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EDUC580: Educational Research: Designs and Procedures

Module Assignment: Action Research Paper/Report

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**How the COVID-19 pandemic had
affected student in higher education
within South Africa.**

Abstract

As we have all become aware by the recent situation all educators were put under when COVID-19 had enveloped the world, it was clear that there would have been a generated intense discussion in how the government and the education sector would work side by side to guarantee that no student would be left behind in order to preserve their academic as well as social lives, however it was imperative that cultural as well as social justice issues needed to be taken into serious consideration when figuring out a way forward for these said students. Although the challenges seemed a great undertaking, there was a fact that needed to be viewed, how were special education students meant to handle the change in environment without having their education disrupted severely.

This study was conducted face-to-face with a small group of students and university staff members by a group of students at various universities within South Africa and would explore the challenges faced by students who are affected with learning or other disabilities within South Africa after the implementation by the government for online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whilst conducting their study it was found that most students that were receiving special education were faced with more drawbacks when it came time to complete tasks and testing situations, with students needing extra support in some areas which at times as educators we may forget or not deem as a huge setback for these students. However, it was also noted that many of the academic staff had failed to acknowledge the varying issues and had not taking the necessary steps to accept that they too were at fault for these setbacks. It is, however, important to acknowledge that these students should not be regarded in any way as the 'same' to their normal able-bodied classmates especially in terms of how they study or perceive their educational environment based on other student performances especially in a previously untested situation such as online learning which had become uncharted waters not only for students but for the educators teaching them as well. However, should a situation such as the COVID-19 pandemic or any other global situation ever arise, we as students as well as educators should find a balance

to ensure all students whether able bodied or with special needs get the best quality of education that they deserve.

As reported by Crous (2004) it has been shown that students who have disabilities of any kind are less likely to take part in achieving or applying for any form of higher education however those that do pursue any form of higher education are more inclined to find multiple challenges along the way while they work to achieve their respective education. Most of these challenges were faced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic but were significantly heightened due to the constraints of the pandemic, mostly this is due to the South African government's policy with regards to dealing with disability concerns being fractured with no current national policy in place at that time. Although, that would have appeared to have changed when the South African public was thrown into a state of disaster when on March 23, 2020, the country was officially plunged into a nationwide lockdown. Bearing in mind, whilst writing this report it has been some time since the pandemic in South Africa had happened however the effects are still being felt in some respects within the educational field within South Africa and is being repaired in measure.

When looking at the work and research of Mutanga (2017) and Kamga (2021) it is clear that the connection is formed within the how they present their information. When looking at Mutanga's view, it is pointed out that it is mostly policy-relevant issues that doesn't focus on the related participation of the students who have any disabilities within a higher education setting. Whilst looking at Kamga's point of view, you can clearly ascertain that this belief is pointedly referring to the COVID-19 pandemic that had further intensified the issues surrounding students with learning or physical disabilities within the higher education sector.

While it wasn't just South African students with special needs that were affected by the global pandemic whilst in a form of higher education but according to The World Health Organization (WHO), it has been confirmed that persons with special needs, this also comprising of students, are more likely to be "impacted more significantly" by the COVID-19 pandemic (WHO, 2020). But it should not be forgotten that there are also other situations that should have also been considered such as social, health and cultural aspects. WHO also noted this as a concern the

world over by stating that there may be in some aspects additional obstacles for people with special needs especially when putting into practice the social distancing that was enforced during this time as well as perhaps some underlying medical conditions that could perhaps put them at a bigger danger in developing severe scenarios of COVID-19 should they contact the virus which could perhaps cause tensions or stresses on the services they truly need during that time. (WHO, 2020). This is all related to how persons with special needs or even students who be also be affected in some ways with these issues that were faced.

Due to the findings of WHO, it is only fair to noted and establish that when the COVID-19 pandemic struck most of the world wasn't truly prepared for what was to happen and for that the education suffered a great deal and with that students with special needs or even able-bodied had to learn to adapt along with their educators, who to were learning how to change and adapt their lessons to aid their students in this unpredictable time the world faced. Bring this back to how South Africa dealt with this it was expressed by Singh-Pillay, Subrayen, and Khumalo (2020), is that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought up discussions especially with regards to the education aspect that has led to very intense debates with the needs to the academic school year that year right down to the need of saving lives. However as per the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology within South Africa, the sector had dedicated itself to ensure that no student, whether able-bodied or with disabilities, were left in the dust while being totally aware of social justices and cultures. But while the COVID-19 pandemic had affected South Africa and when the lockdowns were enforced for the whole country meaning that most educational institutions such as universities as well as primary and high schools were momentarily halted with face-to-face classes in order to prevent the overall spread of the virus, so with this the government proposed and eventually started implementing the online learning and teaching for students using various online platforms.

