

**Transition from High School to University:  
Perspectives of first year students at the  
University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences**

By

Midion Mapfumo Chidzonga

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Supervisor: Dr. Alwyn J.N. Louw

Co-supervisor: Prof. Simbarashe Rusakaniko

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## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signature:                      Date: 18/09/2014

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**Declaration of the nature and extent of the contribution by the candidate and collaborators.**

I hereby declare that the contributions by the candidate and collaborators are as indicated below:

i) **Candidate**

- conceptualisation of the study;
- proposal write up;
- applying for ethical clearances;
- distribution of the questionnaires;
- conducting the structured questions interviews;
- transcription and coding and analysis of the qualitative data;
- data entry;
- data analysis;
- writing up of the thesis;
- submission of the thesis.

ii) **Dr. A.J.N. Louw (main supervisor)**

Advice and guidance:

- throughout the conceptualisation of the project;
- development of the proposal;
- ethical clearance;
- submission of the proposal for marking;
- carrying out the study;
- writing up the thesis;
- submission of the thesis.

iii) **Prof. S. Rusakaniko: (local supervisor) Biostatistician**

Assistance with bio-statistical components:

- conceptualisation of the project;
- preparation of the proposal, questionnaire design;
- preparing the questionnaires;
- data entry and analysis;
- final thesis writing.

iv) **Ms.S.N.M'kumbuzi : Research assistant.(junior lecturer).**

- distributed and collected questionnaires
- administered the in-depth interviews

Signature:

Date: 18/09/201

## **Abstract**

### **Introduction**

Literature shows that the transition from high school to university is fraught with challenges and that there is need to appreciate these challenges from the students' perspectives and devise ways of assisting the students navigate them smoothly.

### **Aim**

To explore the perspectives of first year students at the University of Zimbabwe, College of Health Sciences (UZCHS) regarding their transition from high school to the UZCHS and propose possible ways to manage the transition phase based on the students' perspectives.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of this study were to determine the students' perspectives with regards to various factors that are known to affect the transition from high school to university.

### **Design**

An evaluative research study design was adopted using a mixed method research approach sequentially applying a quantitative and qualitative method.

### **Method**

Four hundred and eighty six (486) self-administered survey questionnaires with 23 close-ended questions were distributed to all first year students in the UZCHS. Only 16 questions were analysed for purposes of this research project.

A total of 49 interviews were conducted for the in-depth structured questions interview on a randomly selected group of students from each of the programmes.

### **Results**

The response rate was 51% (246/486) ; 81.4% of students were in the 19 to 20 years age group; 52% males and 48% females; 44.4% of the students were enrolled in the MBChB programme.

The major challenges faced by the students were the heavy workload; poor counselling services; sticking to timetables; using the library; poor teacher-student relationships; poor sense of belonging; living with a diverse population Frustrations at the UZCHS were identified as arising from academic issues: examinations marks; poor facilities; inadequate high school preparation for university grades and poor feedback. Students' financing at

university was also of concern to the students. The students found the orientation week most useful.

The motivation for joining the UZCHS was for career prospects, personal desires and parental influence. Preparatory information given by the UZCHS was considered adequate but not sufficiently detailed. Factors that helped students settle in were the initial reception, orientation week, and the relationships between students, staff and lecturers. The role of parents, peers and friends in settling in was also highlighted as important.

### **Conclusions**

The students' perspectives on transition are similar to those reported in the literature: need for pre-university information, better accommodation, improved library facilities, improved counselling services, lengthening the orientation week, more detailed information about UZCHS before admission, improve pre-university contact with students, reduced workload in order to accommodate extra-curricular social life. Students' preparation for life and learning at university should start during high school.

## **Opsomming**

### **Inleiding**

Uit die literatuur is dit baie duidelik dat die oorgang van studente vanaf die skool na universiteit baie uitdagend is. Daar is derhalwe 'n behoefte dat hierdie uitdagings vanuit die perspektiewe van die studente beskou word in 'n poging om hulle op die mees effektiewe maniere te ondersteun en te begelei.

### **Doelstelling**

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die perspektiewe van eerstejaarstudente aan die Universiteit van Zimbabwe se Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe (UZCHS) te ondersoek wat betref die oorgang van hoërskool na die UZCHS, en wyses voor te stel om die oorgangsfase te bestuur, gebaseer op die studente se perspektiewe.

### **Doelwit**

Die doelwitte van hierdie studie was om te bepaal wat die studente se perspektiewe was oor die verskeie welbekende problematiese faktore teenwoordig in die oorgang van skool na universiteit.

### **Ontwerp**

'n Evaluerende navorsingsontwerp is onderneem deur 'n gemengde navorsingsmetode te volg. Dit is opeenvolgend deur 'n kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe metode toegepas.

### **Metode**

'n Self-administrerende vraelysopname met 23 geslote vrae is ewekansig toegepas en versprei aan vierhonderd ses- en tagtig (486) studente van die UZCHS. Slegs 16 vrae is vir die doeleindes van hierdie studie geanaliseer.

'n Onderhoud met in-diepte gestruktureerde vrae is ook gevoer met 'n ewekansig geselekteerde groep studente (49) van elk van die programme wat aangebied word by die UZCHS.

### **Resultate**

Die responskoers was 51% (246/486); 81.4% van die studente was in die ouderdomsgroep 19 tot 20 jaar; 52% was manlik en 48% vroulik; 44.4% van die studente was geregistreer vir die MBChB program.

Die uitdagings deur die studente ervaar was onder andere die swaar werklading, swak studente-ondersteuningsdienste, om by te bly by die rooster, die gebruik van die biblioteek,

swak dosent-student verhouding, 'n swak gevoel van behoort aan, en om deel te wees van 'n diverse samelewing. Frustrasies by die UZCHS het hul oorsprong gehad by akademiese kwessies: eksamenpunte; uitslae en swak terugvoering. Studente-finansiering aan die universiteit was ook 'n bron van kommer by studente. Studente het die oriëntasieweek die nuttigste gevind.

Die motivering om aan te sluit by die UZCHS het verband gehou met loopbaanvooruitsigte, persoonlike behoeftes en ouer-invloed. Voorbereidende inligting verskaf deur die UZCHS is beskou as voldoende maar sonder genoeg besonderhede. Faktore wat studente gehelp het om tuis te voel was die aanvanklike ontvangs, oriëntasieweek, en die verhoudings tussen studente, personeel en lektore. Die rol van ouers, portuurgroep en vriende om hulle te laat tuis voel, is aangedui as belangrik.

### **Gevolgtrekkings**

Die studente se perspektiewe op oorgang is soortgelyk aan dié wat in die literatuur gerapporteer word. Daar is 'n behoefte aan beter studentebehuising en biblioteekfasiliteite en studente-ondersteuningsdienste, en meer gedetailleerde informasie oor die UZCHS voor toelating. Studente glo ook dat die oriëntasie week verleng moet word en dat die werklading verminder moet word om hul buitemuurse sosiale lewe te akkommodeer. Studente se voorbereiding vir die studentelewe en universiteitstudies behoort reeds op hoërskool te begin.



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## **Dedications**

Mudiwa Musekiwa our late son, and Mavis my late wife: aluta continua. Mapfumo Anodiwa and Tichafa Tinodiwa, our lovely children, for the strength and purpose to continue, the centre of my universe.

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## List of Abbreviations

Frequently used abbreviations are listed below.

IGCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
MBChB	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery Degree
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
UZCHS	University of Zimbabwe, College of Health Sciences
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Few studies on transition from high school to university have been done on the African continent with the most recent being from Afulo (2005). The majority of studies on transition from high school to university have been undertaken in the North American, European and Australian contexts (Burnett, 2006; Krause et al., 2005; Briggs et al., 2012, James et al., 2010). These studies indicate that the transition from high school to university is fraught with challenges and that there is a need to appreciate them from the students' perspectives. The transition from high school to the university culture is often complex and difficult, with challenges for all parties involved (Briggs et al., 2012; Yam, 2010; Lawrence, 2005; Kremer, 2001; Krause, 2001). Students' academic success is largely dependent on successful transitioning in the first year (Briggs et al., 2012). Problems encountered during the transition period are now being compounded by the increased student population with diverse backgrounds (Doring, Bingham & Bramwell-Vial, 1997). The change to student-centred learning calls for early student engagement, especially during the transition phase in their first year, in order to help the students adapt to university learning (Krause, 2005). University support systems and staff play a major role in assisting first year students to engage with their studies (Krause et al., 2005). Transition is facilitated by the adoption of a teaching and learning strategy that facilitates student engagement. In view of the fact that academic staff play a major role in students' academic performance and also that they have direct contact with students, they should play a critical role during the transition period (Rhoden & Dowling, 2006). The active participation of the academic staff will go a long way in assisting students to adapt to the learning environment of the university. Student transition to university offers considerable challenges to all parties involved (Briggs et al., 2012). The transition may be from high school, from a working environment or from another social background (Yam, 2010). In the students' transition to university there are various factors which could possibly interplay with each other, for example, the social and academic circumstances of students and the institutional systems that should support them (Briggs et al., 2012).

Tinto's seminal work on first year student success and progression (Briggs et al., 2012;Tinto,1993), provides guiding principles. These principles are as follows: students enter with or have the opportunity to acquire the skills needed for academic success; personal contact with students extends beyond academic life; retention actions are systematic; retention programmes address students' needs early; an explanation of the study retention programmes is student-centred; and education is the goal of retention programmes.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

It is unknown whether students at the UZCHS,in Zimbabwe, experience challenges similar to students in North America, Europe and Australia, or whether similar approaches to assist students during transition should be applied in managing this transition phase at the UZCHS.

### **1.2.1 Research question**

In order to understand the transition phase in relation to the UZCHS students, this study was carried out to answer the question: "What are the perspectives of the first year students at the UZCHS with regards to their transition from high school to university?"

### **1.2.2 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study was to understand the UZCHS first year students' perspectives with regard to the major areas that influence transition to university as reported in the literature. These areas include aspects such as support networks, curriculum issues, preparedness for university life, support at university, gaps and mismatches in the transition, impact of high school experiences on transition to university. The transition involves negotiating new academic and personal challenges (Rickinson, 1998) and making social and cognitive adjustments (Harklau, 2001).

### **1.2.3 Rationale**

Understanding these challenges would enable UZCHS propose ways of handling the transition phase based on students' own perspectives and create an optimal



environment for facilitating a smooth transition to university. This approach would possibly lead to a successful journey in higher education.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The research objectives of the study were to determine:

- (i) the demographics of the students in the various programmes;
- (ii) the influences motivation for joining the courses at the UZCHS;
- (iii) the personal and institutional challenges and enabling factors faced by the students during their transition;
- (iv) factors affecting stay at the UZCHS, personal development, and satisfaction with students support at the university;
- (v) possible changes suggested by the students;
- (vi) factors that assisted students in settling in;
- (vii) preparatory information given to students on joining the UZCHS;
- (viii) factors that impacted on the transition process;
- (ix) sources of frustration;
- (ix) factors involved in personal growth;
- (x) experiences in high school and how they impacted the transition;
- (xi) students' personal rating of their academic and other qualities;
- (xii) general evaluation of the learning environment.

A mixed method research approach was used to investigate the perspectives of the students. The method involved using a self-administered questionnaire survey and an in-depth structured questions interview.

### **1.4 Overview of the Chapters**

Chapter 2 is concerned mainly with the literature review. It gives an overview of what is known in the literature with regard to the students' transition from high school to university, and also an indication of published work relating to the Zimbabwean context. Various aspects of the transition phase are described in the literature. These aspects are explored in relation to the Zimbabwean context. To date no work has been done in Zimbabwe in this field of study.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology. It presents the research design adopted, research instruments used, data collection, data analysis, ethical issues in the study and points out the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and their analysis and interpretation.

Chapter 5 deals with the discussion of the findings and recommendations of the study.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusions from the study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

The majority of studies on transition from high school to university have been undertaken in the North American, European and Australian contexts (Action on Access, 2003; Burnett, 2006; Krause et al., 2005; Briggs et al., 2012; James et al., 2010). These studies indicate that the transition from high school to university is fraught with challenges and that there is a need to appreciate them from the students' perspectives. Literature confirms that the transition into the university culture is often complex and difficult, with challenges to all parties involved (Briggs et al., 2012; Yam, 2010; Lawrence, 2005; Krause, 2001; Afulo, 2005). Very little work has been done in the African context (Afulo, 2005).

