined in chapter 1 are compared with the results obtained, to determine whether the objectives have been met. As far as possible, an attempt has been made to correlate the results of this research with the discussions and discoveries of other authors.

7.2 The demographic details of respondents

The demographic data supplied in this subsection provide details of the age, gender, race and qualifications of the participants of this study. This information provided an understanding of the background of the respondents and aided in gender and equity studies (see subsection 7.16). For, example, the qualifications of men and women were compared to ascertain if there is an even distribution, or whether men are more qualified than women, as is reflective in the literature (see subsection 7.16.1).

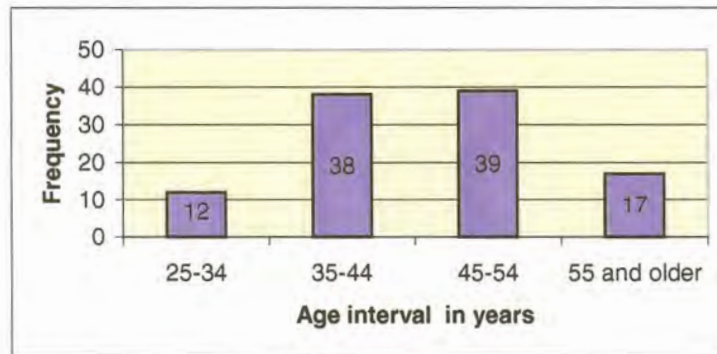


Figure 7.1: Age distribution of academic staff

7.2.1 Age distribution

The age distribution of respondents gave an idea of the level of experience and could be used in later studies to determine if there is a relationship between age and other variables, such as attitude towards educational transformation. Also, older academics might be used to the traditional, transmission mode of teaching and learning and would need to be inculcated into facilitating learning and adopting innovative teaching/learning techniques.

The ages as represented in the questionnaire (see appendix A, item 1), were regrouped as follows: 1 and 2; 3 and 4; 5 and 6 as well as 7 and 8 to limit the groupings and to facilitate analysis of the data. As can be seen in figure 7.1, the majority (77 out of 106 or 72, 65%) of respondents are between the ages of 35-54, with only 12 out of 106 (11,32%) between the ages of 25-34 years and 17 who are 55 and older. Therefore, most academics are neither so young that they would lack experience as educators and/or researchers, nor so old that they would be looking forward to retirement and lack motivation.

7.2.2 Gender distribution of academic staff

Looking at figure 7.2 it becomes evident that there are more male academics (63 out of 106 or 59,43%) than female (43 out of 106 or 40,57%) employed at MEDUNSA. The ratio of male: female is, therefore 1,47:1.

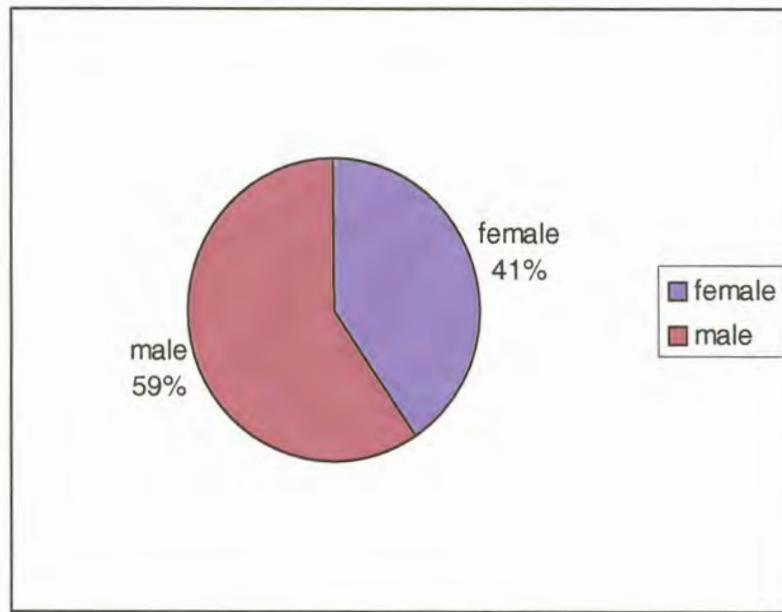


Figure 7.2: Gender distribution of respondents

7.2.3 Race distribution of respondents

Race distribution was examined for employment equity studies and to determine what needs to be addressed by MEDUNSA in terms of equity and redress. Despite the fact that Africans are in the majority in this country, this is not reflected in the scenario at MEDUNSA (see figure 7.3). Out of 105 respondents, 47 are white (44,76%), 43 are African (40, 95%), 13 are Asian (12, 38%) and just two are Coloured (1.90%).

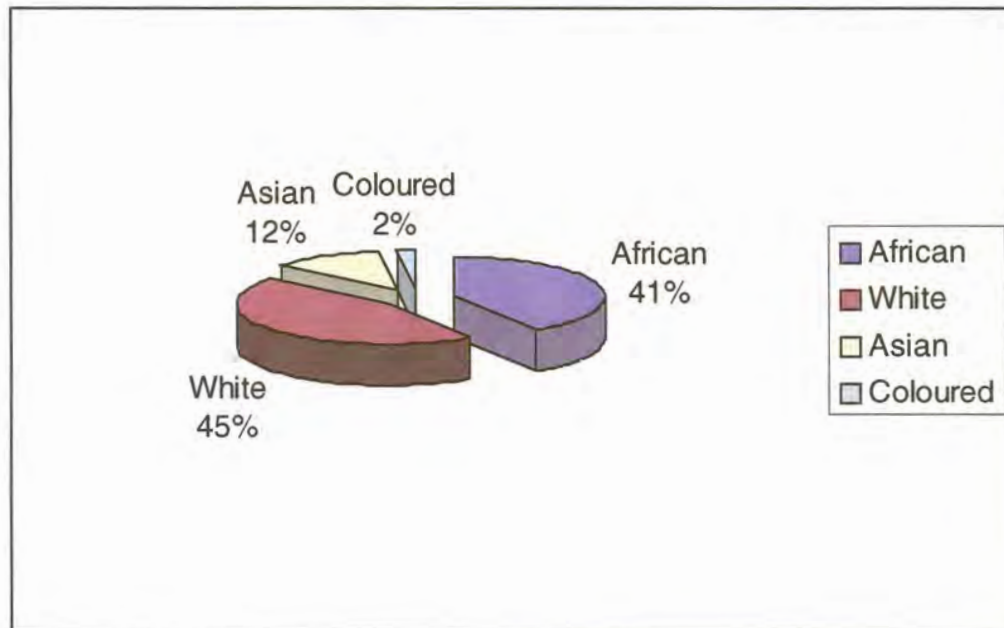


Figure 7.3: Race distribution (n=105)

7.2.4 Distribution of qualifications of respondents

Determining the qualifications of respondents was important for the comparison of qualifications between men and women. The literature shows that women are under-qualified as compared to men (see subsection 4.5). It was important to investigate the trend at MEDUNSA so that appropriate steps for the empowerment of women can be taken through staff development. Another reason for determining the distribution of qualifications was to establish the level of expertise at the institution.

The majority of respondents (36 out of 105 or 34, 29%) have a Masters degree followed by a PhD (23 out of 105 or 21,90%). Interestingly, considering that MEDUNSA is a medical university, there are a large number of academics with the MMed Degree while the rest have qualifications in Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing Science. Only 3 respondents (2, 86%) are qualified with just a bachelors degree (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: The qualifications of respondents

Qualification	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
PhD	23	21,90
Masters	36	34,29
Honours	9	8,57
Bachelors	3	2,86
MMed	19	18,10
MBChB	3	2,86
MD	2	1,90
MChD	2	1,90
BDS	1	0,95
BACur	2	1,90
Other	5	4,76

7.3 Perceptions towards educational transformation

In order to determine the opinions and attitudes of respondents towards educational transformation, the mode (most frequent value) for the following variables were determined: V11, V12, V16 and V17 (see appendix A). The mode (depicted in table 7.2) showed that the majority (45 out of 106 or 43, 69%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (21 out of 106 or 20, 39%) to the aforementioned variables. Grouping the strongly disagree and disagree categories gives a frequency of 66 out of 106 (64, 08%).