With this aforementioned implementation, the report goes further into detail explaining regular teaching and learning are essentially different as there are supports in place to assist students, teachers as well as the school support team. However, for students with disabilities, this had to be adapted in order to assist them but required a certain set of specific tools and the actual physical assistance for these students who are already at a disadvantage to those of their able-

bodied peers. An issue that also had arisen during this time was that most special needs students were widely dispersed around the country and it needed to be ensured of away for them to still continue classes within or around the offered university services with the essence of how could their education be resumed without the quality of their education be completely disrupted as the COVID-19 had been a tremendous disruption to face-to-face teaching and learning within a higher education setting, all while trying to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus as well as to make certain that the academic school year should go on through the channels of remote learning and teaching. (Khumalo et al. 2020)

While the concerns of the nation was entirely valid during the pandemic, the government had to act in accordance and as laid out by the South African constitution which has been widely accepted by the country's supreme law as stated in Section 29 (1) of the Constitution Act No.108 of 1996 where it states clearly that everyone within South Africa has the absolute right to: 1) to basic education, including that of basic education for adults. 2) To further education, which the state (government), through a reasonable measure, must be made progressively available and accessible. (Republic of South Africa, 1996). With this, a quote from the South African constitution it is evident that all persons are considered equal, that including persons with disabilities or special needs and that they too have the right to access education of any kind whether basic or higher education as well as the other freedoms and services that the country provides to all its citizens regardless of culture, race or creed. Which essentially means that they have a right to privacy, respect and life.

Whilst looking at the aforementioned information, it is intriguing to see that the rest of the world also had to address this problem on a greater scale. This led to the path of other informative reports and investigations coming out this makes it clear that all persons whether able-bodied or with any disabilities should be afforded all the same rights. We see this in a report which was published in May 2020 by the *United Nations' Disability-Inclusive Response*, where it breaks down the imperative need for people with special needs, no matter at the level of severity, should also be welcomed and included in all areas. This is a fundamental agreement that countries worldwide have internationally accepted and signed upon to ensure that these injustices should not happen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other areas of the above-mentioned response also

included that of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda for Humanity* (2016), the *United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy*, as well as the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD). This is where it is highlighted that there should not be by any means any incidents where special needs citizens of a country should be discrimination for their position as it is an important human right for them to be treated equally and should get the same care and treatment during the COVID-19 without bias based on their disability or need. (United Nations, 2020)

It is with this reasoning and logic of where all people should be treated accordingly as stated by the United Nations, that perhaps there were some misgivings or misinterpretation that led to the enacted shortfall of how the South African education department had handle the overall situation of how to deal with special need students, and as laid out by many other reports and articles it has become a vital error and issue that has led to the exploration of the aforementioned authors to figure out how the South African government along with its education department would eventually respond or even offer an insight to challenges and hurdles faced by students who wish to achieve a higher form of education and what it entailed for them during the pandemic in order to maintain or even continue their education. It is without a doubt that the implementation and starting point of the remote studying and teaching approach that was enforced upon all educational staff and students alike during the start of the lockdown was incredibly challenging, although it has been contested by several authors and researchers that when looked into further the Higher Education sector's motivation in supposedly being highly involved has been rather silent in helping to support schools and/or higher educational institutions and with the correct compliance on how educational staff can aid the previously mentioned students who needed the extra support and guidance from their own universities or higher educational institutions during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the severe lockdowns that were impose due to it within South Africa.

