ISSN 2521-0262 Print African Perspectives of Research in Teaching & Learning 4 (1): (2020)

APORTAL VOL4 (1)

# University senior management support and how it influences implementation of professional development programmes for academic staff

Owence Chabaya
*Centre for Academic Excellence*
*University of Limpopo*
*RSA*

## ABSTRACT

In many countries, staff development programmes offered through a university's centre for learning and teaching have been put in place to enhance quality teaching and learning. Zimbabwe state universities experience quality challenges due to various factors including severe brain drain, which has led to the juniorisation of staff who have little or no experience in higher education teaching. Hence, institutions of higher learning were encouraged to establish teaching and learning centres to support quality teaching. The purpose of this study was to find the extent to which senior management in universities support academic development programmes for their teaching staff. This was a qualitative research which adopted the case study design and it was guided by the critical theory. The population of the study included all the state universities in the country and all Vice Chancellors, deans and chairpersons of departments in the institutions under study. Purposive sampling was used to come up with two institutions, one which was established before, and another which was established after political independence as well as the 2 Vice Chancellors, 2 Directors of Teaching and Learning Centres, 4 Deans, 4 Chairpersons of departments and 4 lecturers per institution. Data were collected from Vice chancellors and Directors of centres through interviews and a questionnaire was used for the 4 Deans, 4 Chairpersons of departments and 4 lecturers per institution. Data were analysed through thematic coding of data. Results showed that in an institution where managerial staff support the staff development programmes, most academics' job satisfaction was high because the staff were well informed about their roles. The study recommended that policies should be put in place for all state universities to have well supported teaching and learning centres so as to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the country.

**Key words**: academic staff development, higher education, management support, teaching and learning centres.