Student transition to university offers considerable challenges to all parties involved (students, parents, families and institutions) (Briggs et al., 2012). This leads to the transition phase being affected by an interplay between the social and academic circumstances of the students and the institutional systems that should support them (Briggs et al., 2012). The students come from various backgrounds, such as either directly from high school, or from a working environment, or from other social backgrounds (Yam, 2010). However, students enrolled at the UZCHS all come directly from high school. The varied backgrounds of people entering university as first year students may mean that a considerable number of students are either not familiar with, or have been ill-informed about, what to expect from university education, especially the group referred to as "first generation students" (Nelson et al., 2006). The literature shows that this group of students may have unrealistic expectations which may then lead to difficulties in adjusting to the university environment (Krallman & Holcomb, 1997). The first year is the period in which most students face serious challenges in adjusting socially and academically, and thus efforts have to be made to assist them to adapt to the different set of university learning expectations and experiences (McInnis, 2001). Skene, Hogan and Brown (2006) look upon the transition phase as comprising a series of adjustments that need to be made, not only by the students, but also by the academic staff as they have to be accommodating and responsive to the students' needs. Students' expectations of teaching and learning are partly influenced by their previous education and life experiences (Ozga & Sukhnandan, 1998). Students' level of pre-university preparation is crucial in affecting and effecting their adaptation to university learning (Lowe & Cook, 2003). Tinto (2008) suggests that institutes of higher education should

not blame the students for their poor understanding of university expectations, but instead should adopt a more student-centred and supportive approach that will encourage their social and academic integration right from their first year. This will contribute to the enhancement of their future academic success. A rich and smooth transition to university will avoid student dissatisfaction with their academic experience and thereby reduce poor performance and ultimately withdrawals from the university. Nelson et al., (2006) also emphasise the need for support during the first year to enable students to adjust to a more independent style of learning at the university.

Published literature has identified the following key issues in the transition process:

- i) student engagement;
- ii) student expectations;
- iii) encouraging potential students;
- iv) students diversity;
- v) learner identity;
- vi) university support system;
- vii) learning and teaching in higher education.

These issues will be discussed in the following sections in the attempt to shed light on the scholarly work done on these aspects.

## **2.2 Student Engagement**

The quality of teaching, the approach used and poor feedback from faculty to students, may lead students to perceive academics as unapproachable, inaccessible, and not interested in their work (McInnis & James, 1995). On the other hand, Krause et al., (2005) have shown that improved staff commitment and accessibility is making the students take a more positive view of learning at university. Effective teaching strategies can be developed only once the students' conception of learning has been taken into account. To be able to engage with them, it will be important, for example, to take the different learning styles present in the group into account (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). It behoves the institutions and staff to provide the right environment that promotes engagement right from the first year (Krause & Coates, 2008;

Ramsden, 2003). This is achieved by creating an environment that makes the students develop a sense of belonging to the institution and the university community. This starts with peer interaction which ultimately leads to reinforcement of academic learning. As noted by Pascarella & Terenzini (2005), this becomes the bedrock of other university life: discussion groups, social activities, service learning.

### **2.3 Student Expectations**

Students who plan to transfer to university have difficulty envisaging university life and accurately predicting their experience (Peel, 2000; Sander et al., 2000; Tranter, 2003; Smith & Hopkins, 2005; Longden, 2006; Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC, 2007). This possibly relates to their expectations, aspirations and decision-making capacity (Peel, 2000; Sander et al., 2000; Tanter, 2003; Smith & Hopkins, 2005; Longden, 2006). The reality of the students' first year at university tends to be mismatched by their pre-transfer aspirations (Tranter, 2003; Smith & Hopkins, 2005). This creates great difficulty in adapting to higher education. Many students tend to make uninformed decisions with regard to the institution of choice or programmes they wish to pursue at university (James, 2000; Hillman, 2005). This leads to students withdrawing or contemplating withdrawing from the university (Yorke et al., 1997; Yorke & Longden, 2007). Planning the transition is important as it leads to better-informed decisions being taken (Smith, 2002). This can be achieved by planning the transition process in a collaboration between schools and universities (Smith, 2002). When the transition from high school to university is planned properly the students develop pre-transition skills and knowledge that support independent undergraduate learning. At times there may be fewer choices due to the limited numbers of institutions offering the students' "preferred" courses. This tends to occur in developing countries where facilities are limited. Systems of planned transition involving liaison between schools and universities make for better informed decision-making (Smith, 2002). Pitkethly and Prosser (2001) proposed that institutional changes in universities be made so that the higher educational experiences match more closely with the students' expectations (Briggs et al., 2012; Longden, 2006; Smith, 2002).

### **2.4 Encouraging Potential Students**

Students should be familiarised with university teaching and learning modes as this has been shown to improve first year performance (Pargetter, 2000). This should include familiarising students with university teaching and learning modes, learning to move independently about the city and the university complex, and acquiring a good understanding of course choices

(Pargetter, 2000). These pre-transition skills and knowledge are important in preparing the students for independent undergraduate life and learning (Briggs et al., 2009). Various familiarisation programmes have been advocated, e.g. Newcastle University PARTNERS programme and the University of Melbourne higher education Buddy Program (Briggs et al., 2009; Clerehan, 2003). Student familiarisation programmes are important in helping potential students build their learner identity. Familiarisation programmes could be more successful if they started at the high schools that eventually feed the university with the students. My personal view is that open days should be organised for high school students to visit the UZCHS and have first-hand information and feel of the university.

## **2.5 Student Diversity**

Most countries have now made university education accessible to all the different socio-economic groups unlike earlier times when university education was only for the elite. Access to higher education by all has been made possible by the development of national policies that make it mandatory to extend access to university to all. As a result there is a change in students admitted, from recently qualified high school students to mature students and disadvantaged students (Briggs, 2012; Yorke & Thomas, 2003). Several studies on diverse groups of students: mature students (Clerehan, 2003; Johnson & Watson, 2004); students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Yorke & Thomas, 2003); indigenous students and those from isolated locations (Hillman, 2005); students in paid employment (Broadbridge & Swanson, 2005; Longden, 2006); first-generation students (Clerehan, 2003); 'non-traditional students' (Leathewood & O'Connell, 2003); provide some interesting insights into the difficulty first year students experience at university. Knox (2005) has shown that all these student groups experience some form of potential isolation and frustration at university due to the fact that they fail to meet the university's expectation of them. Yorke and Thomas' study (2003) demonstrated that the potential success of students can be maximised if universities respond positively on an institution-wide basis by creating:

- an institutional climate supportive in various ways of students' development, that is perceived as "friendly";
- an emphasis on support leading up to and during the initially first year of study;
- an emphasis on formative assessment in the early phase of programmes;
- a recognition of the importance of the social dimension in learning activities;

- recognition that the pattern of students engagement in higher education is changing, and a preparedness to respond positively to this in various ways (Yorke & Thomas, 2003).

## **2.6 Student Identity**

Support must be given to the students during the transition phase to enable them to adjust to university life and develop student identity and autonomy (Briggs et al., 2012). As pointed out by Huon and Sankey (2002), on entry to university students are expected to adjust to university life and hopefully reorganise the way they think about themselves as learners and social beings as this adjustment helps them develop learner identity and autonomy. As students enter university they are expected to make connections between pre-university experience and the experience at university (Perry & Allard, 2003). Further expectations are that they could include making use of opportunities to form positive social relationships with other students and with staff members (Johnson & Watson, 2004; Kemp & Barefoot, 2005). This normally happens when students are encouraged to visit institutions of higher education and make contact with current students, enabling them to imagine what it feels like “being a student” (Briggs et al., 2009). Harvey and Drew (2006) contend that “students adjust quicker if they learn the institutional “discourse” and feel they fit in as a result of visiting the institution prior to admission. It is during this period that students need to form a sense of their student identity (Huon & Sankey, 2002) and learn to act autonomously as a university student (Frazey & Frazey, 2001). Unfortunately if they miss out on this opportunity there is a tendency for them to experience disorientation and loss of personal identity (Scanlon et al., 2005). This may make them feel that they are in the wrong place (Tranter, 2003). Establishing a positive student identity is thus an essential factor in being persistent and successful as a university student (Briggs et al., 2012). Students are encouraged to develop peer interaction as a mode of developing concepts of self that are associated with learning and achievement (Dweck, 1999).

## **2.7 University Support Systems**

Adequate university support systems enable socialisation and adaptation. This goes a long way in promoting easy passage through the first year at university. At induction, student peer coaches are useful in assisting new students to develop positive relationships with other students (Pitkethly & Prosser, 2001; Westlake, 2008). These authors advocate the use of the most student-focussed members of staff to assist the first year students in developing positive relationships with other students. Staff course co-ordinators should be assigned to work with

small groups of first-year students particularly during the induction week (Pitkethly & Prosser, 2001; Huon & Sankey, (2002). Peel (2000) and Pitkethly & Prosser (2001) note that improved student-staff ratios are beneficial in helping students adjust to university life. During the first year the most student-focused members of staff should be assigned to guide the first year students (Briggs et al., 2012). However, in resource limited environments this is not possible as the numbers of university students is increasing in the face of diminishing numbers of academic staff. Briggs et al., (2012) indicate that some of the important university support systems during the transition phase include: systems of information-giving; orientation; tours; student hand-outs; course outlines with clear statements of aims; objectives and assessment methods; career information integrated into courses; and information about staff availability. This thinking is also supported by the works of Pitkethly & Prosser (2001). However, current literature indicates that students may be over-burdened with information during the induction period and suggests that effective induction should be spread over the whole of the first semester or even all throughout the first year (Briggs et al., 2012; Edward, 2003). There is thus a need for an intensive activity-based induction programme purposely designed to introduce the students to the university, the programme, the staff and each other (Briggs et al., 2012; Edward, 2003). Students should be encouraged to participate in seminars and workshops during their first year as a way of sustaining socialisation (Keup & Barefoot, 2005). Student learning is benefitted by college environments that emphasise close relationships between faculty and students as well as faculty concerns about student development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

## **2.8 Learning and Teaching in Higher Education**

Another important aspect of transition to higher education involves the university curriculum, the learning modes in higher education and access to lecturers and tutors (Briggs et al., 2012). Assessment feedback is also a very important facet of student learning experiences and must be clearly enunciated in the curriculum. There must also be clarity on the core content to be mastered, the skills that need to be developed, and reflective and autonomous learning that need to be developed. These issues relate to the various disciplinary skills that need to be mastered. Sander et al., (2000) contend that new students value the approachability and teaching skills of 'good teachers' and that they enjoy learning through group interaction rather than formal lectures. Formal lectures tend to be the norm at universities with a large number of students, as opposed to the usual small classes in high school. Most studies indicate that the onus is on the students to adapt to the higher education learner identity (Action on Access, 2003; Briggs et al., 2012). The student will thus have to adapt to these large numbers and at times to



strangers with whom they have to forge new relationships. Another important goal to develop at this stage is autonomous learning. Pascarella & Terenzini (2005) suggest that collaborative and co-operative learning tend to improve knowledge retention.

Harvey & Drew (2006) caution that the need is not so much on focusing on first year students' deficiencies and how to provide for them, but rather to improve upon the student experience in general. This echoes the sentiments expressed by Yorke & Thomas (2003) that universities must be prepared to respond positively on an institution-wide basis in order to maximise the success of all their students (Briggs et al., 2012). Pascarella & Terenzini (2005) add that changes in students are a result of many factors acting holistically in unison to achieve the desired change.

## **2.9 Empirical Studies on Transition**

The Newcastle University study on students transition to university by Briggs et al., (2009) and the Bridging the Gap study by Clark & Hall (2010), are two of the major studies on student transition carried out in the United Kingdom in an attempt to understand what is involved in this transition phase. Various data collection methods were used in these studies on transition to university. The methods used were an intranet survey, conferences involving staff, case studies, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews. These studies explored the programmes set up to support students in transition and also to gather information from students in transition and from those who had gone through the process. The themes that were explored were the students' impression of their first year at university, any relevant pre-admission activities, experiences of university initial and extended induction programmes, their experiences of teaching and learning at university, and their levels of engagement with their peers, tutors and courses.

The above named two studies showed that some students felt that progressing to university was a normal process in life, and yet others needed a lot of encouragement and information before they could bring themselves to apply to join the university. The students felt that communicating with the proposed university and students from that university before entry was useful in moulding their aspirations to join university. Visits to universities by students and teachers go a long way in helping high school students decide on joining university.

These two studies further advocated various pre-entry programmes to prepare students to join university. These programmes could be targeted at final year high school students with the hope that they could help students decide to join university or not. Specific programme oriented

activities could also help students to prepare for university life. Other programmes could be geared to encourage students to appreciate the benefits of university education.

