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AFRICANISATION OF TUTOR SUPPORT IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING [ABSTRACT]

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	This phenomenological qualitative study explores the views of Unisa students and tutors on the Africanisation of tutor support in Open Distance Learning by taking the African worldview of students into account.
Background	Tutor support is a widely used phenomenon in different spheres of education including institutions of higher learning to promote equity of access and fair chances of success for all. The University of South Africa (Unisa) is making a concerted effort to support its students by providing various programmes to enhance the success and this includes tutorial support. However, the tutor support being offered lacks African perspectives and approaches.
Methodology	A qualitative phenomenological design was used in this study. Data were collected through face-to-face (F2F) interviews from the tutors who teach the students and students at Unisa regions. Data was also collected through focus groups from the students.
Contribution	Africanising tutor support will contribute toward the Africanising of the academic project that Unisa has started to implement from a transformation point of view.
Findings	The findings showed that a lot still needs to be done to transform tutor support at Unisa by ensuring the inclusion of African cultural perspectives and approaches in tutor support to suit the majority of African students who are enrolled at Unisa.

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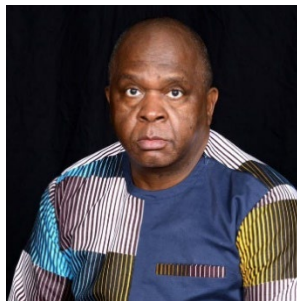
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Recommendations for Practitioners	Africanisation should not only be confined to the academic programmes but primary lecturers, who are represented by tutors in the regions, and the tutors, should transform tutor support to suit the teaching of the modules from the programmes.
Recommendations for Researchers	The findings of the study can inspire further research on Africanisation of tutor support considering the Africanisation of the academic project that Unisa is embarking on.
Impact on Society	The findings of the study could increase the interest of African students in learning by making not only the programmes relevant to their worldview but tutor support as well.
Future Research	The study can trigger future research on the impact of students' culture on guided learning and tutor-student interaction as far as tutoring is concerned.
Keywords	tutor support, open distance learning, Africanisation, transformation, students

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