Table 7.2: Mode for variables related to educational transformation

Mode for V11, V12, V16, V17	Frequency (n=106)	Percentage
Strongly disagree	21	20, 39
Disagree	45	43, 69
Neutral	17	16, 50
Agree	16	15, 53
Strongly agree	4	3, 88

Therefore, the majority of respondents do not feel disillusioned with the educational changes taking place in the country, and are willing to participate in the educational change process at this institution. They did not feel that the current changes in education are just another trend which

will soon pass over. They did not feel that they would rather spend time doing scientific research than be concerned with educational transformation. These results suggest that MEDUNSA academics have a positive view and are supportive of educational transformation.

In contradiction to these findings at MEDUNSA, the literature suggests that, left to their own devices, universities are resistant to change. Bondesio and Berkhout (in Van der Merwe 2000:83) argue that since higher education is an instrument in effecting change, it should adapt continuously in order to be able to reflect societal changes. Thus, it is encouraging that academics at MEDUNSA are accepting of change, considering that higher education can act as an agent for the maintenance of the status quo (Van der Merwe 2000:83). Moran and Brightman (2001:113) advise that if change is aligned with a person's sense of purpose, they will engage in the process of change with a positive attitude. Hence, one needs to take into account that respondents in this investigation are positive about educational transformation, and one should capitalize on this by offering staff development programmes which would better prepare them for the challenges of educational transformation..

On another note, in the qualitative study, the Executive Manager expressed his concern that "educational transformation is occurring within a polarized environment in that some resistant change while other embrace it" (see subsection 6.3.2). On the contrary, what emerged from the results of the quantitative study was that respondents are supportive of educational transformation. While this sentiment of the Executive Manager might have been that of just one person, he holds a very senior and powerful position at the university and is responsible for directing staff development policies and practices.

7.4 The content for staff development programmes

In order to establish what academics perceive the content of staff development programmes should be, the mode for the following variables were determined: V21, V22, V37, V38, V41, V43, V45, V46 V48, V49, V52, V53 and V63. It was found that the majority (96 out of 106 or 90,56%) agreed to these variables.

Thus, respondents agreed that a staff development programme should not only focus on teaching/learning but on research as well (V21). They were of the opinion that topics on personal development should be an integral part of any faculty development programme (V22). There

was also an expressed need to learn more about teaching portfolios (V41). They concurred that a knowledge of educational theories would help them in their role as educators (V37) and that literature given during workshops will help direct them towards extra reading (V38). Similarly, they agreed that it would be good if references to relevant literature were given during staff development programmes (V48).

Respondents were of the opinion that mentoring of new educators should be part of a staff development programme (V45) and were in agreement that formal peer coaching programmes would be beneficial in the enhancement of professional development (V46). Academics were in favour of staff development programmes that would focus on helping academics cope with the challenges of empowering educationally disadvantaged learners (V49). They also expressed an interest in getting guidance on applying for a NRF rating as a researcher (V52) and applying for NRF funding (V53). Further, they would like to learn about research methods on the teaching/learning process (V63).

To this question: “What topics would you consider to be relevant in a staff development programme?”, respondents answered as follows:

- 1) Research
- 2) Curriculum development, namely OBE, PBL, teaching methodology and assessment.
- 3) Training in ICT.

Additionally, in answer to the question: “Which of the following do you feel you would benefit from training in?” (see appendix A, item 70), the following data was obtained and tabulated in table 7.3 to illustrate the trends in the choices made. A large number of academics selected all options listed. The most popular choices were the application of CBE (n=53), the enhancement of creative thinking (n=53) and QA in teaching and learning (n=51). Just 37 selected peer observation and assessment of teaching.

All of the aforementioned variables measured enthusiasm towards gaining an overall multifaceted approach towards academic excellence. It is clear that academics at MEDUNSA have a preference for the incorporation of these approaches in staff development programmes. On the other hand, it is the observation of this researcher that most academics used a compliance style of simply ticking all of the options listed for inclusion in staff development programmes. Whether

CADS can cope with these requests is doubtful and therefore, outsourcing would need to be considered.

In a survey done in Hong Kong examining educators' perceptions of peer observation, it was found that educators preferred classroom observation aimed primarily at staff development rather than appraisal. Therefore, resistance towards peer observation is not uncommon. Although peer observation is perceived as an indispensable component in staff development and appraisal, it is not well received by educators in general (Lam 2001:162, 170). Further, the presence of a peer in the classroom is likely to be perceived as intrusion instead of support (Thomas, in Lam 2001:162).

Table 7.3: Choices made for the content of staff development programmes

Content	Frequency
Action research (V86)	47
Peer observation and assessment of teaching (V87)	37
Enhancement of creative thinking (V88)	53
Implementation of PBL (V89)	47
Application of CBE(V90)	53
Implementation of OBE (V91)	44
Research methodology (V92)	43
Use of e-learning in teaching/learning (V93)	49
Quality assuring the teaching/learning process (V94)	51
OBE aligned assessment (V95)	36

It was important to determine the main strengths and weaknesses as identified by the respondents themselves since these could have ramifications for the choice of content in staff development programmes. The significance of self-reflection has been emphasized in the literature. Badley (1998:70) argues that an educational view of educator development would demand a growing ability in critical self-reflection and self-review not only as a subject expert but also as a “teacher-practitioner”. This notion of the educator as a competent reflective practitioner is crucial to the concept of quality in teaching and learning.

Therefore, the responses to items 67 (V81) and 68 (V82) (see appendix A) were analyzed using data reduction techniques such as coding and categorization. It emerged that academics perceive their main strengths as follows:

- 1) Dedication towards teaching
- 2) Research
- 3) Clinical service

They perceived their main weaknesses as follows:

- 1) Lack of resources, for example staff, facilities and finance.
- 2) Insufficient time to perform tasks effectively.
- 3) Lack of motivation to perform professional tasks effectively.

The lack of resources and facilities were also identified as being problematic and negatively affecting the performance of academics, during the interviews with the Deans and HODs (see subsections 6.5.11 and 6.6.10.4 respectively). The HODs also complained that due to staff shortages and overload of work, there was insufficient time to perform one's task effectively or develop as professionals (see subsection 6.6.1). Needless to say, these factors have a major bearing on the quality of the academe and the enhancement of academic excellence.

7.5 The process of staff development programmes

Just 44 out of 106 (39, 62%) preferred a faculty development programme that allows for unplanned, unanticipated learning over one that allows for closely specified, predetermined objectives (V28). A majority (93 out of 106 or 87, 74%) felt that academic staff employed at this institution, who may have the appropriate expertise, should be invited to conduct staff development programmes (V47).

Regarding the methods preferred in a staff development programme, the most popular were workshops, followed by seminars and exchange programmes. The least preferred were self-directed study and lectures (see table 7.4). To validate this result, the response to item 22 (V23) was that 46 out of 105 (43, 81%) respondents agreed and 39 out of 105 (37,14%) strongly agreed that in a staff development programme, workshops involving small group discussions will be more effective in promoting deeper understanding than lectures (V23).

These findings correlate with the literature discussions that workshops are preferable to lectures since they allow for greater participation (see subsection 3.4.2.1). The benefits of using discussions in a staff development model is further endorsed by Licklider et al. (1997:127):

“Staff development research supports the use of discussions and also suggests that experiential activities are useful in diagnosing and building awareness, challenging existing beliefs and assumptions, developing a rationale for new behaviours and shaping new behaviours”.