Experiences during and after transition included aspects such as creating learner identity, relating to other students and staff and learning in higher education. The initial induction period is important in the formation of learner identity. This includes social programmes for introducing new students to the layout of the university campus and to the systems and services available at the university. During this period the students are also introduced to the nature and content of their academic programmes. However, there is need to make sure that these activities assist in bringing together students and staff in a course-related manner.

Positive relations between staff and students should be created early in university life as a way of building learner identity. This can be achieved if an extended induction period is adopted. This also helps students familiarise themselves with their new environments, staff and other students. The university thus needs to create a supportive environment with more personal contact from tutors.

Thus for transition to university to be successful there is a need for a conscious effort on the part of the university to create a supportive environment to support the students before entry and during the crucial first year.

The findings from this study will therefore be useful to the UZCHS in that it would enable the authorities manage the transition period in line with the perspectives of the students and thus augur for a smooth transition.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodological approach used: the mixed method approach used; the research instruments used; data collection and data analysis; ethical issues in the study and the limitations of the study. Random sampling was used for both the quantitative and qualitative arms of the study research.

### **3.2 Study Design**

An evaluative research study design was undertaken to determine the perspectives first year students have about their experience of the transition phase from high school to university. A mixed method research approach was used sequentially applying a quantitative and qualitative research method. This approach is appropriate in this study because the aim of the study is to draw conclusions from students' perspectives and the quantitative approach alone would be too impersonal while, on the other hand, the qualitative approach alone would not have been sufficiently representative of the students' perspectives during the transition period. The two methods are complementary in data collection and data analysis by building on the strengths of each method, minimising the potential biases inherent in each method when used separately and thus broadening the scope of the research. The questions are retrospective in nature and multiple approaches in data collection and analysis were warranted. An equivalent status design was used for data analysis and inferences. The equivalent status means that the qualitative and the quantitative arms of the study are carried out in parallel and at the same time with neither the qualitative or quantitative arm being given preference or dominance over the other.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

Two instruments were used: a) a self-administered survey questionnaire with 16 close-ended questions for the quantitative component, and b) a structured questions open-ended questionnaire was used for the qualitative in-depth interviews (see appendices B and C, respectively).

- a) The survey questionnaire (16 questions long) was constructed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale which sought responses on demographics, motivation for choosing the programme of study, personal and institutional challenges faced during the transition, factors affecting stay in the university, factors affecting settling in at the university, level of

satisfaction with the programme, experiences in high school and how they prepared one for study in university and general evaluation of the learning environment at the university. The questionnaire was constructed as an adaptation of questionnaires from the following authors: Astin (2003), as quoted by Afulo (2003); Pace & Kuh, (1998); and Afulo, (2005). The questionnaire was pilot tested before administration for both face and content validity to ensure that the questions measured what they were supposed to answer, the words used could be understood clearly, that questions were being similarly interpreted, questions were user-friendly and the questionnaire was not unduly long.

The research assistant (a junior lecturer) distributed the questionnaires to the students in the various programmes at the beginning of a class lecture and collected them after the students had filled them in. This avoided the power differential with the students if the researcher –the dean- distributed them. All students were eligible to participate and hence these were the convenient sample and they opted to participate randomly.

- b) An in-depth structured questions (15 questions long) interview was conducted with individual students randomly selected from each of the nine programmes. The assistant researcher requested those students willing to participate in the interview to contact her for the appointment to conduct the interviews.

### **3.4 Setting**

The UZCHS is currently the major training institution for Health Professionals in Zimbabwe. Students are admitted into the UZCHS following six years of secondary education (high school). They have to pass either the Advanced Level Certificate Examinations administered by the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), or other equivalent examinations such as the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) from Cambridge, England. For admission to the UZCHS, students are expected to pass in any three of the following school subjects: chemistry, mathematics, biology or physics.

### **3.5 Study Population**

The target population was all the 486 first year students in the UZCHS August 2013 intake.

#### **3.5.1 Sample**

A convenience sample was randomly selected and issued with the self-administered questionnaires, explanation sheet of the study, and consent form (quantitative arm).

Another randomly selected sample of 10% of the student population from each programme was invited and consented for in-depth interviews using the structured questions (qualitative arm).

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data was entered into STATA 10 for analysis and frequencies calculated for the various items under study and reported as percentages for the quantitative component.

The recorded interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed for themes and categories. The themes that came up were mainly to do with self-rating, environment at UZCHS (accommodation, water, electricity, learning facilities, programme choices, motivation to join UZCHS, orientation week activities, workload, meeting university expectations).

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Participation by all students was voluntary after reading the explanation form of the study and signing the consent form. No risk was envisaged in participating in the study. No identifiers of the participants were on the questionnaires. The data collection forms were kept under lock and key. Institutional Ethics Review Committees' permission was granted to conduct this study from Stellenbosch University and University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences.

### **3.8 Limitations of the Study**

This study was carried out six months after entry into university and some students may not have had accurate recollection of their expectations, and how they felt at entry. Their answers may well have been influenced by their six month experience at the university. Students may have interpreted the questions differently and hence given answers in line with their interpretation of the meaning of the question. The questionnaire was piloted to limit possible misinterpretation of the meaning of the questions. Similar to other retrospective studies recall bias may not be ruled out.

The poor response rate (50.6%) could be attributable to general student apathy and possibly unfamiliarity with the use and importance of surveys by the students.

## Chapter 4: Results

### 4.1 Introduction

The quantitative and qualitative results were analysed separately and then integrated in a thematic sequence (where possible) and reported thematically in tables, and as a narration according to the following themes: demographics; students motivation to join university; preparatory activities on joining university; factors that assisted students in settling in at university; sources of frustration in the university; self-perception; personal development; evaluation of the university learning environment; experiences of the learning environment in high school; preparation for university in high school; and relationships between students, staff and teachers in high school.

The structured questions with the in-depth interviews were administered to a random sample of 49 students (10% of the first year students drawn from each programme from the student population of 486).

Respondents were randomly selected from each of the nine programmes offered by the UZCHS.

### 4.2 Qualitative Component Data

#### 4.2.1 Demographic and socio-economic background

These interviews were administered to a random sample of 49 students which translates to 10% of the first year student population of 486. Respondents were randomly selected from the nine programmes offered by the UZCHS. The largest group of respondents were from the MBChB programme, followed by Pharmacy. General responses to the questions are given below.

#### 4.2.2 Question 1: How do you rate yourself among other students?

Summary findings

The majority of students rated themselves as being average. The students were more likely to report being above average than being below average. Note this typical remark from the average students:

*“Excellence in medicine is not a piece of cake. This is a hard science subject. The teaching is average and resources, including facilities are below expectation, what do you expect.”*

#### **4.2.3 Question 2: Are you happy with this programme you are doing? If not, why?**

##### Summary findings

The programmes were almost universally positively rated with an overwhelming majority maintaining that they were happy with the programme. These were also the programmes of their first choice. An exception was from the Anatomy course which, although they were generally positive, they maintained that there was need for improvement especially with regard to the provision of adequate cadavers.

*“Yes I am happy with the programme but improvements should be in anatomy. There are not enough cadavers and those present are degenerated and little to learn from them”*

*“Aaaaaah, at anatomy the cadavers are not available one has to cram or use old ones”*

#### **4.2.4 Question 3: Who encouraged you to join the UZCHS?**

##### Summary findings

Self-motivation was the most cited underlying factor to students' registration in their respective programmes of study. The second largest group of respondents reported that they were encouraged by their parents to join the UZCHS. Friends, siblings, high school teachers, and employment opportunities did not have any significant influence on respondents' choice to join the UZCHS. However, medical students noted that they were largely encouraged by the prestige attached to being a doctor, and also by the employment opportunities available to medical graduates.

*“Mainly my parents ever since my childhood they have always wanted me to be a doctor. I then developed an interest”*

*“Ummm, my parents and friends and other relatives”*

#### **4.2.5 Question 4: Who is financing your studies?**

##### Summary findings

The majority of respondents reported that their parents are responsible, while a few have scholarships. Sibling, government support and other relatives were other sources of funding cited.

#### **4.2.6 Question 5: Are you in UZCHS accommodation? If yes, any improvements you wish to get.**

##### Summary findings

The majority of the UZCHS programme students are in university accommodation. A minority of the students stay off campus largely in rented accommodation. Those who stayed on campus maintained that there was need for improvement especially in the supply of water and electricity.

Note this typical comment:

*“Water and electricity are basic amenities which are needed for effective learning. Can you imagine going to class without taking a bath, after spending a night without lights, hence no homework done. It is hard.”*

A few students complained about poor internet connectivity and the poor quality and variety of food.

Only a handful of students were satisfied with their living conditions.

#### **4.2.7 Question 6: Are you staying out of residence? Where? What are the challenges of the place and staying out of residence generally?**

##### Summary findings

A majority of those who reported that they stayed off campus reported that they stayed in localities which are more than five kilometres from campus. Such students had serious complaints about non-availability, inconvenience and cost of transport. Students reported that they waste a lot of time travelling, while at the same time they maintained that they have limited time for studies especially because they are forced to leave campus early in order to catch their transport. The following remark is evidence of students' perspective in this regard.

*“It is painful when you have to leave important discussions with fellow students who stay on campus. Staying off-campus is a serious impediment to learning.”*

Poor and erratic supply of water and electricity were also reported as worse than for those who stay on campus. Most neighbourhoods which are affordable to students were reported not ideal for study primarily because they are noisy all the time. Despite the high rentals charged by owners, the accommodation was reported as very poor, small and unfurnished.



#### **4.2.8 Question 7: What are the greatest challenges you are currently facing about studying at UZCHS?**

##### Summary findings

What is clear is that the students are not aware of what it would take for them to be successful health professionals. For instance, the majority students argued that UZCHS programmes have workloads are too heavy, leaving them with no time for socialisation. Note this general remark from most students”

*‘This programme is anti-social. We spend all our time either being in class or studying. We will graduate without knowing Harare at all.’*

Some students complained about the inadequate learning materials including the library facilities. The most disgruntled students were those in the MBChB programme. Quite a few respondents reported that they did not face challenges.

#### **4.2.9 Question 8: Are you satisfied with the information you received about UZCHS?**

##### Summary findings

Almost all the respondents, save for a few, reported that they were happy with the information they received about the UZCHS. Generally, the information was rated as very good, educative and encouraging. However, they remarked that they were not made aware of the magnitude of the work.

#### **4.2.10 Question 9: Is UZCHS meeting your expectations of university life? If not what would you wish done?**

##### Summary findings

Generally an overwhelming majority agreed that the UZCHS is meeting their expectations of university life. Of the few who disagreed, they wished the university would allow time to socialise and to improve learning approaches and learning facilities. They noted that they are stuck in classrooms with no exposure to virtual learning.

#### **4.2.11 Question 10: Are you satisfied with the following at the UZCHS?**

##### **4.2.11.1 Orientation**

##### Summary findings

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the orientation.

#### **4.2.11.2 Academic**

##### Summary findings

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the UZCHS academically. Asked about their earlier complaints some of them remarked:

*“Well given our Zimbabwean context we cannot complain much. But for sure a lot can be improved”*

#### **4.2.11.3 Time management**

The majority of respondents were satisfied with UZCHS time management, while a few complained that some lecturers cancel class without informing students, resulting in considerable inconvenience, especially for those who stay off campus.

#### **4.2.11.4 Programme selection**

The majority of respondents were happy that they were given the programmes of their choice.

#### **4.2.12 Question 11: How did you choose the programme you are studying? Why are you studying this programme? If not your choice, who chose it for you and why?**

##### Summary findings

Asked how respondents chose the programme of study, the majority of respondents reported self-motivation as the main reason. This group was followed by those who reported that their Advanced level results were key in their choice of a programme. A few respondents cited teachers, parents and friends in high school as having had influence on them. A small proportion of the students maintained that they joined the programmes because they wanted to help the country. Passion for the programme, the status associated with medicine and job security were some of the reasons given for choosing their respective programmes. A few students maintained that their parents influenced their choice of programmes.

#### **4.2.13 Question 12: How do you find the campus environment with regard to security and resources?**

##### Summary findings: Security

The majority of respondents reported that campus security was very good and very secure. Only an insignificant number of students maintained that security was not good.

##### Summary findings: Resources

Generally, the respondents were almost split in half, between those who noted that resources were adequate and those who noted that resources were fair at the UZCHS. Only a few respondents reported that resources were inadequate.