When analyzing and looking further in depth at all the information presented within the reports of the authors who contributed to highlighting this issue that many special needs students faced when having to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic while also trying to maintain their educational needs and aspirations. It is only fair to say that these students could have been helped

and supported better while trying to stay afloat and up to date with the demands placed on them by the educational institutions they were studying at as well as the South African education department of higher education. The response that came for the government department during this time was lack luster and this was partly due to the way of how remote learning and teaching was implemented and laid out during the pandemic which highly encouraged during the start of COVID-19 lockdowns. One of the authors pointed out and contested how the Higher Education sector acted was one thing in contrast to how they should had acted in terms of helping the students with special needs from the forementioned university as well as the deafening silence that the South African government has stood by, in light of the treatment of these students during the pandemic as well. Which puts a bitter taste in most people mouths as according to what the reports suggest is that in the eyes of the country's civil rights laws not one person should be subjected to any form of discrimination within public life, meaning that people with disabilities should be allowed to be treated as any able-bodied person should whether it is in education, health care, work environments, etc. This context to resonate with that of Armitage and Nellums (2020), McKinney et al. (2020) as well as Kittay (2020) where is it distinctly highlighted that this type of discrimination were likely to become amplified within the timeframe leading up to and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic as there were numerous factors that were also essentially not made provision for such as physical and technical issues that could occur during remote learning process for students with these disabilities, it is well recorded that within the elements with the reports that argues largely that the Higher Education sector within South Africa were aware of the potential challenges and/or disadvantage that special needs students faced in comparison to that of their able bodied peers with looking online remote learning and teaching.

So, to sum up briefly with the issues that students with special needs who were pursuing some form of higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is clear to see that there are two sides to the argument of should the government have done more in order to ensure that all students whether with disabilities or without them were and should've been treated equally. Also, could the educational institutions that had enrolled these students be 100% responsible for the issues these students faced while participating and engaging in remote learning. Regardless, of who is to blame in the fray of the imbalance that were faced by students of special needs, there

is an obvious problem that needs to be noted, these students were unfortunately placed in a rather uncomfortable position while participating in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rationale for the research

The objective and rationale for this report is to identify not only the imbalance of governmental sectors or that of educational institutions that have at times failed the students who needs the additional support and help. Students with special needs not only have issues within the classroom, but they also have external issues like social, cultural and health issues as well, areas that most educators and support staff forget about when comparing them to that of their able-bodied peers. In this research project, I will look and discuss at all these areas while also focusing on the issues of how these students dealt with the pressures of having to study remotely while dealing with their own limitations while in pursuit of higher education.

Needless to say, these areas should be highlighted to help achieve equality within the classroom for special needs students especially now after the COVID-19 pandemic and its strict lockdowns as there should now to practices and protocols put in place to avoid these challenges and issues should another global phenomenon ever happen again. This is the time where the South African government alongside the Education department should collaborate with schools and higher education institutions in order to help aid these students regardless of their backgrounds whether in a global pandemic situation or just a simple task like the day-to-day routine these students face at school or university. There should be a balance that enables these students to have the same treatment as that of their able-bodied classmates within the classroom and other school/ university or college facilities.

Literature Review

Whilst reading through the research materials from other authors and researchers it is clear to see that in some regards, they all have a common sentiment about how students with disabilities have struggles during the global pandemic and how whether intentional or not, many of these students have suffered without the sufficient support from their educational institution or from the government. However, these same researchers and authors have highlighted other areas that were not provided for during the pandemic and how some of these same students are feeling the aftermath even now after the shutting down educational facilities throughout South Africa.

While we know the highly publicized occurrences within the educational field during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the smaller yet equally important parts that had been left behind due poor and inadequate planning on behalf of educators, government officials and faculty support staff that have led to the vast gap between students, able-bodied or disabled, who were dealing with the challenges of having to study remotely. It is easy to try and blanket all these students in one big melting pot, but the reality is there are other variables and factors that have played an important role to these misfortune for these students. Firstly, socio-economic factors - not all South African could afford to keep up with the educational costs while not being able to work or couldn't rely on family members to help cover tuition costs in order for them to continue. Secondly, there are welfare and health factors that affected everyone during this time but that became a much trickier for those who are affected with disabilities or other special needs, as medical outlets and hospitals were primarily focused on dealing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and while that is granted there should have been structures put in place to deal with public who needed it due to their health needs as well as those who got infected with the virus. All of these social justices were afforded to some members of the South African public whilst the rest of the population had to continue on with a lack of resources or means to get the medical treatment they truly needed during this time.