Table 7.4: Preference for methods used in staff development programme

What would be your preference as regards the methods used in a staff development programme?	Frequency
Individual/self-directed study (V68)	24
Workshops (V69)	69
Lectures (V70)	18
Seminars (V71)	41
Exchange programmes (V72)	37
Other (V73)	2

As far as timing for staff development is concerned, 84 out of 100 chose a model where staff development is distributed evenly over a ten month period (see figure 7.4).

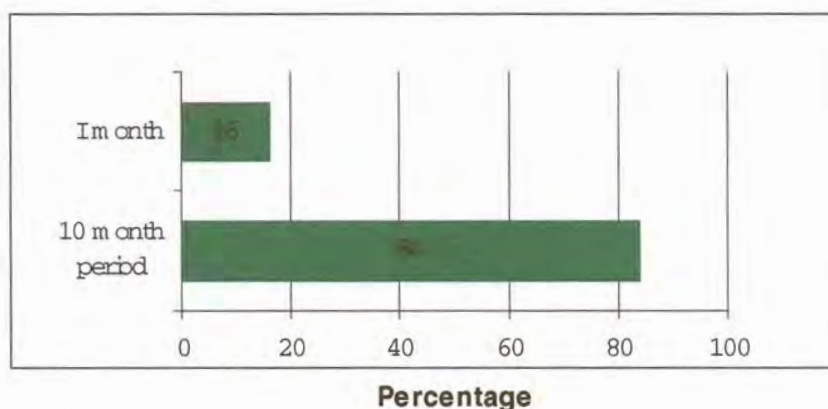


Figure 7.4: The choice of a time frame for a staff development model

7.6 The perceptions of attending staff development programmes

The frequencies for the variables pertaining to attendance at staff development programmes (V24, V29, V30, V34, V51, V55 and V60) were examined to determine the feelings of respondents on this matter. The values for “agree” and “strongly agree” were grouped together, as were those for “disagree” and “strongly disagree”, to give an overall perception of agreement or disagreement, respectively.

Staff (73 out of 106 or 68, 87%) felt that they would be willing to participate in a faculty development programme to improve themselves as educators, even if they were not going to be rewarded by the institution (V29). Thus, they were not looking for external rewards as a motivation to attend staff development programmes. There was consensus (104 out of 106 or 98,11%) that they should have access to programmes for the continued improvement of their professional skills (V30). Sixty nine out of 106 respondents (65, 09%) were of the opinion that participation in staff development programmes should be voluntary rather than compulsory (V51). Sixty four out of 106 (60, 38%) of respondents disagreed that they have no time to attend staff development programmes while 30 out of 106 or 28, 30% were in agreement (V55).

Eighty five out of 105 (80,95%) disagreed that attending staff development programmes in this uncertain period of the merger is a waste of time (V60). Many respondents (67 out of 105 or 63,81%) considered being away from their departments during a staff development programme will be stimulating for them (V24). An overwhelming majority (100 out of 105 or 95, 23%) concurred that sharing of experiences with other academics during staff development programmes will be valuable for their professional development (V34).

Therefore, these results point conclusively to the fact that academics are very positive about staff development and are keen on enhancing their professional skills through attendance of staff development programmes, and that they do not feel it will be a waste of time.

During the interviews with the Management of CADS and Executive Management, however, the interviewees complained that attendance at staff development programmes is very poor and that this needs to be addressed (refer to subsections 6.2.1 and 6.3.1 respectively). It is apparent that the results obtained by the two studies are in conflict. It could well be that academics would

indicate their support for staff development in a survey, but in reality don't necessarily follow through on that response.

On the issue of making staff development programmes compulsory, Blunt (1998:108) reports that the experience at the University of Port Elizabeth is that voluntary projects do not answer the question of how to facilitate the development of less competent staff and students. The suggestion was made that it is essentially through compulsory programmes that the needs of the institution can be met.

7.7 Perceptions about current staff development practices at MEDUNSA

A large number of respondents (79 out of 101 or 78, 22%) do not feel that enough is currently being done regarding opportunities for professional development of the academe (see figure 7.5).

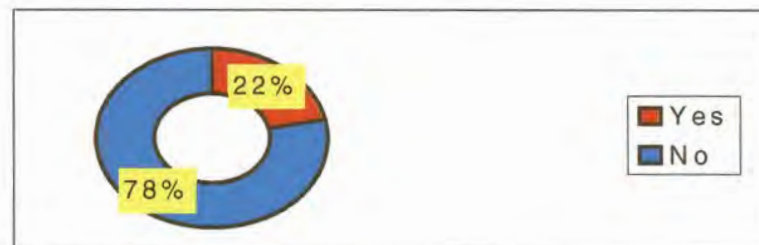


Figure 7.5: Perceptions of effectiveness of current staff development practices.

The rationale for saying that not enough is being done were categorized as follows:

- 1) Lack of awareness of existing staff development programmes.
- 2) More needs to be done to improve programmes.
- 3) Some have no time to attend staff development programmes.

Staff mostly agreed (74 out of 105 or 70,48%) that they were aware of the staff development programmes run by CADS. Essentially, this means that they are aware of staff development programmes but feel that not enough is being done for their professional enhancement. Therefore,

staff development programmes need to be improved especially in terms of being more relevant to the needs of academics. The results of this study could contribute towards that improvement.

To add to that, 64 out of 106 respondents (60, 80%) agreed that they have time to attend staff development programmes (V55) while 96 out of 105 (91, 43%) claimed that release time for staff to attend staff development programmes is crucial for the improvement of professional skills (V25).

7.8 Innovative methods in teaching and learning

What skills do respondents feel they are lacking in regarding innovative methods in teaching and learning? To determine this the mode for the variables pertaining to innovative methods in teaching and learning, was ascertained. These variables were V13, V15, V26 and V36. The scale for V13 was reversed (since it was stated negatively) prior to the mode being determined. The mode obtained was: strongly agree (14 out of 103 or 13, 5%) and agree (65 out of 103 or 63,11%). The values for strongly agree and agree were combined to give an overall perception. It was calculated that 79 out of 103 (76,70%) were in agreement with the foregoing variables.

Respondents do not feel they will find it difficult to facilitate an integrated course in a multidisciplinary setting (V13). On the other hand, they were of the opinion that there is a need for staff development programmes that would help them improve their facilitation skills (V15). Further, they had indicated the need to improve on their skills in order to help students become self-directed learners (V26). They also require more skills to be able to implement co-operative learning in their classes (V36).

At the same time, 85 out of 105 respondents (80, 19%) disagreed that they would much rather stick with lectures as the main mode of teaching and learning than introduce novel methods (V31). This implies that generally, although staff still feel they need more skills in implementing novel teaching/learning methods, they were not content with simply adopting the lecture method. This highlights the willingness of respondents to adopt innovative teaching/learning methods.

One of the elements, identified through the literature search, as driving educational transformation, was the paradigm shift from teaching to learning (see subsection 3.2.3). It was also argued that those elements would help define the nature of staff development (see

subsections 2.8 and 3.5). In support of this, the empirical study has demonstrated that academics have expressed a need for training and development in the application of novel teaching/learning methodologies which would influence future programme design and implementation at MEDUNSA. Evidently, there is synergy between the contents of the literature and the results of this investigation.

7.9 The need for training in Technology

Are academics willing to learn about the use of technology in the classroom? The frequency for V90, which relates to the need for training in CBE, was 53 and that for V93, which relate to the need for training in e-learning in the teaching/learning situation, was 49. Hence, a large number of respondents opted for training in CBE and e-learning. During the interviews with the Deans and HODs, however, it became clear that MEDUNSA is ineffective in providing training in the use of technology in the teaching/learning process (see subsection 6.6.5) and that there is no commitment from the university in providing facilities, space and funding for this purpose (see subsection 6.5.5.3).