**4.2.14 Question 13: Is UZCHS meeting your university expectations? If not what needs to be done?**

Summary findings

Generally the respondents felt that the UZCHS is meeting their university expectations.

**4.2.15 Question 14: What was the most memorable moment during orientation week? Which is the worst moment during orientation?**

Summary findings

Generally the majority of respondents recalled the welcome speeches by the UZCHS staff during orientation as memorable. Others cited the university tour as the most memorable. On the other hand, the majority of respondents reported that there was not much that was unacceptable; they also reported that the time spend during the welcome speeches was too long. Lack of directions showing where one had to go on campus was also cited as one of the worst memories.

**4.2.16 Question 15: Who do you call when you have the following problems: social problems and academic problems?**

Summary findings:

**4.2.16.1 social problems?**

The majority of students reported that they consulted their friends when they have social problems. Another significant group reported that they consult their parents. A small number of students maintained that they consult UZCHS counsellors and also their siblings. The majority of students maintained that they consult their UZCHS peers/friends and lecturers in that order.

**4.2.16.2 academic problems?**

The majority of students maintained that they consult their UZCHS peers/friends and then lecturers.

The overall conclusion from the qualitative component of the study was that the UZCHS was highly rated by the majority of the students who maintain that they were happy with the programmes they were studying. They made recommendations, however, that included the need to improve the supply of electricity and water, the reduction of the workload in order to

increase the capacity for socialisation among students, the need to improve on the quality and quantity of food for the students, the need to improve on the speed of internet connectivity and other learning facilities such as libraries. The students who lived outside university accommodation requested the university to provide adequate accommodation for all students so as to avoid the hazards of commuting to university using public transport.

### 4.3 Quantitative Component Data

#### 4.3.1 Demographics

Two hundred and eleven (211) students, out of 486 first year students, responded (response rate, 43.4%) to the quantitative component of the study. The largest proportion of respondents (for both the qualitative and quantitative component) was from the MBChB programme, followed by the Pharmacy programme, with dentistry the least, having the least number of responses.

The student body comprised 48.1% females and 51.9% males.

Table 4.1 below indicates that 81.4% of the respondents are in the 19 to 20 years age group (26% and 55.4%) which is a relatively young group. Their youthfulness absolves them from social commitments such as looking after a family or to seek part time employment to sustain them and pay for their studies. They are legally adults but socio-culturally they remain minors being looked after by their parents for sustenance and university fees.

**Table 4.1: Age distribution of the students**

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
18	5	2.5
19	53	26.0
20	113	55.4
21	26	12.7
22	4	2.0
23	2	1.0
24	1	0.5
Total	204	100.1

The distribution of the students by programme indicates that the MBChB programme has the largest enrolment at 44.7% (217/486) with Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) and Bachelor of

Science Honours Degree in Health Education and Health Promotion (BScHEHP) the lowest at 2.9% (14/486) and 3.1% (15/486) respectively. The figures tally with the student population response rates of 44% for the MBChB and 2% and 3.8% for dentistry and BScHEHP, respectively.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of students by programme and response to the questionnaires**

Programme	Respondents	% Response	Total number of students per programme
Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)	4	29	14
Bachelor of Nursing Science (BSc NS)	23	45	51
Honours Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences (HBMLS)	20	69	29
Bachelor of Science in Health Education Promotion (BSc HEP)	8	53	15
Bachelor of Science Occupational Therapy Honours (BSc Occup.Th)	16	47	34
Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours (BPharm Hons)	36	56	64
Bachelor of Science Physiotherapy Honours (BSc Physio Hons)	29	81	36
Bachelor of Science Honours Radiography Diagnostic (BSc HRD)	19	73	26
Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB)	91	42	217
<b>Total</b>	246	50.6	486

### 4.3.2 Motivation to join the UZCHS

Table 4.3 shows that 78% of the students were encouraged by their parents to apply for the courses they applied for (very important (48%) and important (30%)) and that friends played a role in this process (52%).

**Table 4.3: People who encouraged students to join the UZCHS**

	Very Important 5	Important 4	Somewhat important 3	Less important 2	Not important 1	Total (responses)
<b>Encouragement by:</b>						
Teacher	21% (49/234)	21% (48/234)	23% (54/234)	13% (30/234)	23% (53/234)	234
Friend	13% (30/234)	19% (44/234)	29% (68/234)	15% (34/234)	25% (58/234)	234
Parent	48% (111/233)	30% (70/233)	9% (22/233)	6% (13/233)	7% (17/233)	233

*(Adapted from A.W. Astin's 2003 Student information form: as quoted by Afulo (2005))*

The teachers (42%) also played a role in encouraging the students to join the course they did. The effect of this encouragement may be difficult to judge without knowing the level of knowledge they had about the various courses. Parental influence could easily have a negative

effect on the student surviving university as the student may have been “forced” to do a course that the parents are interested in and not the students themselves, while the teachers may not have had adequate information on the courses the students intended to study at university.

#### 4.3.2.1 Personal motivation (reasons)

Table 4.4 shows that the reason students joined the courses they are enrolled in was mainly to “enable me to get a better job”, 79% (very important and important) with the role of the parents being the least at 46% (very important and important), that is fulfilling what their parents/guardians have wanted of them. The low parental role (46%) is at variance with what the students indicated in Table 4.3 that their parents encouraged them to join the courses. This may illustrate that not all parents determine what their children should study at university. It would be interesting to find out how many students were encouraged against their will or just enrolled to please their parents/guardians. A number of students (74%) joined their programmes as a way of fulfilling their life dreams. However, the qualitative component of the study indicated that self-motivation played a major role in students decisions to join the courses in answer to the question, “Who encouraged you to join the UZCHS?”

**Table 4.4: Personal reasons for joining the UZCHS**

	Very Important 5	Important 4	Somewhat important 3	Less important 2	Not important 1	Total (responses)
<b>Personal decision:</b>						
Enable me to get a better job	56% (127/227)	23% (53/227)	13% (29/227)	2% (4/227)	6% (14/227)	227
My parents/guardian wanted me to go	26% (60/227)	20% (46/227)	20% (45/227)	15% (35/227)	18% (41/227)	227
Always been my dream	57% (135/235)	17% (40/235)	9% (20/235)	5% (12/235)	12% (28/235)	235

*(Adapted from A. W. Astin’s 2003 Student information form: as quoted by Afulo (2005))*

Self-motivation was the underlying factor most cited by students for registration in their respective programmes of study. The second largest group of respondents reported that they were encouraged by their parents to join the UZCHS. The role played by parents is also in agreement with findings from the quantitative study. Friends, siblings, high school teachers, government and employment opportunities did not have any significant influence on respondents’ choice to join the UZCHS. Students noted, however, that they were largely encouraged by the prestige attached to being a doctor (for the MBChB), and also the

employment opportunities available to medical graduates. The prestige issue may play a role in the parents' encouraging their children to study medicine. Parents find a lot of joy in announcing: ".....my child is going to be a doctor".

Issues of job opportunities and prestige were common reasons cited by medical students for joining the course they did. In response to the questions on why they chose the specific programme, the majority of respondents reported self-motivation as the main reason. This group was followed by those who reported that their Advanced level results were key to their choice of a programme. The trend at UZCHS is that only those students with the highest grades at A-level are admitted to the MBChB programme. Few respondents cited teachers, parents and friends in high school as having influenced their choices. A small proportion of the students maintained that they joined the programmes because they wanted to help the country. Passion for the programme, status associated with medicine, and job security were some of the reasons given for choosing their respective programmes.

It is apparent that there are many factors that influence the students' in choosing their programme of study: employment prospects, fulfilling parental/guardian wishes and realising one's dream.

### 4.3.3 Preparatory information given at UZCHS

The overall rating of the preparatory information given at the UZCHS indicates that 65% strongly agree/agree that the information was useful (Table 4.5). However, there were wide variations when individual aspects were considered in the area of course selection and orientation period.

**Table 4.5: Preparatory activities on joining the UZCHS**

	Agree strongly 5	Agree 4	Disagree 3	Disagree strongly 2	I don't know 1	Total (responses)
<b>Information from University/UZCHS</b>						
<b>Course selection:</b>						
Received good advice aligned with my performance	29% (66/227)	46% (104/227)	13% (30/227)	7% (16/227)	5% (11/227)	227
Adequate information about UZCHS received while at high school	6% (13/232)	25% (58/232)	41% (95/232)	24% (55/232)	5% (11/232)	232
Information was detailed	6% (13/233)	22% (52/233)	49% (115/233)	18% (41/233)	5% (12/233)	233
Information was clear	4%	30%	41%	19%	6%	230



	(10/230)	(69/230)	(94/230)	(44/230)	(13/230)	
There was a career counsellor	6% (14/232)	26% (60/232)	38% (88/232)	26% (61/232)	4% (9/232)	232
Teachers were helpful	9% (21/233)	41% (95/233)	31% (73/233)	13% (30/233)	6% (233)14	233
UZ admission department was useful	9% (20/231)	25% (58/231)	37% (86/231)	23% (52/231)	6% (15/231)	231
UZ admission policy was clear	13% (29/227)	39% (88/227)	26% (59/227)	15% (35/227)	7% (16/227)	227
<b>Orientation:</b>						
Programme was effective/helpful	24% (56/21)	45% (103/231)	19% (45/231)	10% (22/231)	2% (5/231)	231
Helped with extracurricular adjustment	16% (36/228)	42% (96/228)	24% (55/228)	14% (31/228)	4% (10/228)	228
Introduced university academic requirements	20% (46/230)	56% (128/230)	16% (37/230)	6% (14/230)	2% (5/230)	230
Programme information was clear	20% (46/230)	56% (128/230)	16% (37/230)	6% (14/230)	2% (5/230)	230
Senior students were helpful	20% (47/230)	46% (105/230)	23% (53/230)	8% (19/230)	3% (6/230)	230
My expectations were met	13% (31/230)	41% (95/230)	27% (63/230)	14% (32/230)	4% (9/230)	230
Was a time of anxiety and confusion	29% (67/229)	33% (76/229)	25% (57/229)	11% (25/229)	2% (4/229)	229
Helped me settle in faster	16% (37/230)	38% (88/230)	30% (70/230)	13% (29/230)	3% (6/230)	230

Under course selection 75% of the respondents agree strongly/agree that they received good advice aligned with their performance. 31% agree strongly/agree that they received adequate information about the UZCHS while at high school, with 65% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing that they received good advice with regard to course selection. On the issue of whether the information was detailed, 31% agreed/strongly agreed that it was, with 65% disagreeing/disagreeing strongly. On whether the information was clear 60% disagreed that the information was clear and only 34% agreed. 32% agreed that career counselling was given with 64% disagreeing. Teachers were found to be helpful by 50% of the respondents. 60% agreed that the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) admission department was helpful with 34% disagreeing. 52% attested that the admission policy was clear.

On considering all activities during the orientation programme 65% agreed/strongly agreed that it was useful with wide variations when specific aspects were considered. Found to be useful, 69%; 58% strongly agree/agree that it helped with extracurricular adjustment. 76% strongly agreed/agreed that they had a good introduction to university academic requirements. 76% felt that senior students were helpful. 54% felt that their expectations were met and 41% felt that

they were not met. 62% felt that the orientation week was happening during their time of anxiety and confusion, while 54% felt that the orientation period helped them settle in faster at the university.

Response to the qualitative study question: Are you satisfied with the information you received about UZCHS?

The response to this question by almost all the respondents, save for a few, was that they were happy with the information they received about the UZCHS. Generally, the information was rated as very good, educative and encouraging. However, they remarked that they were not made aware of the magnitude of work to expect. This finding is in agreement with Table 4.5 in that the information given during the orientation week was useful in aiding their transition to the UZCHS.

#### 4.3.4 Factors that were important in helping the students settle in

Table 4.6 shows factors that were important in helping the students settle in and the importance (very important, important, moderately important) that was attached to various aspects on entry to the UZCHS preparatory activities. These were assessed as follows: reception at university was rated 91%; with academic demands rated at 96%, indicating how the students take their academic demands; relationship between staff and students, 91%; relationship between lecturers and students, 86%; social demands were rated 67%.