Considering the climate of when this report is completed, in comparison to the articles and research that came before. It is important to noted that a) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there are still some areas that the South African government need to work on and fix in order to

prevent future discriminations of students with disabilities and other special needs as well as trying to find proper solutions in order to further integrate disabled students should there be a future occurrences that we all faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, there should be an accountability by all who were included, who didn't recognize the need for further helping and aiding of these students during remote learning period. In this report, it should be mentioned that although there are elements that could have been improved on it is also without saying that perhaps in the minds of the South African government it was a situation of protecting the general public first, which granted is something that all countries were focused on. When lockdowns were put in place all students and teaching staff were sent home regardless of disabilities or not, but as the pandemic raged on and remote learning and teaching got introduced this led to problems that not only was education related, this can be argued that the lack of accountability or knowing in terms of skills, understanding, knowledge and even training of these special needs students' community, home support systems or even their family members as a whole were not sufficiently equip to deal with the academic demands place on the students, meaning that the lack of resources and knowledge also played an active role. With these aforementioned challenges, many could argue that all students, whether disabled or able-bodied, were wholly affected by this, however the key factor that most tend to forget is that students with special needs need additional help and resources in order for them to be high functioning students. This brings on another point, the technical and support issues face in the remote learning and teaching platforms during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic within South Africa, not many students had the capability of accessing equipment such as laptops, desktop computers and other materials needed to engage in remote learning sessions as some students with disabilities come from impoverished backgrounds means that most of these students and their families are depended on government grants that is just enough to provide food on the table as well as the necessary medical expenses they are faced with and during the pandemic this became an even harder task. As mentioned by McKinney et al. (2020), when the WHO (World Health Organization) implemented a document on March 26, 2020, called *Considerations for Disabled People during COVID-19*, which lays out certain steps and actions that should be taken in order to assist people with disabilities in receiving as well as accessing public health information, basic sanitation and water services, and basic healthcare services. But still, in a country like South Africa, this is sometimes not achievable as there are a mirage of other factors that during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic

left a tremendous gap in the economy, social, cultural as well as physical aspects for many South Africans, however with this shift this widely affected students with special needs as the change from one-to-one learning with support and physical help became remote learning without the required support whether physical or technical.

Description of the Participants of the Study

While it has been looked at extensively the challenges and issues faced by both public and students with disabilities, it is time to take a look at these affects within the classroom, as mentioned before a group of students were asked about their own personal experiences with studying in a higher education institution while dealing with the pressures and restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these students felt let down in many ways by the administration staff as well as their educators, this is not an uncommon experience for students with special needs within South Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic put multiple stresses on many educators and educational institutions whether it was on a basic level or a higher level of education. Like students some teachers felt that they weren't supported enough by their employers or the South African Department of Education, leaving teachers to make do with the limited resources they had at home during the pandemic as well. This left an imbalance of great proportion for both students and educators. Some key elements to these issues as pointed out by Kamga (2020) is that there was a rather troublesome lack of varying learning materials for unique projects whilst the students were at home during the lockdowns. Some students also didn't have access to helpful, assistive equipment that they potentially required meaning students were already starting at an immense disadvantage. However, should these different types of equipment have been made available and delivered to these students while at home it is important to noted that many of these devices are highly expensive and often unaffordable for the families of these students, although the financially aspect is an important one there is also the factor of the usage. Many of the students and their families are not always sure on how to work these devices as they can often be not as user-friendly, especially for parents and other family members who have never used them or who are unaware of the equipment as a whole, meaning they are not able to help the student in question who perhaps needs this equipment to help them study or even participate

in lessons remotely. Another area, that Kamga (2020) mentions is the potential of the students' home environment if this equipment was introduced within the students' home that there may be areas that are not accommodating for these tools for example especially devices and tools that requires educational or study aspects within sight, physical, sensory or even in dealing with intellectual disabilities. With this pointed out, it is clear to see how remote learning by these students could be difficult to handle especially while living at home with limited resources and capabilities.

However, according to the research of Simonsson and Heide (2014) who feel that there are other factors that should be explored in that of open forms of communications especially in terms of situations that are hard pressure, that leaves the public anxious and uneasy. During these times of the COVID-19 pandemic the public seemed uncertain and quite vulnerable in a vast majority of sectors within South Africa. With this said during the lockdowns, such things had happened a lack of communication had led to a lot of confusion among the general public. There are other authors, Lambert and Dryer (2018) who to have said that the elements of social discrimination and withdrawal when adjusting to a new style of education especially one that demands a drastic shift from one-to-one learning to a form of remote learning and teaching. This too can cause stresses, anxieties and uncertainties for the students' mentioned as well as all students who suffers with any form of disability or special needs.