It was previously explained that ICT is an imperative of the educational transformation process and that academics would need training in that respect (see subsections 1.2.4 and 2.8). Hence, ICT is another factor that would need to be taken into account when designing and implementing future staff development programmes at this institution.

According to research conducted at nine South African universities, it was concluded that unfamiliarity with hardware and software inhibits educators from commencing with ICT programmes but the problem is resolved with the appropriate support. Consequently, there is an acute awareness among support services to keep up with technological development, since they know the importance of their role in the training and support of educators (Schulze 2000:248). Therefore, for academics at MEDUNSA to become more proactively involved in ICT, training and support is pivotal.

7.10 Quality assurance in relation to the professional functions of academics

Ninety nine out of 105 (94, 29%) respondents concurred that they would like to learn more about the concept of academic quality (V44). Many (100 out of 105 or 95, 24%) also felt that there

should be staff development programmes to guide academics in improving the quality of their teaching and learning (V59). Fifty respondents indicated that they would benefit from training which assures the quality of the teaching/learning process (V94). Fewer (37) opted for training in peer observation and assessment of teaching (V87).

To cross check these results, the mode for V44, V59, V94 and V87 gave a response of 64 out of 100 respondents who agreed (84, 21%) and 12 out of 100 respondents (15, 79%) who strongly agreed. Thus, the mode and frequencies tallied to give an overall response of acquiescence.

Being an additional variable that contributes towards educational transformation, QA also helps determine the nature of academic staff development (see subsection 2.8). Reinforcing this, respondents in this study are of the opinion that they require guidance and support in the application of QA measures to daily tasks and functions. Additionally, the Executive Manager stated that although MEDUNSA is making an effort to improve academic quality, more still needs to be done (see subsection 6.3.5).

For Vroeijenstijn (1995:49), QA is about integrating internal and external mechanisms. He advises that: "It does not make sense to set up a system of external quality assessment without a good fluctuating system of internal quality care". For this reason, it is imperative that staff development programmes provide avenues for the improvement of quality among academics. Currently, at MEDUNSA the Evaluation Assistant system is operational for the evaluation of teaching/learning and courses by students (see subsection 1.8.7) but other methods, such as self- and peer- assessment, can be introduced.

7.11 Perceptions about training and development in Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

This subsection is concerned with the perceptions of respondents in terms of their knowledge and skills regarding the philosophy, design and implementation of OBE as well as their expressed need for training in this approach in a higher education environment.

7.11.1 Perceived knowledge and skills in Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

What are the perceptions of academics regarding their knowledge and skills pertaining to OBE? The mode for the variables that related to OBE namely, V14, V20, V26, V36, V39, V40 and V61 was determined to be 59 out of 100 (55, 66%) who agreed and 12 out of 106 (11, 32%) who strongly agreed. The scales for V39 and V40 were reversed since they were stated negatively in the questionnaire. After combining the values for agree and strongly agree, it was calculated that 70 out of 106 respondents (66, 98%) concurred with the aforementioned variables.

Translating this, it seems that respondents are of the opinion that they have sufficient knowledge of the philosophy of OBE to be able to implement the novel curriculum (V14). At the same time, they responded that they need to improve their knowledge and skills regarding student assessment using OBE principles (V20). They also expressed a need to improve on their skills which would help students become self-directed learners (V26), and to be able to implement co-operative learning (V36). Respondents admitted that they are able to design OBE learning programmes (V39) and that they are familiar with OBE terminology (V40). They were in agreement that they need support on the writing of courses in an outcomes-based format (V61).

A contrast was found in the responses for V39 and V61, which had been stated similarly for a reliability check. While respondents felt they were able to design OBE learning programmes (V39) they still expressed a need for support on the writing of courses in an outcomes-based format (V61). It is possible that the phrases “OBE learning programmes” and “courses in an outcomes-based format” were interpreted differently by the respondents. An additional conflict was found in the responses to V14 and V20- V20 being a reliability check for V14. Although respondents felt they had sufficient knowledge of the philosophy of OBE to be able to implement it (V14), they still required knowledge and skills in student assessment using OBE principles (V20). It may well be that academics don’t have a solid understanding of what the implementation of OBE entails. So, it can be concluded from an analysis of the above responses that, although they are familiar with OBE terminology, academics in this study feel they lack the knowledge and skills needed for the implementation of OBE.

Some of the above findings do not corroborate with evidence in the literature, which suggests that academics elsewhere have difficulties understanding the terminology of OBE. The terminology used in OBE has been criticized for being “perplexing, nebulous, business-like and controlling”.

Furthermore, it has been lamented that new OBE jargon which is vague, is being manufactured at an unprecedented rate which only serves to confuse educators (Schwartz 1994:87).

In a case study undertaken at Rhodes University, Goode and Thomen (2001:196, 198) complained about the difficulty experienced by educators when it came to writing courses in an outcomes-based format and their further lack of expertise in implementing OBE. The lack of preparedness of academics world-wide in implementing curricula innovations has been explained at greater length in subsection 1.2.3.

In continuation, some of the aforementioned results correlate with data obtained from the interviews with the Deans when they stated that staff have difficulty implementing OBE (see subsection 6.5.3.1). A conflicting finding was that, while the Deans stated that most staff are unable to write courses in an outcomes-based format (see subsection 6.5.3.1), the quantitative study did not reveal conclusively that academics feel they are competent in this regard.

7.11.2 The need for training in OBE

Although academics identified a perceived lack of knowledge and skills regarding OBE (V20, V26, V36 and V61), a mere 44 stated that they would benefit from training in the implementation of OBE (V91) and only 36 out of 106 felt that they would benefit from training in OBE-aligned assessment (V95). Thus, there is a discrepancy between perceived knowledge and skills and what academics feel they would benefit from training in. More information pertaining to training in OBE was gleaned from the responses obtained for item 71.

To this question: “What more needs to be done to better prepare academics for OBE implementation (item 71), the following responses were categorized:

- 1) Supply adequate staff.
- 2) More information and better communication about expectations regarding implementation of OBE should be provided.
- 3) Staff development programmes on the philosophy of OBE and its implementation is required.

These responses revealed that staff need more information about the philosophy and implementation of OBE and what is expected of them when OBE is implemented. Also, the fact

that staff shortage is a mitigating factor in the successful implementation of OBE, came through strongly from some respondents. The constraint of staff shortages having a negative impact on the implementation of OBE also surfaced during the interviews with the HODs (see subsection 6.6.3.2).

7.12 The need for training in Problem-based Learning (PBL)

In this investigation, it was deemed important to determine whether respondents are familiar with PBL and whether they would like to learn more about the curriculum since MEDUNSA is a medical university and PBL is extensively used in medical schools (see subsection 2.5.2.2).

From the frequencies achieved, it became evident that when the strongly agree and agree categories were combined, 67 out of 106 respondents (63, 2%) claimed that they are familiar with the learning methodologies of PBL (V19). Many (72 out of 105 or 78, 09%) would like to learn more about implementing PBL (V42), (see figure 7.6). When asked if they feel they would benefit from training in the implementation of PBL (see item 70, V89), 47 respondents answered in the affirmative.

Hence, academics have some understanding of PBL and have expressed a need to learn more about the implementation of PBL. Note the contradiction with the statement made by the Management of CADS (refer to subsection 6.2.3) who asserted that: “It would be futile to offer training in PBL when most staff are not using it”. Staff are probably not using PBL because they do not know how to implement it and training would help considerably.

The adoption of problem-solving as a teaching strategy, in conjunction with focussing on learning outcomes in training students enrolled for a secondary Teacher Education programme, was used successfully by Hattingh and Killen (2003:41). The point is that the principles of PBL and OBE can be used together to optimize learning and should not necessarily be seen as separate entities.