**Table 4.6: Factors that were important in helping the student settling in**

	Very Important 5	Important 4	Moderately important 3	Not important 2	I don't know 1	Total (responses)
Reception	41% (90/220)	27% (60/220)	23% (50/220)	7% (15/220)	2% (5/220)	220
Academic demands	54% (120/223)	32% (72/223)	10% (23/223)	3% (6/223)	1% (2/223)	223
Social demands	1% (39/217)	34% (74/217)	32% (70/217)	15% (32/217)	1% (2/217)	217
Relationship between staff and students	31% (69/224)	31% (70/224)	29% (64/224)	6% (14/224)	3% (7/224)	224
Relationship between lecturers and students	32% (72/224)	31% (69/224)	23% (51/224)	7% (16/224)	7% (16/224)	224

This clearly shows that the students were happy with the reception they received, the academic demands they faced, the relationships between students and lecturers, students and staff along with the social demands put upon them. The satisfaction with the academic demands is at variance with findings in the qualitative study where students complained that there was work overload. The satisfaction with social demands is also surprising in that in the qualitative study the students indicated that they had no social life any more due to the heavy workload.

#### 4.3.5 Factors perceived to impact on transition to the UZCHS

Table 4.7 shows by how much (very much, much, little, very little, not at all) the various factors perceived to impact transition to the UZCHS were viewed by the students: how effectively career counsellors addressed their concerns 38% (very much /much); 40% (little/very little); not at all 22%. On whether career counsellors gave competent advice: 45% (very much/much; 34% (little/very little) and 20% (not at all). Career counselling is rated low at the UZCHS.

**Table 4.7: Factors affecting adjusting in the transition phase**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Little 3	Very little 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
Careers counsellors effectively addressed my concerns	13% (28/215)	25% (54/215)	27% (57/215)	13% (28/215)	22% (48/215)	215
Career counsellors gave competent advice	15% (33/215)	30% (65/215)	23% (49/215)	12% (26/215)	20% (42/215)	215
The lecturers were very professional in advising	28% (61/216)	36% (78/216)	20% (44/216)	9% (19/216)	6% (14/216)	216
Peers are better advisors than counsellors	14% (29/214)	22% (48/214)	29% (63/214)	16% (35/214)	18% (39/214)	214
Settled in the university through trial and error	18% (38/210)	23% (49/210)	20% (43/210)	14% (29/210)	24% (51/210)	210
Your concerns changed in the university	20% (42/205)	21% (43/205)	25% (51/205)	15% (31/205)	19% (38/205)	205
University effectively addresses your concerns	18% (37/206)	25% (51/206)	26% (54/206)	16% (33/206)	15% (31/206)	206
Your study method has changed greatly	54% (113/210)	24% (51/210)	11% (24/210)	5% (11/210)	5% (11/210)	210
Parents/guardians are helpful in process of transition	43% (91/212)	25% (52/212)	17% (36/212)	9% (20/212)	6% (13/212)	212

Friends/peers are helpful in the process of transition	36% (73/204)	33% (68/204)	19% (38/204)	10% (20/204)	2% (5/204)	204
Parents/guardians influence the process of transition	35% (68/194)	31% (61/194)	19% (36/194)	9% (17/194)	6% (12/194)	194

The following were ratings for the various aspects: whether lecturers were very professional in advising students 64% (very much/much); peers are better advisors than counsellors 36% (very much/much); 45% (very much/much); settling in at the university by trial and error 41% (very much/much) 34% (little/very little); whether their concerns about university life changed on joining UZCHS 41% (very much/much), 40% (little/very little), 19% (not at all); whether these concerns were effectively addressed by UZCHS 43% (very much/much), 42% (little/very little), 15 % (not at all).

It is known that study methods in high school are likely to be different from those at university and in finding out whether this is what the students perceived or not the responses were as follows: 78% (very much/much); 16 % (little/very little); 5% (not at all). This means that attention will need to be focussed on the 21% (little/very little/not at all) so as to enable these students to participate successfully in university learning.

The helpful role of parents/guardians in the transition process was rated as follows: 68% (very much/much); 36% (little/very little); 6% (not at all). Friends/peers were useful in the transition process with these ratings: 69% (very much/much); 29% (little/very little); 2% (not at all). The guardian/parental influence in the transition process was rated as; 66% (very much/much); 28% (little/very little); 6% (not at all). Thus it would appear that parents/guardians, friends and peers play an important helpful and influential role in the transition process.

#### **4.3.6 Sources of frustration at the university**

Table 4.8 shows that the sources of frustration at the university are academic issues (67%), examinations (66%) and marks and grades (66%), with most of the factors evenly distributed between affecting them (very much, and not at all). This clearly demonstrates the difficulties student have in adjusting to learning at university when compared to their high school experiences.

**Table 4.8: Sources of frustration at the university**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Little 3	Very little 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
Academic	37% (83/222)	30% (66/222)	17% (38/222)	8% (17/222)	8% (18/222)	222
Relationships	15% (32/219)	17% (38/219)	32% (69/219)	16% (35/219)	21% (45/219)	219
Social interactions	12% (26/220)	15% (33/220)	37% (81/220)	17% (38/220)	19% (42/220)	220
Sense of Belonging	15% (32/215)	23% (49/215)	30% (64/215)	17% (37/215)	15% (33/215)	215
Examinations	42% (92/218)	24% (52/218)	20% (43/218)	6% (13/218)	8% (18/218)	218
Marks and grades	41% (88/217)	25% (54/217)	16% (35/217)	10% (22/217)	8% (18/217)	217
Student-lecturer relationship	16% (35/217)	14% (30/217)	31% (68/217)	17% (36/217)	22% (48/217)	217
Student-lecturer interaction	13% (27/216)	19% (40/216)	31% (66/216)	15% (32/216)	24% (51/216)	216
Administration-student dialogue	20% (42/212)	16% (34/212)	25% (53/212)	17% (37/212)	22% (46/212)	212
Administration-student relationship	17% (32/212)	12% (23/212)	28% (52/212)	17% (31/212)	26% (48/212)	212
Punctuality	21% (44/186)	23% (49/186)	27% (57/186)	11% (23/186)	19% (40/186)	186

In response to the question on the greatest challenges faced by students it was clear that the students were not aware of what it would take for them to be successful health professions students. For instance, the majority of students argued that UZCHS programmes workload is too much leaving them with no time for socialisation. The following is a general remark from most students, as stated by this quotations from two students:

*“there is far too much work and one is ever so busy and can hardly breathe and let alone eat. We have lost all our social connections. It is tough”*

and another student had this to say:

*“This programme is anti-social. We spend all our time either being in class or studying. We will graduate without knowing Harare at all.”*

Some students complained about the inadequate learning materials including the library facilities. The most disgruntled students are those in MBChB. Quite a few respondents reported that they did not face challenges.

The majority of the students (69% little, very little, not at all) had no problems with issues of relationships as well as a sense of belonging, 62%. 70% had no problems with the student-lecturer relationship although 30% had some problems with this relationship. Student-lecturer interaction was no cause for concern with 70% of the students. 57% of the students had no difficulties with the issue of punctuality in their daily activities, although 43% had some difficulty. Dialogue between administration and student was not perceived to be a source of frustration by 64% of the students; 71% felt that the relationship with students and administration was not a cause of frustration.

#### 4.3.7 Self rating in various aspects

Table 4.9 shows that 96% of the students rated themselves highly, above average and average, academically. This contrasts with the qualitative report where they rated themselves as average academically.

**Table 4.9: How the students rate themselves in various qualities**

	Highly 5	Above average 4	Average 3	Below average 2	Lower 1	Total (responses)
Academic	24% (58/237)	46% (108/237)	26% (62/237)	3% (7/237)	1% (2/237)	237
Co-operativeness	27% (65/238)	42% (100/238)	28% (66/238)	3% (7/238)		238
Competitiveness	27% (65/238)	40% (94/238)	29% (68/238)	4% (9/238)	1% (2/238)	238
Drive to achieve	51% (123/241)	31% (74/241)	16% (38/241)	2% (4/241)	1% (2/241)	241
Leadership	28% (67/238)	27% (65/238)	31% (74/238)	9% (22/238)	4% (10/238)	238
Physical health	52% (126/241)	32% (77/241)	13% (32/241)	3% (6/241)		241
Emotional health	34% (81/235)	34% (81/235)	24% (57/235)	3% (6/235)	4% (10/235)	235
Resistance	22% (48/222)	24% (53/222)	37% (82/222)	9% (21/222)	8% (18/222)	222
Popularity	10% (24/236)	16% (37/236)	44% (105/236)	16% (38/236)	14% (32/236)	236
Religiousness	30% (72/239)	34% (80/239)	28% (68/239)	5% (11/239)	3% (8/239)	239
Risk taking	23% (53/233)	30% (71/233)	31% (72/233)	11% (25/233)	5% (12/233)	233
Self-confident (intellectual)	33% (78/240)	36% (88/240)	27% (64/240)	2% (5/240)	2% (5/240)	240

Self-confidence (socially)	31% (74/241)	31% (76/241)	27% (66/241)	6% (14/241)	5% (11/241)	241
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In response to the question on self-rating: the majority of students rated themselves as being average. The students were more likely to report being above average than being below average. Note this typical remark from the average students:

*“Excellence in medicine is not a piece of cake. This is a hard science subject. The teaching is average and resources, including facilities are below expectation, what do you expect.”*

Health wise 84% claim good physical health, although people are unlikely to confess to poor health; cooperativeness 97%; highly competitive 96% with 98% rating themselves to have a high, above average and average drive to achieve. On leadership qualities 86% rated themselves in the highly, above average and average range; 92% had average and above average emotional health; 96% believed they had average, above average self-confidence intellectually with a 89% rating in social self-confidence.

In response to the question on whether they were happy with the programme they were doing and if not to give reasons why they were unhappy, the programmes were almost universally positively rated with an overwhelming majority maintaining that they were happy with their programme. An exception was for the anatomy course, although they also echoed the positive remarks, they maintained that there was need for improvement especially with regard to the provision of adequate cadavers.

#### 4.3.8 Personal development

In Table 4.10 the respondents indicated that most of their personal growth (67%) comes from the university with the least coming from home (50%), with high school being a source of growth in 56% of the respondents; clubs and societies 59%.

**Table 4.10: Sources where most personal development took place**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Satisfact- ory 3	Low 2	Very Low 1	Total (responses)
High school	28% (61/218)	28% (61/218)	29% (63/218)	7% (15/218)	8% (18/218)	218
University	40% (87/216)	27% (59/216)	19% (41/216)	9% (20/216)	4% (9/216)	216
Home environment	26% (55/214)	24% (51/214)	29% (62/214)	14% (31/214)	7% (15/214)	214

Clubs and societies	31% (66/213)	28% (60/213)	19% (40/213)	10% (21/213)	12% (26/213)	213
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#### 4.3.9 Associations in personal development

Table 4.11 indicates that further personal development while in the university is attributed to personal responsibility (85%), dialogue (73%); and autonomy (72%), concentrating on one's studies (83%), with teacher attitudes towards students contributing comparatively little at (48%).

**Table 4.11: Associations in the university that contributed to personal development**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Little 3	Very little 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
Freedom at UZCHS	32% (49/217)	33% (72/217)	24% (53/217)	8% (17/217)	12% (26/217)	217
Personal responsibility	52% (111/214)	33% (71/214)	10% (22/214)	2% (4/214)	3% (6/214)	214
Autonomy	35% (70/199)	37% (74/199)	23% (45/199)	3% (5/199)	3% (5/199)	199
Authority	21% (45/211)	31% (65/211)	34% (71/211)	8% (17/211)	6% (13/211)	211
Peer relations	18% (38/215)	37% (80/215)	33% (70/215)	9% (20/215)	3% (7/215)	215
Teacher attitudes towards the student	17% (36/210)	31% (66/210)	31% (65/210)	12% (26/210)	8% (17/210)	210
Participation	30% (62/210)	32% (67/210)	26% (54/210)	7% (15/21)	6% (12/210)	210
Concentration	41% (79/193)	42% (81/193)	12% (24/193)	4% (7/193)	1% (2/193)	193
Effective communication	42% (81/192)	38% (72/192)	17% (33/192)	3% (5/192)	1% (1/192)	192
Dialogue	34% (66/194)	39% (76/194)	23% (44/194)	3% (6/194)	1% (2/194)	194

#### 4.3.10 Developing students' potential

Several factors have been identified as contributing to developing students' potential in the university and, as shown in Table 4.12, all seem to be equally effective with the highest being the ability to develop one's practical value of the programme (85%).