Upon further research and investigating, there is a survey that was conducted by the authors, McManus, Dryer and Henning (2017), who shared their insights on how remote learning can have an even greater effect on students who are dealing with certain mental health issues as well as any other disabilities, it is there that a finding has found that the change of learning environment can have a massive impact and can also be a substantial challenge going forward for students with special needs. However, McKinney et al. (2020) had pointed out that the total disregard of people living and dealing with disabilities is the exact opposite of what is laid out within the South African Constitution in where it states that all people declared as equal and have the right to all basic facilities such as health care and other human rights. However, in recent years and as pointed out by the students affected themselves as well as other researchers and authors such as Khumalo et al. (2020) the country as a whole has been plagued with issues that

go beyond the everyday citizen, South Africa has been going through an ongoing period of electric power outages with varying time durations meaning that internet connectivity, technical support and training as well as assistive devices are often times disrupted, not to mention the other factors such as teaching methods, time, the students home environments, lesson content design, no contact with other peers as well as the lack of institutional and parental support that the student participants of the Disability Unit needed during this time, these are the variables that endangered these students' remote learning and teaching qualities.

Methodology

This action research paper is based on an article that was conducted within the time period of the COVID-19 pandemic that focused on the affects that students with special needs had faced within South Africa. There were interviews that were conducted one-on-one that is largely the method used to collect relevant data. The article took place at in one of the provinces within South Africa. The study had involved three lecturers, twenty-five students and a couple of support staff within this university, of the thirty students involved the range of age and duration at the institution from first year students right up until fourth- and fifth-year students. The data collected were then placed in the relatively appropriate grouping and recordings.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Results and Findings

Based on the study's results and findings it is important to note that there was a variety of questions asked and answered by the participants were a range of open and closed- ended questions all that were appropriate to the articles, reports and research that was conducted during this time frame of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data is presented in a question and then an answer or answers given by the participants after that it is then combined into figures added to a pie chart. There are three questions that were asked that I will closely examine and laid out in my action research paper.

Question #1

Were there any issues or challenges that you faced technically when transitioning from contact learning to remote learning and teaching? Explain.

When asked this question, most of the participants shared their experiences with how they faced certain issues along the way whilst try to share effectively during the pandemic. With about 90% of students claimed to have experiences a variety of technical issues while studying remotely, as shown in pie chart #1, most also cited that this made learning even harder than before as they weren't afforded the same kind of treatment as when learning from contact learning situations. Some students expressed disappointment for the support staff and teachers where they feel could have done more to assist them as they (the universities staff) know that they are not the same as other (able-bodied) students putting them at an even greater disadvantage while studying remotely. Although, with this being said, there was however two students who found this not to be true and could study and participate during classes technical issues and challenges free. However, it is safe to say that most students had dealt with these technical occurrences and had no control over why or when to fix it. It was also mentioned by Howell (2005) who found a similar situation noted that one of the most telling elements to students, who have special needs, responding negatively to unfamiliar aspects is due to the lack of proper preparation and planning from the institution they are studying through.

Question #2

Did you feel or see the educational institution you are studying through do enough to ensure that you were on par with the rest of your peers during the remote learning and teaching process? Give details to your response.

As this question was posed, many students wholeheartedly felt that they were let down by the institution as they felt that the staff had not done enough to ensure that they were on par with the rest of their classmates. 100% of the students in this study felt that the university could and should have done more to ensure that all the students who were dealing with special needs should have been checked on to have an understanding of whether or not they were able to keep up with the rest of their classes while undertaking remote learning. Many also felt that the

universities lack of options to assist students with learning impairments was also a contributing factor to students eventually falling behind and not being able to keep up with the pace or demand that remote learning required. It was also expressed that some students felt that the support structure of the university had become lack luster during the COVID-19 pandemic while remote learning was required, as shown in Figure 2, and felt that a social injustice that taken place that should have been monitored by the university during this time.

Question #3

Did you feel that there were certain injustices made which you would consider your education was violated without regard for your disabilities?

To note, it was important for students to feel that their voices were heard, especially since the vast major of these students felt that their rights to education as stated by the South African Constitution were indeed abused by the university during the remote learning process, although there were also a handful of students who believed that their rights were in ways protected by the university. The students who felt protected explained that the procedure of the university was carefully thought out and that they were doing enough to assist students whilst also limited to information and resources. The other students who felt violated expressed that the university made little to no provision for students with special needs and would often be in the shadows in comparison to their able-bodied peers, as shown in Figure 3. Leaving most students at a disadvantage when attending remote classes. Upon hearing all the participating students, it is clear that there are some discrepancies between the university's conduct and that of students needs especially those that are disabled. As shown in Figure 4, some professors even agreed with some students that a lack of resources and the support of the university led them to teach curricula that was better for one-to-one classes and that time to find alternative forms in a limited time frame that become increasingly difficult over time. Other professors felt that everyone both teachers and students were given enough time to prepare for remote learning and felt that no students' human rights or right to education was abused or misused in any way during the COVID-19 pandemic and also mentioned that sufficient planning and support were offered by the university as well as support staff.