Therefore, it can be deduced that academics need training and development in another aspect imperative to educational transformation, namely curriculum development. This will have a bearing on the dynamics of academic staff development at the institution.

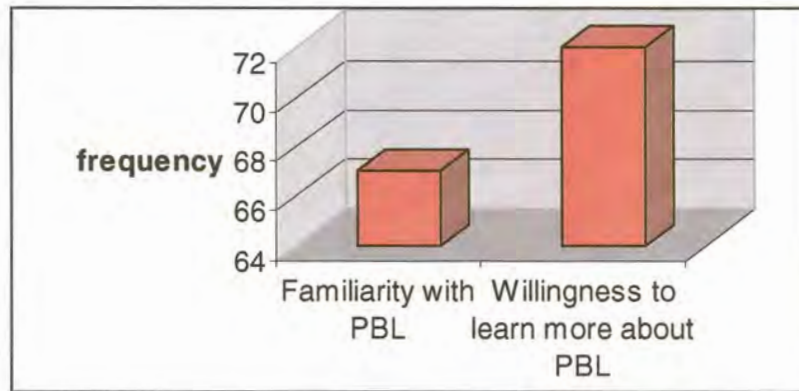


Figure 7.6: Perceptions of academic staff about PBL

7.13 The scholarship of teaching

In this subsection, the perception and knowledge of issues related to the scholarship of teaching is discussed.

7.13.1 Knowledge and skills in respect of the scholarship of teaching

Only 29 out of 106 respondents (27, 36%) claimed that they are familiar with the concept of scholarship of teaching (V18). A majority (89 out of 106 or 84, 76%) expressed a desire to acquire more knowledge in their field of specialization through staff development programmes (V43). If a postgraduate programme in higher education (for example the PGCHE) were to be offered at MEDUNSA, 63 out of 106 (59, 45%) would be interested in enrolling for such a programme (V50). Numerous academics (90 out of 105 or 94, 25%) perceive a need for staff development that would guide them towards improving the quality of their teaching/learning (V59). There was great interest among respondents (83 out of 105 or 79, 05%) in wanting to learn about research methods on the teaching/learning process (V63).

In summary, most academics are not familiar with the concept of the scholarship of teaching and are interested in improving their knowledge and skills with respect to teaching and learning.

7.13.2 Perceptions of the reward system for teaching excellence

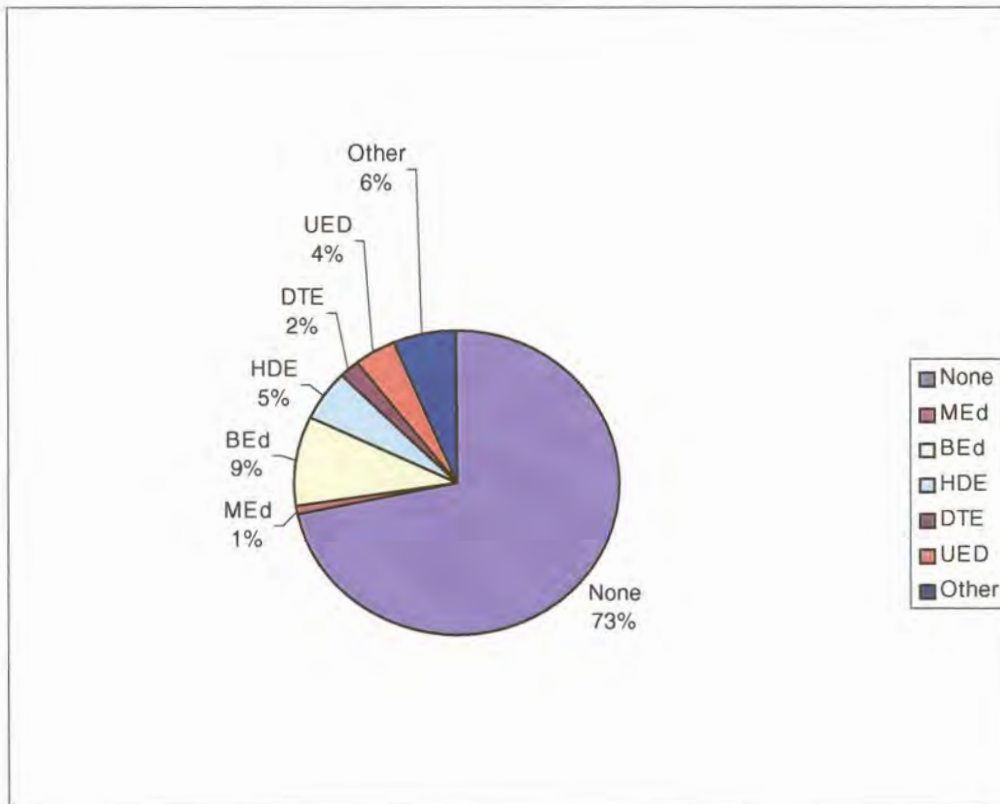
Seventy nine out of 104 respondents (75, 96%) perceive excellence in teaching to be seldom rewarded by the institution (V62). Only 29 out of 106 respondents (27, 35%) stated that they support the university's practice of rewarding research more than it does teaching (V54), and interestingly, many respondents (24 out of 106 or 22, 64%) were also neutral on this issue. Therefore, although many academics perceive teaching to be under-rewarded, they do not support the institution's stance on this skewed reward system. In the interview with the Executive Manager, it was learnt that MEDUNSA does reward research more than it does teaching (see subsection 6.3.4) and he expressed a desire to see this being changed.

This result is supported by a study of staff perceptions of teaching and research at UNIN where it was found that respondents criticized the lack of recognition and incentives for teaching (Ruth 2001:157). By the same token, in a study at several South African Universities, teaching awards were viewed as very important while only 28, 5% of respondents reported that it was in place at their universities (Hay and Herselman 2001:135). Similarly, a study conducted by Cronje et al. (2002:38) demonstrated that while respondents supported the importance of teaching, they perceived that their institutions tended not to reward teaching as much as it did research.

7.13.3 The prevalence of professional teaching qualifications

When the frequencies for V10 (which asks for highest teaching qualification) were calculated, it was established that 68 out of 95 respondents (71, 58%) have no teaching qualification. A small proportion (9 out of 95 or 9, 47%) have a BEd. Degree and just 5 out of 95 (5, 26%) have a H.D.E. Only one person has a MEd. Degree. Thus, most academics at MEDUNSA have had no formal training in education. This situation is not unique to MEDUNSA since a survey of the literature (refer to subsection 1.7.1) revealed that most educators in tertiary institutions have had no formal training in education.

Therefore, it would be unfair to expect educators with no formal training in education to *implement the imperatives of educational transformation* (as was outlined in subsection 1.2.4). Without a doubt, staff development is critical in rendering assistance to cope with the demands and challenges of educational transformation.



Key: MEd.: Master of Education
 BEd.: Bachelor of Education
 HDE: Higher Diploma in Education
 DTE: Diploma in tertiary Education
 UED: University Education Diploma

Figure 7.7: Professional teaching qualifications of respondents

7.13.4 Teaching experience at a higher education institution

The majority of academics (63 out of 105 or 61, 76%) have less than 15 years of teaching experience with 31 out of 105 (29, 41%) having taught for between 16-25 years. A small minority (9 out of 105 or 4, 88%) have more than 25 years of teaching experience (see figure 7.8). Therefore, the vast majority of academics are experienced educators.