**Table 4.12: Factors in the university that contributed to developing students' potential**

	Very strongly 5	Strongly 4	Weakly 3	Very weakly 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
Achieving your	51%	35%	9%	3%	2%	211



professional goal	(107/211)	(73/211)	(20/211)	(7/211)	(4/211)	
Advice about your educational programme by your lecturers	42% (88/209)	37% (77/209)	15% (31/209)	4% (8/209)	2% (5/209)	209
Appreciation of university	31% (64/205)	36% (73/205)	24% (50/205)	5% (10/205)	4% (8/205)	205
Being approachable	24% (49/205)	40% (83/205)	27% (55/205)	5% (11/205)	3% (7/205)	205
Being considerate	27% (54/202)	40% (80/202)	26% (52/202)	5% (10/202)	3% (6/202)	202
Being encouraging	28% (58/204)	47% (95/204)	19% (39/204)	2% (4/204)	4% (8/204)	204
Being flexible	32% (66/205)	40% (83/205)	19% (39/205)	4% (9/205)	4% (8/205)	205
Being friendly	29% (60/205)	44% (91/205)	20% (41/205)	3% (7/205)	3% (6/205)	205
Being supportive	29% (60/206)	44% (91/206)	21% (43/206)	3% (7/206)	2% (5/206)	206
Being helpful	31% (64/206)	47% (96/206)	16% (33/206)	4% (8/206)	2% (5/206)	206
Being understanding	30% (59/198)	44% (88/198)	17% (34/198)	6% (11/198)	3% (6/198)	198
Developing aesthetic quality	24% (45/184)	43% (80/184)	26% (48/184)	2% (4/184)	4% (7/184)	184
Developing critical quality	28% (56/199)	50% (100/199)	18% (35/199)	2% (3/199)	3% (5/199)	199
Developing analytical quality	33% (65/200)	46% (92/200)	14% (28/200)	4% (8/200)	4% (7/200)	200
Developing creative quality	36% (72/202)	41% (82/202)	16% (32/202)	4% (9/202)	3% (7/202)	202
Developing evaluative quality	32% (64/199)	45% (90/199)	16% (32/199)	4% (8/199)	3% (5/199)	199
Developing information literacy	41% (83/201)	43% (86/201)	11% (23/201)	1% (2/201)	3% (7/201)	201
Developing intellectual quality	44% (88/200)	41% (81/200)	13% (26/200)	2% (3/200)	1% (2/200)	200
Developing personal relevance of your programme	43% (88/204)	42% (86/204)	9% (18/204)	4% (8/204)	2% (4/204)	204
Developing practical value of your programme	43% (89/208)	42% (87/208)	11% (23/208)	2% (4/208)	2% (5/208)	208
Developing scholarly quality	37% (76/206)	43% (89/206)	16% (32/206)	2% (5/206)	2% (4/206)	206
Having a sense of belonging	26% (54/204)	39% (79/204)	27% (56/204)	3% (6/204)	4% (9/204)	204
Mutual challenge among students	2% (4/201)	4% (8/201)	30% (60/201)	38% (76/201)	26% (53/201)	201
Mutual respect among lecturers and students	29% (59/206)	40% (83/206)	22% (46/206)	6% (13/206)	2% (5/206)	206
Mutual support among students	27% (55/202)	49% (99/202)	18% (36/202)	2% (5/202)	3% (7/202)	202
Understanding	30%	45%	17%	2% (5/204)	6%	204

human diversity	(62/204)	(91/204)	(34/204)		(12/204)	
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(Adapted from GD Kuh and CR Pace's (1999) College Student expectation questionnaire)

#### 4.3.11 General evaluation of the university as a learning environment

Table 4.13 shows the general evaluation of the university as a learning environment. The respondents seem to value highly several aspects of the university with the provision of general education being valued the most 87%, with counselling being the lowest at 42%. In response to the question whether the UZCHS met the students' expectations the general response was that the UZCHS was meeting their expectations. On the issue of security on the campus the majority felt that it was adequate. On teaching resources at UZCHS the students were split in half between those who felt they were adequate and those who felt they were not adequate.

**Table 4.13: General assessment of the University as a learning environment**

	Very Strongly 5	Strongly 4	Weakly 3	Very weakly 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
General education	32% (67/207)	55% (113/207)	10% (21/207)	1% (2/207)	2% (4/207)	207
Curriculum of your programme	23% (47/206)	50% (103/206)	22% (45/206)	2% (4/206)	3% (7/206)	206
Library facilities	30% (61/202)	42% (84/202)	20% (40/202)	5% (10/202)	3% (7/202)	202
Computer/ICT facilities	19% (39/206)	37% (77/206)	24% (50/206)	13% (26/206)	7% (14/206)	206
Sense of community on campus	11% (22/205)	45% (92/205)	28% (57/205)	10% (20/205)	7% (14/205)	205
Academic assistance	19% (38/205)	50% (102/205)	24% (49/205)	5% (10/205)	3% (6/205)	205
Tutorials	28% (58/205)	43% (89/205)	16% (32/205)	5% (10/205)	8% (16/205)	205
Lecturers	27% (54/203)	52% (106/203)	14% (29/203)	2% (5/203)	4% (9/203)	203
Seminars	12% (24/200)	24% (47/200)	24% (47/200)	12% (24/200)	29% (58/200)	200
Academic advice from lecturers	22% (45/203)	40% (81/203)	25% (50/203)	8% (17/203)	5% (10/203)	203
Amount of contact with lecturers	14% (28/204)	38% (77/204)	31% (64/204)	13% (27/204)	4% (8/204)	204
Ability to find Lecturer	12% (25/201)	38% (76/201)	32% (65/201)	12% (24/201)	5% (11/201)	201
Peer support	22% (44/203)	41% (83/203)	28% (56/203)	7% (15/203)	2% (5/203)	203
UZ accommodation	17% (35/201)	35% (71/201)	22% (44/201)	9% (19/201)	16% (32/201)	201
Financial assistance	9% (18/201)	24% (48/201)	26% (53/201)	13% (27/201)	27% (55/201)	201

Campus health services	12% (25/201)	37% (74/201)	24% (49/201)	15% (31/201)	11% (22/201)	201
Interactions with other students	20% (42/207)	43% (88/207)	24% (49/207)	8% (17/207)	5% (11/207)	207
Leadership opportunities	11% (23/203)	30% (60/203)	33% (67/203)	13% (27/203)	13% (26/203)	203
Recreational facilities	11% (22/205)	29% (60/205)	28% (58/205)	16% (33/205)	16% (32/205)	205
Overall facilities at UZCHS	11% (22/206)	44% (91/206)	30% (61/206)	12% (24/206)	4% (8/206)	206
Class discussion	16% (33/202)	42% (85/202)	26% (52/202)	12% (24/202)	4% (8/202)	202
Prompt evaluation feedback	13% (25/194)	31% (60/194)	34% (66/194)	15% (29/194)	7% (14/19)	194
Social-cultural event at campus	11% (21/199)	28% (55/199)	29% (58/199)	19% (38/199)	14% (27/199)	199
Counselling	11% (22/199)	31% (61/199)	33% (66/199)	15% (29/199)	11% (21/199)	199
Services	10% (19/187)	35% (65/187)	34% (64/187)	16% (30/187)	5% (9/187)	187

The majority of the students reported that their parents were responsible for financing their studies and upkeep at the university although a few were on some scholarship or other funding. For some students, however, there was also assistance from relatives, siblings and government.

*“My parents are unemployed and so it is difficult to raise the necessary tuition fees.*

*Some relatives do chip in with some assistance. A very difficult situation indeed.”*

#### 4.3.12 Rating of facilities as experienced in high school

Table 4.14 shows that while in high school students rated the personnel highly, headmaster/headmistress (very good/good) at 41%, followed by the teacher at 39%. They rated the overall personnel at 36%, facilities and resources were rated at 29%, (very good/good library 29%, textbooks 31%, class 33%, laboratories 33%, sports facilities 23%). Other available services were rated at 25% (health services, 23%; accommodation, 28%; transport facilities 25%, food services 24%).

**Table 4.14: Students rating of facilities as experienced in High School**

	Very good 5	Good 4	Satisfactory 3	Poor 2	Very poor 1	Total (responses)
<b>(a) Personnel</b>						
Headmaster/Headmistress	40% (93/235)	41% (96/235)	17% (40/235)	2% (4/235)	1% (2/235)	235
Teacher	43%	34%	21%	2%	1%	237

	(102/237)	(80/237)	(49/237)	(4/237)	(2/237)	
Support staff	20% (46/235)	38% (89/235)	34% (80/235)	7% (16/235)	1% (3/235)	235
<b>(b) Facilities and resources:</b>						
Library	30% (70/237)	27% (64/237)	22% (52/237)	16% (37/237)	6% (14/237)	237
Textbooks	30% (72/238)	31% (74/238)	23% (54/238)	13% (30/238)	3% (8/238)	238
Class	28% (67/238)	37% (87/238)	24% (57/238)	8% (18/238)	4% (9/238)	238
Laboratories	33% (78/237)	33% (78/237)	25% (58/237)	7% (16/237)	3% (7/237)	237
Sports facilities	20% (46/235)	26% (61/235)	32% (75/235)	14% (32/235)	9% (20/235)	235
<b>(c) Available services</b>						
Health services	21% (48/231)	25% (58/231)	27% (63/231)	19% (44/231)	8% (18/231)	231
Accommodation	26% (58/224)	30% (67/224)	27% (61/224)	11% (24/224)	6% (13/224)	224
Food services	22% (50/228)	25% (57/228)	35% (80/228)	8% (18/228)	10% (23/228)	228
Transport facilities	23% (53/233)	27% (63/233)	27% (62/233)	16% (37/233)	8% (18/233)	233

#### 4.3.13 High school preparations for university

Table 4.15 shows how well students' experiences in high school prepared them for university. The table shows that the range of preparation in various skills for learning at university was not adequate, with those who felt very well/well prepared ranging from 30% to 41% (using the library and independent study, respectively). It appears that students' experiences in high school did very little to prepare them for university. With this in mind it would be important to expose the students to some of these activities which are crucial for learning at university.

**Table 4.15: How well high school studies prepared students in various skills for learning**

	Very well 5	Well 4	Satisfactorily 3	Poorly 2	Very poorly 1	Total (responses)
Taking notes	42% (100/238)	33% (78/238)	18% (44/238)	4% (10/238)	3% (6/238)	238
Writing papers	38% (89/236)	36% (84/236)	22% (51/236)	4% (10/236)	1% (2/236)	236
Independent study	57% (135/238)	25% (60/238)	13% (31/238)	4% (9/238)	1% (3/238)	238
Ability to diverse culture	28% (67/237)	33% (79/237)	27% (64/237)	8% (19/237)	3% (8/237)	237

Using the library	33% (78/237)	27% (63/237)	20% (47/237)	13% (31/237)	8% (18/237)	237
Using laboratories	43% (103/238)	33% (78/238)	15% (36/238)	6% (14/238)	3% (7/238)	238

#### 4.3.14 High school experiences

Table 4.16 shows the students' experiences while in high school in relating to teacher-student relations, student-student relations and institutional climate, on a scale of very high, high, satisfactory, low and very low.

**Table 4.16: On Relationships: How do you rate your high school experiences in the following areas**

	Very high 5	High 4	Satisfactory 3	Low 2	Very low 1	Total (responses)
<b>Teacher-student relations</b>						
Teacher availability	40% (90/226)	29% (65/226)	25% (56/226)	5% (12/226)	1% (3/226)	226
Teacher authority	36% (81/227)	35% (79/227)	24% (54/227)	5% (12/227)	0.4% (1/227)	227
Teacher-student contact	36% (81/225)	26% (59/225)	29% (65/225)	8% (17/225)	1% (3/225)	225
Teacher motivation	41% (93/227)	30% (67/227)	22% (50/227)	6% (13/227)	2% (4/227)	227
Student motivation	35% (79/228)	39% (89/228)	21% (48/228)	3% (7/228)	2% (5/228)	228
Dialogue with students	35% (78/226)	36% (82/226)	26% (56/226)	1% (3/226)	2% (5/226)	226
<b>Student-student relations</b>						
Student discipline level	30% (67/226)	38% (86/226)	25% (57/226)	4% (10/226)	3% (6/226)	226
Students' level of confidence	29% (65/223)	40% (89/223)	25% (55/223)	5% (12/223)	1% (2/223)	223
Student autonomy	25% (51/208)	35% (73/208)	34% (70/208)	6% (13/208)	1% (1/208)	208
Student involvement	27% (60/221)	39% (86/221)	22% (48/221)	10% (21/221)	3% (6/221)	221
<b>Institutional climate</b>						
Free expression of opinion	24% (52/221)	32% (70/221)	27% (59/221)	11% (24/221)	7% (16/221)	221
Level of time management	22% (48/222)	36% (80/222)	31% (69/222)	9% (21/222)	2% (4/222)	222
Timetable flexibility	20% (45/222)	31% (69/222)	33% (74/222)	12% (27/222)	3% (7/222)	222
Homework	25% (56/223)	38% (84/223)	29% (64/223)	6% (13/223)	3% (6/223)	223

Level of school safety	36% (80/220)	29% (63/220)	28% (61/220)	7% (15/220)	1% (1/220)	220
Sense of belonging	34% (74/220)	36% (80/220)	24% (954/220)	3% (7/220)	2% (5/220)	220
Concentration	37% (80/218)	33% (73/218)	23% (50/218)	6% (13/218)	1% (2/218)	218
Effective communication dialogue	35% (57/163)	33% (54/163)	24% (39/163)	4% (7/163)	4% (6/163)	163

The teacher-student relations were rated highly 76%. Teacher availability 69%; teacher authority 71%; teacher motivation 71%; student motivation 74%; dialogue with students 71%; student-student relations 66%; and institutional climate 63%. This shows that the various aspects of teacher-student relations were highly valued in high school. Unfortunately this may not happen in the university due to the large number of students involved. This may lead to the feeling of alienation at the university.