Conclusions, Implications, and recommendations

This action research report has looked at the challenges faced by students who suffer from or deals with special needs, this report also laid out the different issues that had arisen during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic that affected not only South Africa but by the whole world. The report also showed that a number of students and professors (the participants of this report) and how they dealt with a various amount of challenges whether it was inter-universities policies or external factors that played a part in the breakdown of some social justices being abused or mishandled at time. However, it is true that since the government imposed lockdowns that had prevented a lot of clarity and organization, it should to be noted that most educational institutions that little to no time to prepare as no definitive timelines or frameworks were offered from the government as to how long the lockdowns would be therefore leaving many areas of creating valuable work not well advised and lacking for students who have special needs. In hindsight, I hope that most educational institutions and schools can learn from this and begin building proper infrastructures should another situation like this arise, therefore giving support staff, professors, as well as students who have special needs or who are able-bodied. There is also an opportunity for the South African government to see how ineffective some areas were during the pandemic especially towards students with special needs and could perhaps pass a new law or amend a preexisting one where it is included that no matter the situation all students of disabilities or special needs should be treated in the same way as that of able-bodied students, this will help prevent further issues arising later on or should another global phenomenon ever be encounter again. This research report is merely an insight of how things can be improved for future generations of educators and students in terms of education and accountability for situations that can be fixed as well as for governments to act in accordance while maintaining the proper social justices for all who suffer from any form of disabilities or special needs.

Limitations

Reflecting on the social injustices made towards students with special needs and disabilities within higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic was only the proverbial cherry on top and it needs to be made clear that some of the social injustices that these students faced were not just brought on by the lockdowns endured or the constant struggle they faced while participating in remote learning. Some students in this action research report noted that these injustices also took place in face-to-face classes as well and although mentioned to universities support staff nothing would be done about it, leaving most students disillusioned in continuing their higher education. Some staff and students believe that the South African government should try and do more to prevent and avoid further injustices especially now that the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns have passed us. Some even expressed that the government should try and implement some new structures to the law to further allow students with disabilities to have the support from the universities they have choose and perhaps open up new branch where there are qualified staff to help these students when they require and assistance. However, the major concern in this is a lack of proper funding and accountability for this meaning that both the government and universities don't give the students the proper answers they need in order to prevent this in the future.