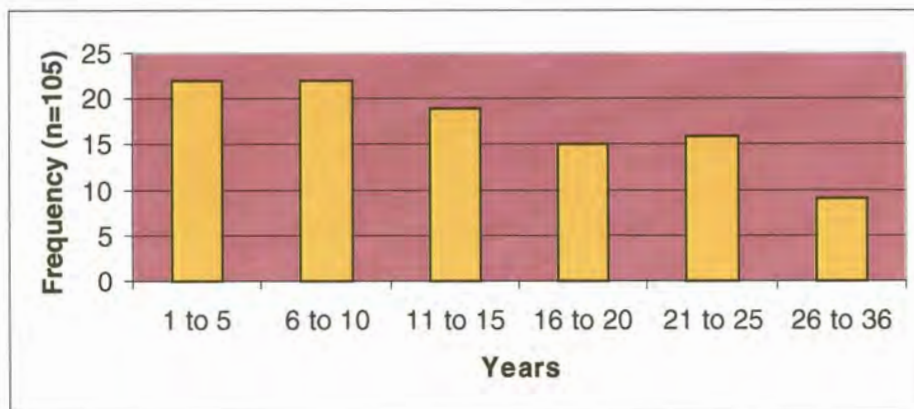


Figure 7.8: Intervals of the teaching experience of respondents

7.14 The scholarship of research

A considerable proportion of respondents (103 out of 105 or 98, 09%) are of the opinion that a staff development programme should not only focus on teaching/learning, but on research as well (V21). Many (95 out of 106 or 89, 63%) would like to receive guidance on the procedure taken to apply for an NRF rating as a researcher (V52) and 89 out of 106 (83, 96%) want to know how to apply for NRF funding (V53). Interest was also expressed by several academics (83 out of 105 or 79, 05%) on learning about research methods on the teaching/learning process (V63). Forty seven respondents feel they would benefit from training in action research (V86) while 43 opted for training in research methodology (V92), (see table 7.4). Only a few respondents, however, (29 out of 106 or 27,35%) felt that research should be better rewarded than teaching (V54). It can therefore be concluded that academic staff have a need for training on research methodology and how to apply for funding for that purpose. Note the statement by the CADS Manager that the emphasis of CADS is on teaching and learning (see subsection 6.2). Thus, the institution needs to recognize the needs of academics in that there is a demand for training and development in research.

In the interview study with the HODs, it was found that many of them are providing support and encouragement in an effort to promote research in their departments (see subsection 6.6.7.1). Arguably, this support should be augmented with staff development programmes which focus on empowering staff to be more competent in research. Many HODs emphasized the importance of conducting research since it is not very prevalent at MEDUNSA. Additionally, research was

identified as a transformational issue and as being important in the generation of knowledge in a knowledge-driven society (see subsection 3.2.2.4).

Moreover, training and development in the scholarship of research and teaching would assist in accommodating the demands of educational transformation since scholarship was selected as an additional element of educational transformation (see subsection 2.8).

Table 7.5: General perceptions regarding the scholarship of research

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
A staff development programme should not only focus on teaching/learning but on research as well (V21).	103 (n=105)	98, 09
Through staff development programmes, we should get guidance on how to apply for an NRF rating as a researcher (V52).	95 (n=106)	89, 63
I would like to receive more information about how to apply for funding from the NRF (V53).	89 (n=106)	83, 96
I would be interested in learning about research methods on the teaching/learning process (V63).	83 (n=105)	79, 05
Which of the following do you feel you would benefit from training in:		
Use of action research (V86)	47	44, 34
Research methodology (V92)	43	40, 57

7.15 Management and leadership

It was agreed upon by 92 out of 105 respondents (87, 62%), that there should be more involvement in matters regarding educational transformation from top management (V33). Many respondents (66 out of 105 or 62, 86%) also feel that effective leadership in the transition towards OBE is lacking (V35). When the HODs were interviewed, it was also determined that their perception was that the university has not done much to prepare academics for the implementation of OBE, and that they were left to cope on their own (see subsection 6.6.3.1). Similarly, inadequate planning and a lack of co-ordination, together with poor strategic interventions in the introduction of OBE, have been reported in the literature (Christie, in Cross et al. 2002:181).

7.16 Equity issues and implications for staff development

It was explained in subsection 3.2.2.2 that part of the educational transformation process in this country is to overcome past inequalities perpetrated by discrimination based on race and gender. It is therefore, crucial that the nature of staff development in an era of educational transformation encompasses equity issues with a view to empowering those who were previously marginalized. In this subsection, equity issues at MEDUNSA are explored with the intention of making recommendations for future staff development programmes.

7.16.1 Personnel rank and qualifications of male and female staff

This subsection explores the demographic data from a gender perspective. An important question that needs answering is: How many women have PhDs and are in professorship positions as compared to men? From table 7.6 it can be gleaned that the majority of respondents in professorship positions are men with only 2 women occupying this level in the academic hierarchy. The numbers of men and women in either senior lectureship, lectureship or junior lectureship positions are equal or close to equal.

Table 7.6: The personnel rank of male and female respondents

	Professor and associate professor	Senior lecturer	Lecturer	Junior lecturer	Other
Male	21	19	17	3	2
Female	2	19	20	2	0

There appears to be a difference between gender and personnel rank and this researcher was interested in determining whether this difference is statistically significant or not. Thus, a chi-square test was applied to test if there is a relationship between race and personnel rank. Since a computer program (SAS) was used to calculate the chi-square value, it issued a warning that chi-square might be invalid because too many cells had expected frequencies (fe's) below the level of tolerance of 5 (Sirkin 1995: 364-365). Therefore, certain categories were combined until all fe's satisfied the size criteria. Thus, personnel rank were regrouped as follows and shown in table 7.7:

- 1) Group A: professor, associate professor and senior lecturer
- 2) Group B: lecturer and junior lecturer

Table 7.7: Personnel rank versus gender

	Group A	Group B
Male	40	20
Female	21	22

Application of a chi-square test to data in table 7.7 produced the results as depicted in table 7.8.

Table 7.8: Statistics for table of gender versus personnel rank

Degrees of freedom	Obtained chi-square value	Probability (p)
1	3, 2973	0, 0694

An interpretation of the above table indicates that from a one degree freedom table, an obtained chi-square value of 3, 2973 was generated (Sirkin 1995:357). The value of the p value achieved at 0, 0694 is less than the 5% level of significance. This implies that there is no statistical difference between gender and personnel rank.

In addition, the academic qualifications of male and female staff are given in table 7.9 which shows the frequencies for certain qualifications. The frequencies for the other qualifications listed in item 7, namely the MBChB, MD, MChD, BDS and BA Cur degrees, were too low and were thus excluded in the interest of simplicity and brevity.

It can be pinpointed from table 7.9 that more than twice as many men (n=16) have PhDs than women (n=7) and an overwhelming majority of male respondents (n=15) are in possession of an MMed Degree while only four female respondents have this qualification.

Thus, women in this study are employed at the lower levels on the academic landscape and are *less qualified than their male counterparts*. During the interviews with the Deans and HODs (see subsections 6.5.8 and 6.6.8 respectively), it was reported that support is being given to female educators and that they were being encouraged to further their qualifications. Clearly, there is a discrepancy between what management professes to be doing and what is happening in reality.

Table 7.9: The academic qualifications of male and female staff

	PhD	Masters	Honours and bachelors	MMed
Male	16	19	2	15
Female	7	17	10	4

This phenomenon is not unique to MEDUNSA, though. The problem of gender polarization at higher education institutions has been researched by Mabokela (2003:130) who reports that in a 13 year period between 1983-1995, the proportion of women in senior administrative positions at one prestigious university increased from 14, 55% in 1983 to 15, 35%. This pattern of female under-representation is reflective of trends observed at other South African HEIs.