On considering the various aspects of student-student relations the respondents rated them on the very high/high scale as follows: student discipline level 68%; students' level of confidence 69%; student autonomy 60%; and student involvement in activities 66%. This shows the importance the students rate these relations in high school, and one would expect them to be developed to that same level at university.

Regarding the institutional climate the various aspects (free expression of opinion, level of time management, homework, level of school safety, sense of belonging, concentration, and effective communication/dialogue) were rated very high/high by 63% of the students. However, when broken down to the various items the ratings were as follows: free expression of opinion 56%; level of time management 58%; timetable flexibility 51%; homework 63%; level of school safety 65%; sense of belonging 70%; concentration 70%; effective communication/dialogue 68%. There would be the expectation of the same tendency to happen at university.

#### **4.3.15 Aspects different in high school and university that became sources of frustration at university**

Table 4.17 shows differences in the various interactions in high school and how much they may cause frustrations at university. Selection of study programme was rated at 70% as a cause of frustration when compared to the experience in high school. In high school the study programmes are laid out for students, while at university the students have to choose a

programme for study based on a number of factors, e.g. career path, grades at high school, availability of places and so on. Sticking to the timetable was not a source of frustration (69%); completing assignments on time (75%); library facilities (67%); availability of resource material (69%); campus layout (46%); and diverse population (40%).

**Table 4.17: Differences in aspects between high school and university which became sources of frustration at university**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Little 3	Very little 2	Not at all 1	Total (responses)
Sticking to the timetable demands	31% (65/211)	38% (80/211)	19% (40/211)	4% (9/211)	8% (17/211)	211
Selection of the programme	32% (68/212)	38% (81/212)	18% (39/212)	5% (11/212)	6% (13/212)	212
Completing assignments on time	35% (76/215)	40% (87/215)	14% (31/215)	6% (13/215)	3% (7/215)	215
Library facilities	34% (74/215)	33% (71/215)	22% (47/215)	6% (12/215)	5% (11/215)	215
Availability of resource material	33% (69/210)	36% (76/210)	16% (33/210)	7% (14/210)	9% (18/210)	210
Campus layout	20% (43/215)	26% (55/215)	29% (62/215)	12% (25/215)	14% (30/215)	215
Diverse population	19% (41/213)	21% (45/213)	28% (60/213)	15% (31/213)	17% (36/213)	213

The results show that some of the issues that relate to the students' transition phase appear similar to those reported in the literature, although there are marked differences in the demographics of the first year students, responses to financing students, general facilities in the UZCHS, and the institutional roles in the transition phase. The discussion in Chapter 5 will attempt to highlight the similarities, together with ways of mitigating shortcomings.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

A widely held view is that an educated population leads to economic, social and political stability (Scutter et al., 2011). In view of this, many countries are setting higher targets for university participation (Sutter et al., 2011; Nzimande & Metcalfe, 2009). An increasing number of students entering university does not equate to an increased number of students graduating from university. Some studies have shown that over one quarter of students in Australian higher education are considering deferring study or discontinuing (Scutter et al., 2011; Krause et al., 2005). It is important to know the reasons behind this phenomenon. It is hoped that students with a clearer understanding of university life and its demands are likely to complete their studies as they are better prepared to cope with the new changed environment. The transition to university is critical as it affects students' retention and satisfaction while pursuing their studies.

### 5.2 Student First Year Experiences

The literature provides some consensus on the issues that impact student experiences during transition to the university (Yorke & Longden, 2007; Yorke & Longden, 2008; Carey, 2005; Kuh et al., 2005; Long et al., 2006; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; The Pell Institute, 2011). There is a need to address these issues so as to minimise the resultant social and academic trauma occasioned by them. These issues have been broadly identified as: institutional commitment; proactive management of student transition; fostering social engagement in the curriculum; systematically monitoring and evaluating the student's progress; and placing an emphasis on the first-year experience (Yorke, 2007; Action on Access, 2003; Carey, 2005; Kuh et al., 2005; Long et al., 2006; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; The Pell Institute, 2011).

Experiences during the first semester at university are critical in students' decisions to continue or discontinue studies (Kantanis, 2000; Bowles et al., 2011). This transition involves critical issues of student engagement, development and retention (Kantanis, 2000; McInnis et al., 2000). It is important to understand students' perceptions of the factors that facilitate transition to university (Bowles et al., 2011; Hillman, 2005). Factors that impact on student transition can be viewed as dependent on the individual student, their preparedness to face university challenges, institutional environment and programmes, students' expectations and the need to create a conducive learning and teaching environment.



### **5.3 UZCHS Students' Perspectives versus Reported Literature**

In the current study the pertinent issues in students' perspectives on transition to university were explored under the following categories: diversity of study programmes; gender; age; factors on encouragement to join university; personal motivation for the selected study programme; advice on the study programme; orientation programmes set up by the university to introduce the students to the university's academic and social culture; university environment; academic demands; sources of frustration; personal development and growth; experiences in high school and how they impact transition to university; and evaluation of the university's learning environment.

### **5.4 Study Participants**

The response rate was 50.6% (246/486). The largest group of enrolled students were in the MBChB programme (44.7%; 217/486). In view of the small numbers of students in the other programmes compared to the MBChB it is not surprising that this group had the largest number of respondents (28.9% ; 71/246). This tends to skew the responses in favour of the MBChB group. Thus the perspectives given could be largely attributable to this group and may not be easily generalisable to the other groups.

#### **5.4.1 Age and Gender**

The student population has a fairly equal gender distribution (48% females and 52% males) with 81% of the students in the 19 to 20 year age group. The more or less equal gender distribution is largely attributable to the University of Zimbabwe's affirmation action which allows admission of female students with passes one point below their male counterparts. This is an attempt to achieve gender equity in the nation.

The relatively high number of 19 to 20 year olds (81%) in comparison with similar studies in the literature, Newcastle University (Clark & Hall, 2010) with 59.8% of the students in the 19 to 20 year age group. This is attributable to the fact that only recently qualified A-level students are enrolled at the UZCHS and this is the age at which they complete their A-levels. The UZCHS does not admit mature students into any of the undergraduate courses. This relatively young group of students will definitely need support as they transit from the sheltered life in high school to the university where one is expected to live an independent life away from headmasters and headmistresses, teachers, parents, guardians, relatives and siblings. The UZCHS should come up with ways of bridging this gap: vibrant student affairs department with well developed

counselling services. Faculty members should be trained/encouraged to act as counsellors to the students although the large numbers of students in relation to faculty may make this difficult to achieve. The age at which students join university is critical in their maturation process as it is usually the time of “identity exploration” (Armett, 2004). The growth of the student can thus be identified through physiological and intellectual maturation. This is also the time they are transitioning from adolescence to early adulthood and adapting to new social and academic environments.

### **5.5 Students Motivation to Join the UZCHS**

Similar to findings in the literature students in this study were also motivated to join the courses they perceived would enable them get good jobs. Some studies show that the majority of students join university for career and/or job aspirations, not necessarily because of interest, but to improve their job opportunities (Scutter et al., 2011). However, some students still advance interest in the programme as the reason they joined the university. At this early stage in their careers, they have not yet developed an altruistic spirit befitting their calling. A large number of students (74%) joined their course of studies to fulfil their long-time dream. It is thus important for the UZCHS to come up with clear career guidelines so that the students make decisions based on comprehensive information in order to avoid students discovering much later on in their programmes that there is a mismatch between their expectations and what the programme is offering. The issue of parents or guardians wanting the student to study a specific course was noted in this study. In cases where the choices are not student driven, one tends to get a situation where the student has difficulty with the course and eventually abandons the course.

### **5.6 Personal Growth, Autonomy and Freedom at University**

The majority of the students indicated that taking on personal responsibility (85%), concentrating on one’s work (83%), effective communication (80%), and dialoguing (73%) contributed a great deal to their personal development. This goes a long way in assisting the students to navigate the transition period through the new challenges of the university environment, fulfilling their new expectations, following new administrative approaches and adjusting to an entirely new and demanding environment.

Students valued the autonomy and freedom aspect at university, and being able to act without the normal restraints common in high school. In high school teachers enforce compliance, while at university students are expected to manage their own affairs. However, it is known that students still crave for the direction and supervision that obtains in high school (Afulo, 2005).

This autonomy is helpful in the development of their potential and also in their academic pursuits. The university should be encouraged to hold social skills development workshops and seminars for students so that students will be able to appreciate the responsibilities that come with the newly found personal freedom and autonomy found in the university.

## **5.7 Institutional Roles**

### **5.7.1 Resources and facilities**

Institutional issues are beyond the control of the students. However, the university should strive to meet some of the students' expectations as this would go a long way in enabling the students enjoy their journey in higher education. These issues include resources, facilities and the learning environment. Students are desirous of quick turnaround with regards to feedback on assignments. Feedback is an important factor in keeping students engaged in their studies (Krause, 2007; Whittaker, 2008). This, however, proves difficult at the UZCHS where there is a large number of students and few faculty staff. Faculty development programmes should be mounted to improve the teaching skills of faculty. However, faculty should endeavour to the necessary quick feedback.

Recreational facilities also were described as poor and there is need to provide recreational facilities for the students. The University should be encouraged to improve upon the recreational facilities available to the students.

Suggestions have been made to familiarise students with university teaching and learning approaches as this has been shown to improve first year performance (Pargetter, 2000). This should include issues such as familiarising students with university teaching and learning modes, learning to move independently about the city and the university complex, and acquiring a good understanding of course choices (Pargetter, 2000). These pre-transition skills and knowledge are important in preparing the students for independent undergraduate life and learning (Briggs et al., 2009). Various such forms have been advocated, for example, the Newcastle University PARTNERS programme, and Melbourne University higher education Buddies (Briggs et al., 2009; Clerehan, 2003). These activities are important in helping potential students build their learner identity. The UCHS should be encouraged to adopt some of these approaches suitably adapted to our context. Open days should be encouraged as this would enable students to visit the university and have first hand feel of what happens at university.

### **5.7.2 Preparatory information from the UZCHS**

The study showed that only 41% of the students agreed/strongly agreed, that the information from the UZCHS helped in their preparatory stages. A large number (65% and 60%) disagreed/strongly disagreed that the information received about the UZCHS while at high school was adequate, and not detailed enough, respectively. This clearly shows that the information given to students before joining is not adequate and not detailed enough. There is need for UZCHS to relook at the current information brochures and find ways of making them more detailed. A small survey should be able to come up with areas students perceive are not sufficiently detailed and what else they wish need be included. The university needs to relook at the content of the information given to students so as to be as detailed as the students wish. However, the teachers in high school were deemed useful in helping the students prepare for university. There is a need to engage high schools much earlier on so that students have the appropriate subject combinations for whatever course they may wish to take up at university.

Students were not happy with the admissions department and felt that the admission policy was not clear. The admission policy thus needs to clearly spell out what grades one needs to be admitted into the university. Unfortunately at the UZCHS students only get to know this when they are filling in the admission forms. This information should be available in high school well before they apply to join the university. The students (75%) pointed out that they did receive good advice aligned with their performance, for purposes of course selection. This is so because students are informed on the possible courses they can join, based on their results, at the time of submitting their application forms. The literature shows that the information students need relates to basic communication issues around critical items such as enrolment, the understanding of university terms and obtaining basic course and institution information (Scutter et al., 2011). This information should be availed to the students while at high school well before they submit their application forms for admission.