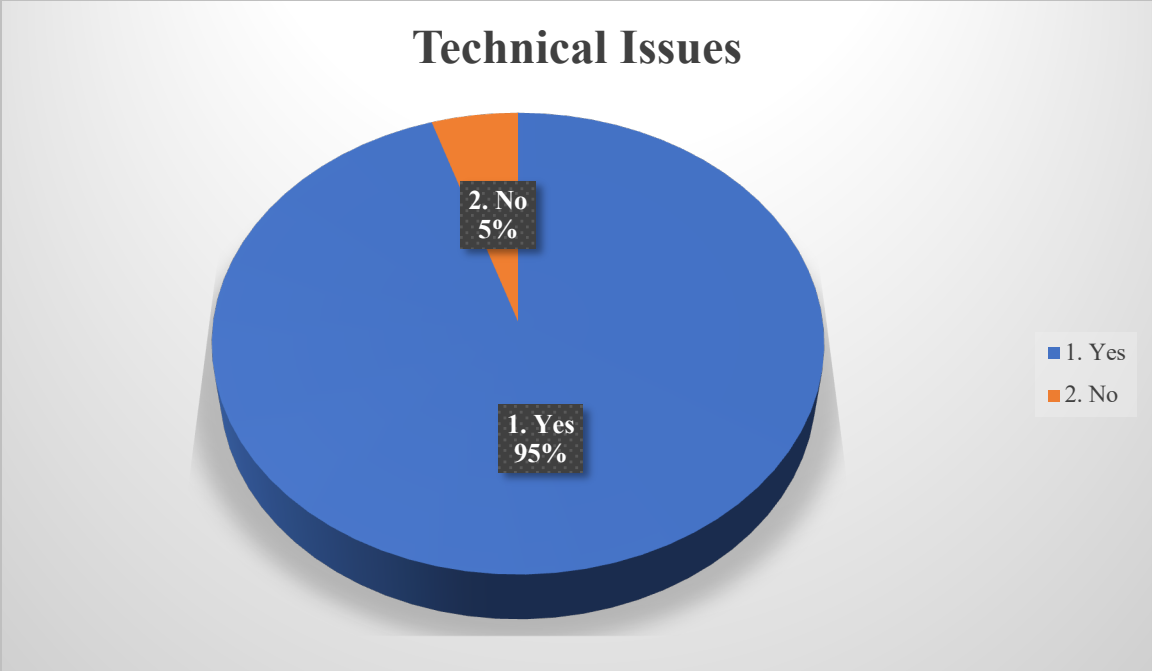


Figure 1 – Technical Issues faced by students with special needs during the remote learning period during the COVID-19 pandemic.

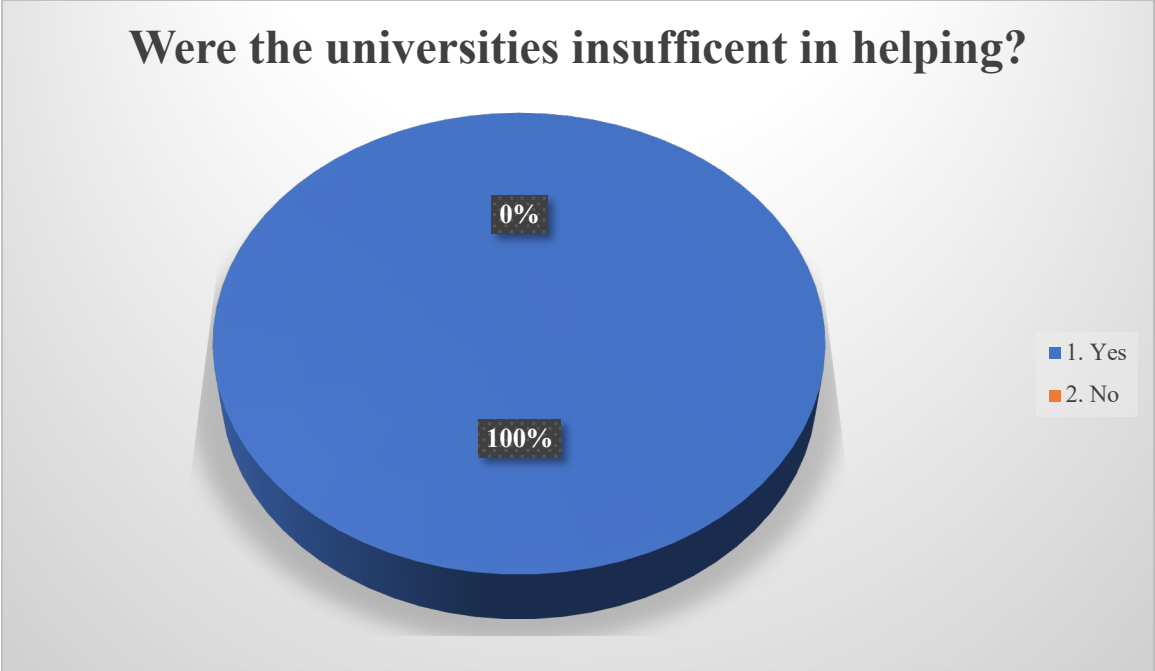


Figure 2 – Universities lack of sufficiency in supporting students with special needs during remote learning.