Zulu (2003:100-101) confirms the preceding assertion with a quantification which emanated from a survey at all South African universities to determine the gender representation pattern of senior positions. A three-tiered category of rank was used to illustrate the numeric representation of women:

- 1) Category A (Officers of the university): 53
- 2) Category B (Deans of faculties): 44
- 3) Category C (Senior administrative officials): 120

The results showed that the majority of women are concentrated at positions which carry less power and are associated with less mobility. Women are also grossly under-represented in senior academic positions, such as Deans, HODs, Vice-Chancellors and Registrars. Zulu (2003:103) advises wisely that institutions can play a significant role in assisting women academics to advance in academia. For example, through the development and implementation of strategies to address the specific professional development needs of women.

A further survey of the literature confirmed that women are employed at the lowest levels in the academe and that this problem is global. Reinforcing this is the following paraphrased statement by Ziegler (2001:47), in reference to female academics in Switzerland:

“Women have less opportunities of advancement. They publish less than men.

Their networking is not as good and effective as men. Their mentoring is comparably poor”

Blattel-Mink (2001:3-19) published the conference presentations on Gender Equality in Higher Education wherein the status of gender inequality was examined at different universities worldwide. For example, Lambropoulou (in Blattel-Mink 2001:6) describes the situation in Greece by saying that women participate in higher education to a higher proportion than men, but hardly show up in higher positions- “academic rank being a male territory”. In a transforming country like Armenia, all leading positions in the education system are occupied by men (Babayan, in Blattel-Mink 2001:8). Compared to other countries, Australia shows quite favourable conditions for women in higher education and it can be expected that the number of women competing for senior academic positions will increase. A survey done in 2001 showed that almost 24% of vice-chancellors in Australia were women (Ramsay, in Blattel-Mink 2001:13).

Halvorsen (2002:348) argues that one of the reasons for the under-representation of women in the higher echelons of academia is that the academic career structure favours the advancement of men. The importance of the advancement of professional development of women has been attested to by Mighty and Ashton (2003:29) who warn that:

“The consequences of not addressing the issue of gender equality may be costly as organization lose the full potential contributions and commitment of human resources in which they have already invested heavily”.

To improve the plight of female academics and to better exploit their capabilities, Ziegler (2001:48) reports on the pragmatic efforts of the Swiss government in trying to create equality between men and women. These efforts included giving universities incentives to employ more female professors, creating better child-care facilities and investing heavily in a mentoring programme to promote networking and consulting.

7.16.2 Race versus personnel rank of respondents

A two-tailed chi-square test for independence was applied to determine if there is a relationship between race and personnel rank. That is, if race and rank are related or independent. The chi-square value when calculated elicited a warning that it might be invalid because too many cells

had fe's less than 5 (see subsection 7.16.1). Thus, certain categories were collapsed until all fe's satisfied the size criteria.

Personnel rank (V7) were regrouped as explained in subsection 7.16.1. The race categories were regrouped as follows:

- 1) Group 1: blacks (African, Indian and Coloured).
- 2) Group 2: whites

The observed frequencies of race versus personnel rank according to these groupings are shown in table 7.10 which indicates that there are more a whites in senior positions than blacks.

Table 7.10 Frequency table of race versus personnel rank

Race (V4) n=102	Personnel Rank (V7)	
	Group A	Group B
1 (blacks)	25	31
2 (whites)	35	11

When a chi-square test was applied to the data in table 7.10 the following results were obtained as tabulated in table 7.11.

Table 7.11: Statistics for table of race versus personnel rank

Degrees of freedom (DF)	Obtained chi-square value	Probability (p)
1	10,3092	0,0013

The above table indicates that from a one degree of freedom table, an obtained chi-square value of 10,3092 was generated (Sirkin 1995:357). The p-value obtained was 0,0013 which is less than the 1% level of significance. This indicates it is very significant and there is definitely a relationship or dependence between race and rank.

7.17 Further cross validation of the responses of the quantitative investigation with the results of the qualitative study conducted with management

In this section of the chapter, some of the responses obtained in the quantitative study are compared with data extracted from the qualitative investigation which had provided the impetus for inclusion as items in the self-administered questionnaire, for the purpose of cross-validation.

7.17.1 A comparison of the quantitative data with the responses of the Management of CADS and Executive management

In subsection 6.4.4 a list of items that were to be included in the self-administered questionnaire for cross validation with the qualitative study, was given. In this subsection that comparison is explained using the responses obtained to the relevant items in the quantitative investigation.

In subsection 6.4 the importance of ascertaining the effectiveness of the transmission of information on educational transformation to academics, was explicated. The Executive Manager reported that information from his office is disseminated to the Deans and HODs (see subsection 6.3.2). Notwithstanding this claim, many academics (59 out of 105 or 56, 19%) stated that they seldom receive information regarding national issues in higher education through their departments.

Further, poor attendance at staff development programmes is regarded as a problem by the Management of CADS and the Executive Manager (see subsections 6.2.1 and 6.3.1). Following on this, an analysis of the quantitative data shows that a minority of respondents (30 out of 106 or 28, 3%) agreed that they have no time to attend staff development programmes while the majority (74 out of 105 or 70, 48%) agreed that they are aware of the staff development workshops run by CADS. In response to item 63, 79 out of 101 (78, 22%) did not feel that enough is currently being done at MEDUNSA regarding staff development in an era of educational transformation. This is probably why staff seldom attend staff development programmes- they might feel that it is not relevant to their professional development in the context of educational transformation.

The Manager of CADS stated that more needs to be done regarding training in OBE (see subsection 6.2.3). From the responses to item 71, which was designed to identify what more needs to be done in this regard, it was determined that MEDUNSA needs to:

- 1) Supply adequate academic staff.
- 2) Provide more information and better communication about expectations regarding the implementation of OBE.
- 3) Conduct staff development programmes on the philosophy of OBE and its implementation in higher education.

Furthermore, that research is better rewarded than teaching is a contentious issue and was raised by the Executive Manager (see subsection 6.3.4). A mere 29 out of 106 academics (27, 35%) support the university's practice of rewarding research more than it does teaching. On another point, the vision of the Executive Manager is that staff who have not gone through a formal programme of teaching should not be allowed to be educators (see subsection 6.3.1). This policy might not be very acceptable to academics since the quantitative study demonstrated that only 24 out of 106 respondents (22, 64%) are in favour of the Executive Manager's pronouncement.

7.17.2 A comparison of the quantitative data with the responses of the Deans

In subsection 6.5.17 several items for inclusion in the self-administered questionnaire were identified with the intention of cross-validating the responses with the input of the Deans.

What came to the fore during the interviews with the Deans was that the concept of "quality" might not be completely understood by academics. It was therefore considered beneficial to establish whether or not academics would want to know more about QA. The quantitative study demonstrated that 100 out of 105 (95, 24%) were of the perception that there should be staff development programmes to guide academics in improving the quality of their teaching/learning.

Also, Deans stated that staff feel insecure and uncertain about the merger. For the purpose of this study it was thought important to determine whether or not if these negative feelings about the merger would impact on the attendance at staff development programmes. Only 7 out of 105 (6, 66%), however, felt that attending staff development programmes is a waste of time in this uncertain period of the merger.

There was a complaint from one Dean that most educators cannot write courses in an outcomes-based format. The survey was not able to establish with finality whether educators felt they were able to write courses in an outcomes-based format since the responses to V39 and V61 were in conflict with each other (see subsection 7.11.1). Lastly, the Deans reported that they would like to see MEDUNSA offering a formal programme in higher education. To this end, a number of academics (63 out of 106 or 59, 45%) indicated that if a postgraduate programme in higher education were to be offered at MEDUNSA, they would be interested in enrolling for such a programme.

7.18 Discussion of the quantitative investigation

The results of this research point conclusively to the fact that the sub research questions (see subsection 1.3.2) have been answered and the general and specific objectives outlined in subsections 1.4.2.3 and 1.4.3.3, respectively, have been achieved. In particular, the general objective has been met since the study was able to determine the needs and perceptions of respondents regarding the dynamics of academic staff development at MEDUNSA, while addressing the demands of educational transformation and achieving academic excellence.