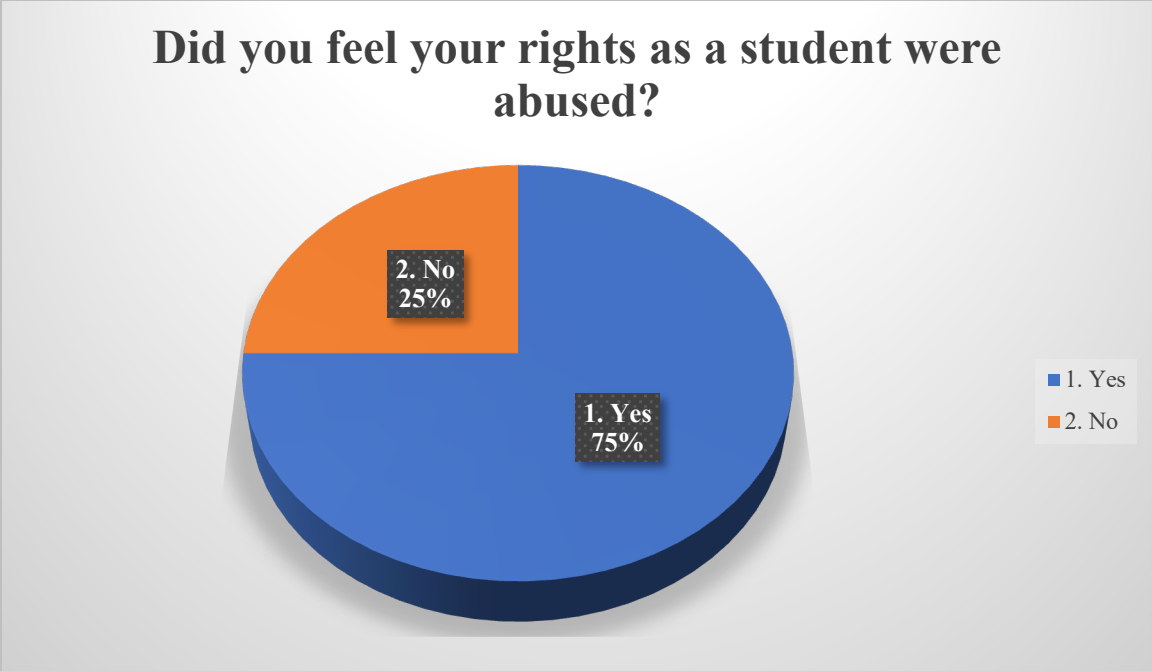


Figure 3 – Students who felt that their rights to education was abused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

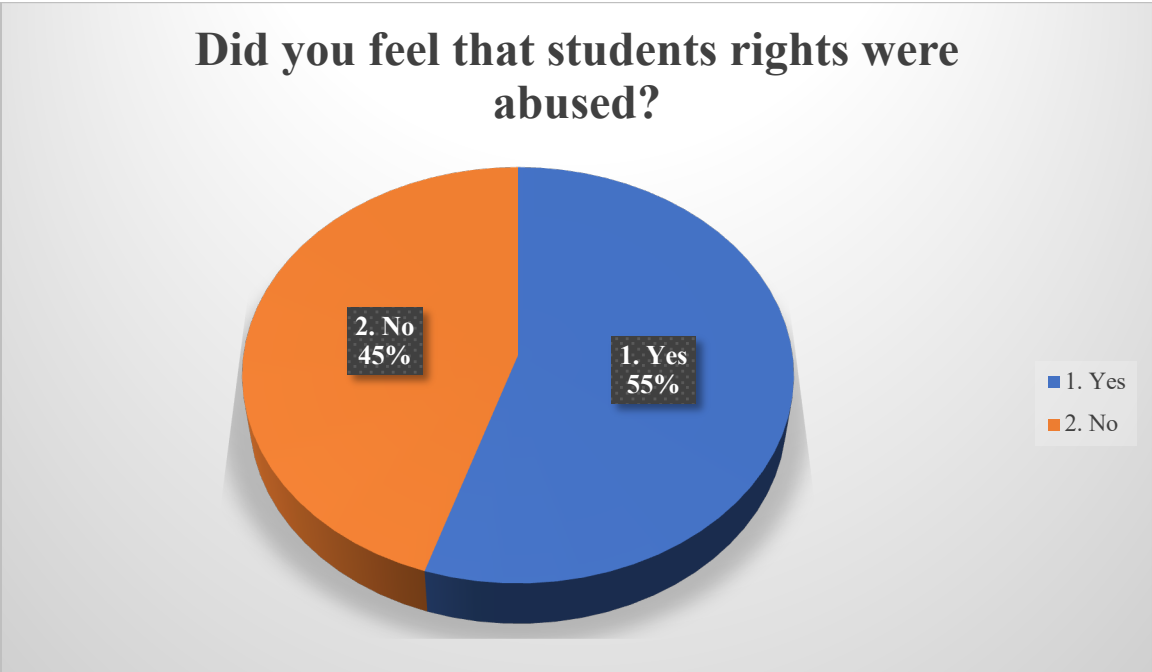


Figure 4 – Professors who felt that students’ rights to education were abused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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