7.18.1 Perceptions about educational transformation

In answer to the sub research question: “Why is there a lack of preparedness among academics at MEDUNSA in dealing with the imperatives of educational transformation? To what extent are the needs and aspirations of staff being addressed by the institution in general and by CADS in particular? What are the perceptions and expectations of academic staff regarding staff development in the context of educational transformation?” (see subsection 1.3.2.3), the following were gleaned from this research:

- 1) Academics have a positive perception about educational transformation and are willing to be involved in the educational change processes at MEDUNSA (see paragraph 7.3).
- 2) Respondents’ perceptions about attending staff development programmes was also found to be promising in that they are keen on improving their professional skills through staff development programmes (see paragraph 7.6).

- 3) Respondents do not feel that enough is being done at MEDUNSA to provide them with opportunities for their growth and development (refer to subsection 7.7).

Also, a specific objective was to: “Investigate the feelings, attitudes and readiness of respondents towards educational transformation” (refer to subsection 1.4.3.3). The issue of feelings and attitudes has been addressed above. As far as their “readiness” is concerned, it was established that respondents do not have adequate knowledge and skills in the adoption of innovative teaching/learning methods such as self-directed learning, co-operative learning and facilitation (see paragraph 7.8). They also need to learn a lot in terms of OBE. Thus, staff are not adequately prepared to cope with educational transformation.

7.18.2 The need for training and development in the factors that drive educational transformation

The following specific objectives are covered in this subsection and because they are broad and encompass aspects such as OBE, PBL, QA, technology in teaching/learning, innovation in teaching/learning including scholarship, they will be addressed under these different subheadings:

- 1) “Obtain information about the current levels of staff knowledge and skills regarding educational transformation issues”.
- 2) “Investigate the training and development requirements of academic staff to enable them to become more effective and efficient in the areas of teaching and learning “.
- 3) “Determine the nature of staff development programmes that would help achieve academic excellence while addressing the elements of educational transformation” (see subsection 1.4.3.3).

7.18.2.1 Knowledge of curricula innovations in higher education

To the other sub research question: “What are the perceptions of academic staff regarding training in innovative strategies such as PBL and OBE at MEDUNSA” (see subsection 1.3.2.6), the following responses surfaced:

- 1) Academics at MEDUNSA are of the opinion that they do not have sufficient knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of OBE but feel that staff development could change that (see subsection 7.11.12).
- 2) There is definitely an interest in wanting to learn more about PBL among respondents who also claimed that they are familiar with PBL (see subsection 7.12).

The specific objective stated in subsection 1.4.3.3: “To ascertain if academics are willing to acquire skills relating to the implementation of OBE and PBL”, has also been addressed and it can therefore be concluded that staff are willing to learn more about PBL and OBE.

7.18.2.2 Quality assurance of academic functions

The specific objective: “To investigate if academics would like to know more about QA (see subsection 1.4.3.3) was attended to when it was determined that 99 out of 105 respondents (94, 29%) indicated that they would like to learn more about the concept of academic quality and that they would benefit from training in quality assuring the teaching/learning process (see subsection 7.10).

7.18.2.3 The application of technology in teaching/learning

A further specific objective was to: “Determine if academic staff are willing to learn about the use of technology in the classroom”. It was verified in subsection 7.9 that there is a demand for training in ICT.

7.18.2.4 The scholarship of research and teaching

A small percentage of respondents - 27, 36% (29 out of 106) are familiar with the concept of the scholarship of teaching. They are interested in improving their teaching/learning skills and would also like to learn about research methods on the teaching/learning process (see paragraph 7.13.1). Only a small proportion of respondents have educational qualifications (see figure 7.7). In terms of research, there is a dire need for training on how to do research and how to obtain financial assistance for that purpose.

7.18.3 The content and process of staff development programmes

Another specific objective was to: “Involve academic staff in the planning of the content and process of future staff development programmes”. This research did that adequately as could be construed from subsections 7.4 and 7.5.

Subsection 7.4 focussed on the content of staff development that respondents would like to see being covered. The content pertained to topics on personal development, teaching portfolios, peer-coaching, action research, the enhancement of creative thinking, research methodology, the application for a rating and funding from the NRF, application of ICT as well as the implementation of PBL, OBE and QA. Furthermore, respondents believed that educational theories, relevant references and literature given during staff development programmes would be helpful (see subsection 7.4).

Regarding the process of staff development (see paragraph 7.5), a considerable number of respondents opted for workshops and seminars instead of the lecture method. At the same time, they preferred a programme that allows for specified, predetermined objectives and felt that staff who have the relevant expertise and knowledge should be invited to facilitate staff development programmes. Further, they chose a model where staff development is distributed over a ten month period rather than one month (see subsection 7.5).

Additionally, a large majority of respondents (78,22%) do not feel that enough is currently being done at this institution regarding opportunities for the professional growth and development of the academe. They feel that more needs to be done to improve programmes (see subsection 7.7).

7.18.4 Cross validation and comparison of the responses in the qualitative study with those in the quantitative study

Subsections 7.17.1 and 7.17.2 focus on the responses to the items in the self-administered questionnaire which were included to cross validate data obtained during the interviews with Executive Management, the Management of CADS and the Deans. Therefore, it is evident that this specific objective: “To cross validate some of the responses obtained during the interviews with Executive Management, the Management of CADS and Deans”, was also achieved.

7.18.5 Reliability checks of responses

Throughout the findings in this study, there was consistency with most of the responses attained. For example, if respondents felt they were willing to participate in the change process at MEDUNSA (V12), they also indicated that they were not disillusioned with the educational changes taking place in the country (V11). Similarly, when respondents opted for workshops instead of lectures as a preferred method in staff development programmes (V23), the method that attracted the highest responses in another item, was also workshops (item 65).

On the other hand, a discrepancy was found with the responses to V39 and V61. Notwithstanding that academics felt they were able to design OBE learning programmes (V39) they agreed that they need support on the writing of courses in an outcomes-based format (item 61). Thus, these responses were not reliable and the researcher was unable to come to a conclusion about whether or not respondents are able to design courses in an outcomes-based format. Another contrast was found in the responses to V14 and V20 because while academics felt they were competent in the implementation of OBE (V14), they admitted to needing support in applying OBE-aligned student assessment techniques (V20). See subsection 7.11.1.

7.19 Conclusion

To recapitulate, the responses attained in this survey highlighted the perceptions and needs of respondents as regards academic staff development. Mostly, academic staff have a positive and supportive attitude towards educational transformation and express a need for academic staff development programmes that would enhance their professional skills.

The factors that direct the educational transformation process have been listed elsewhere (see subsection 1.2.4, 2.8 and 3.5). Also mentioned in the problem statement (see subsection 1.2.4) was the dilemma that most academics lack the appropriate knowledge and skills to be able to implement the imperatives of educational transformation in practice

This study served to illustrate that academics at MEDUNSA are no exception since the majority of them are willing to be trained in the very factors that drive educational transformation, notably, QA, curricula innovations, innovative methods in teaching and learning, ICT, including the scholarship of research and teaching. Hence, this information will help determine the nature and

dynamics of academic staff development that would address the demands of educational transformation. Therefore, hypothesis 1, in subsection 1.5, which states that: “ The factors that play a role in driving educational transformation in higher education, influence the achievement of excellence among academics”, is accepted.

Additionally, the results were cross-validated with the relevant data gleaned from the interview study to enhance the value of the research. Further, it was determined that, generally, responses were very reliable in that only minimal inconsistencies were apparent.

The following chapter concludes this dissertation with a summary and discussion of the theoretical and empirical investigations, and recommendations for future planning in staff development initiatives.

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