### **5.7.3 Orientation week**

The orientation activities were rated as strongly agree/agree as preparatory activities by 65% of the respondents. Orientation is an effective enabler aiding the transition process (Hillman, 2005; McInnis et al., 2000; Bowles et al., 2011). It has been suggested, however, that resources should be made available to allow the orientation to run all year round (McInnis et al., 2000). The introduction to university requirements and clarity of programme information was rated strongly agree/agree equally at 76%. This indicates that these activities were of benefit to the students. On the other hand, 54% of the respondents feel that their expectations were meet.

This implies that more needs to be done to meet the expectations of UZCHS students. It appears, however, that these activities did not really assist in helping the students settle in (54%). The programme information was rated as clear by 76% of the respondents. Thus the programme on the whole was well received although there is a need to improve some specific areas e.g. extracurricular adjustment and alleviation of anxiety and confusion. This is in agreement with the literature where the students find orientation programmes useful, although they decried the need to separate academic and social issues during this period (Westlake, 2008; Yorke & Longden, 2008). Currently these are more information giving activities and socialising gatherings and they need to move to the level of seminars, preferably as all year round activities (Everett, 2013). The university should develop orientation activities with both an academic and social content. These should run throughout the year targeted at first year students. Currently these run for no more than one week and have a largely social component.

#### **5.7.4 Factors that assisted students settle in**

The main factor that was important in helping student settling in was academic demands (86%). One can only assume that the students had to ignore everything else and quickly concentrate on the high academic demands characteristic of the university learning environment, as opposed to their high school experiences. Social demands were seen as not really important. This may be due to the youthfulness of the students who did not have many social responsibilities, for instance a family to look after or a job. Relationships between staff and students were considered important along with relationships between lecturers and students.

The following factors were considered to affect students' adjustment in the university: career counsellors; lecturers being professional in advising students; peers acting as counsellors; settling in by trial and error; parents and guardians' roles; study method change; changing of previously held concerns about university; and the role of the university in addressing students' concerns. The most change was in the study methods with 78% of the respondents stating that they were much/very much affected when they entered university.

#### **5.7.5 Sources of frustration**

The major source of frustration in the university was academic issues (67%) followed by examinations, marks and grades all at 66%. Social interactions, sense of belonging, student-lecturer relationship, student-lecturer interaction, student and administration and issues of punctuality were not regarded as sources of frustration in the university. Students' expectations at university include the expectation of a high level of feedback, regular access to lecturers, the

amount of study they expect to do and the responsibility for learning (Brinkworth et al., 2009; Scutter et al., 2011). The university needs to improve upon the social interactions at the university and relook at the students' workload as well as available library facilities. The frustrations at university were not linked to other experiences at high school, which appear to adequately prepare students for learning at university. These included activities such as using the library, independent study, writing papers, using laboratories and the ability to adapt to diverse cultures. These were rated highly by the students. These skills will definitely assist the students in settling in to the university learning environment. The available services of health, accommodation, food and transport were given low ratings. This is understandable in view of the fact that most of the students at the UZCHS come from government or missionary schools which have very limited resources. Private institutions tend to be better funded and their facilities are much better. Accommodation at university was rated higher than in high school. Unfortunately not all students have access to university residences. There is need for the university to build more accommodation facilities for the students. The university should address the issues of poor water and electricity supplies with the relevant authorities. The commuting students have great difficulty with the available poor public transport. This will definitely affect their university experience because it reduces the time available for study and rest.

#### **5.7.6 Academic self-rating**

Students rated themselves highly in academics. It behoves the institutions to guide the students in such a way that they do not overestimate their knowledge and abilities, only to have their self-confidence undermined by the challenges they encounter at university (Harvey et al., 2006). However the teaching approach should be such that they are quickly engaged in academic work and given formative feedback from an early stage (Scutter et al., 2011). This will enable the students to comprehend the level of work expected of them at university. This is not surprising when one considers that the majority of respondents are medical students where admission is based on the highest possible grades. The other programmes also require good passes at A-level.

Interestingly, none of the respondents rated themselves as lower in cooperativeness and physical health. Human nature is such that we all believe ourselves to be co-operative and healthy. Sources of personal development were very much associated with high school and university as being the most important, and clubs and society were poorly perceived as sources of development. Assuming personal responsibility, effective communication, dialoguing and being autonomous accounted for most of the personal growth issues. Freedom at university,

peer relations, authority and teacher attitudes towards students were not recognised as important sources of personal development.

### **5.7.7 Developing students' potential**

Many factors contribute to the development of students' potential. The respondents indicated that the factors strongly related to the development of students' potential were mainly through achieving one's professional goal, advice about one's educational programme from lecturers, developing information literacy, developing intellectual quality, developing personal relevance of one's programme, and developing scholarly quality. On the other hand, developing mutual support among students, mutual respect among lecturers and students were regarded as less strongly related to this development.

### **5.7.8 General facilities and life at the EZCHS**

The UZCHS general education and library facilities were assessed as the highest by the students, while financial assistance was rated the lowest. This possibly arises from the fact that most students are financed by their parents. The financial strain on the parents could result in students discontinuing their studies. As an institution the UZCHS should find means of securing sponsorship for students to alleviate their financial plight. Having social networks at university is an important factor in adjusting to university (Thomas, 2002). It is important for the university to devise ways to promote building social networks. This could be achieved by encouraging students to join clubs, societies and revamp recreational facilities.

### **5.7.9 High school experiences**

Experiences at high school were rated under personnel, facilities and resources and available services. Under personnel the roles of the headmaster/headmistress and teachers were regarded highly (81% and 77% respectively). This indicates the importance of the ever present role of these officials in high school with unfortunately no equivalent officer at university. The dean of students and his/her officers are the nearest to this role, but due to the large numbers of students at university it is impossible to develop as close a relationship as that of the headmaster/headmistress in high school. This role is probably best played by the first year student adviser as suggested by Burnett and Larmar (2011). This is an academic position situated in each programme, though in resource constrained environments this may be difficult to implement considering the high student numbers in relation to the limited academic staff numbers. The support staff was not regarded very highly (58%). This could possibly be due to the fact they do not usually interact a lot with the students. Facilities were generally rated as

good to very good with laboratories topping the list (66%) and sporting facilities the least (46%). The issue of library facilities will impact negatively on the students when they get to the university as they do not have the experience of using library facilities. There should be coordination between the high schools and the university so that potential students are given adequate information, encouragement and one-to-one support concerning the university entry (Briggs et al., 2012). There is also a need for the university to establish dialogue with the schools that the students come from so as to give them prior information about learning at university, and also work out the best approach to prepare the students for learning at university.

A variety of learning skills were learnt in high school and these could be useful in preparing the students for university. Using laboratories and independent study were top on the list as possible useful preparation for university study.

Teacher-student relations were rated overall at 70% (very high/high). When reviewing the various aspects under consideration, i.e., teacher availability, teacher authority, teacher-student contact, teacher motivation, student motivation and dialogue with students, the students rated student motivation the highest (74%). This shows how important the teacher's role is in high school. This contrasts sharply with the situation at the university where one lecturer has a large number of students and it is impossible to motivate as adequately as when a lecturer has a small number of students. It is also important for the UZCHS to increase staff numbers in an attempt to complement the student population. Staff members have to be appreciative of the challenges first year students face during the transition from school to university. Consideration should be given to reducing the student workload, as it seemed to be a cause of concern. The university should consciously guide the students during their first year at university.

The rest of the items are all well rated by the students.

In high school student-student relations were analysed in terms of student discipline level, level of confidence, student autonomy and student involvement in school activities, and student confidence was rated the highest (69%) with student autonomy lowest at 60%. Autonomy is one attribute that is expected of university students and the students are likely to have challenges during the transition period as they have to move away from the sheltered environment they are used to in high school. The universities, however, should put in place mechanisms that support students, while at the same time facilitating their independence (Krause et al., 2005). This is possible by offering support services and activities with the longer term goal of self-



management in mind (McInnis et al., 2000; Krause et al., 2005). In high school the institutional climate was such that it encouraged a sense of belonging. This is easily achievable in the small community that obtains in high school, unlike the large impersonal environment of the university.

Aspects that were found at university that are different from high school and thus created frustration at university were mainly the selection of the programme, completing assignments on time, library facilities, availability of resource materials, campus layout and the diverse population at the university. The UZCHS should make efforts to address some or all of these issues by improving the facilities and providing adequate information on teaching and learning at university. This can be achieved by continuing academic orientation throughout the first year.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

The perspectives of students at UZCHS during the transition phase are similar to those reported in the literature and so are the factors that impact the transition phase. They have to be adapted in line with our context, culturally and socio-economic status. However, major differences with reports in the literature exist with regards to available facilities, student demographics and how students respond to the transition phase.

The study has shown the the challenges that students at the UZCHS face during their transition period. Both the quantitative and the qualitative components of the study indicate that the UZCHS was highly rated by the majority of the students who indicated that they were happy with the programmes they were studying. However, areas that need improvement include the following: water supply and electricity; student accommodation; catering services; and internet services. Communication with high schools, visits to the university by prospective students, and guidance through the application process, are areas of concern regarding prospective students. Student orientation programmes, counselling services, and university-led social activities are currently also not very effective. The following recommendations for improvement may appear extensive, but most of these issues can be addressed by the university at minimal cost. As stated by Palmer (2010) and quoted by Scutter et al., (2011) “the days when universities were mysterious places where the intellectual elite resided passed long ago”. There is a need to introduce open days when students and parents visit the university, to improve laboratory and library facilities, appoint academic members of staff to act as counsellors for all students, provide affordable accommodation for students, improve water and electricity supplies to the university, and engage high schools for career guidance purposes.

If universities can purposefully address these issues, the transition period for first year students would be much easier and enjoyable for them and would contribute to higher through-put figures.

Continued research into the various aspects of transition to university, particularly to the UZCHS, is important so that the university keeps abreast of the changing times and also the changing profile of the students. An evidence-based approach in managing the transition phase will lead to a successful journey and the retention of students in higher education.

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## Appendix A: Consent Form

**Title of project:** Transition from High School to University: perspectives of first year students at the University Of Zimbabwe College Of Health Sciences

### Information on the project:

Dear Student

This project seeks to elicit the students' perspectives with regards to the transition from High School to the University of Zimbabwe. Transition from High School to University can be a frustrating experience and yet it should not be like that. Living the comfort of High School into University can be traumatic. There is need to adjust to the newly found independence and autonomy which if not properly managed may lead to drop out and failure to fruitfully enjoy University life.

This information will assist the University of Zimbabwe devise and implement programmes that will facilitate the transition. It will also help the university address some aspects of activities in the high school that may impede a smooth and enjoyable transition. There is also need to implement strategies that ensure a smooth transition to a successful both socially and academically life at the University and maturity both as an individual and as a professional.

Participation is voluntary and should not take too much of your time. All the information you supply shall be used in the strictest of confidence and shall in no way prejudice your stay in the University.

**IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE PLEASE KINDLY INDICATE BY SIGNING AT THE SPACE INDICATED BELOW**

Student Signature ..... Date .....

Witness Signature ..... Date .....

Thank you very much for your participation. This is most appreciated. Together we can improve the transition from High School to University.

## Appendix B: Questionnaire for the Quantitative Component

Questionnaire

Study Number

### 1. Demographics:

Programme of study: .....(MChB, BDS, HPT etc.)

Gender: Male

Female

Age: .....(years)

### 2. When you decided to join the UZ-CHS, please kindly indicate how important were each of the following reasons in reaching your decision:-

	Very Important 5	Important 4	Somewhat important 3	Less important 2	Not important 1
<b>Encouraged by:</b>					
Teacher					
Friend					
Parent					
<b>Personal decision:</b>					
Enable me to get a better job					
My parents/guardian wanted me to go					
Always been my dream					

*Adapted from A.W. Astin's 2003 Student information form*

### 3. On self-perception: How do you rate yourself in the following practices?

	Highly 5	Above average 4	Average 3	Below average 2	Lower 1
Academic					
Co-operativeness					
Competitiveness					
Drive to achieve					
Leadership					
Physical health					
Emotional health					
Resistance					
Popularity					

Religiousness					
Risk taking					
Self-confident (intellectual)					
Self-confidence (socially)					

**4. On your experience in High School: How do you take the following:-**

	Very good 5	Good 4	Satisfactory 3	Poor 2	Very poor 1
(a) Personnel					
Headmaster/Headmistress					
Teacher					
Support staff					
(b) Facilities and resources:					
Library					
Textbooks					
class					
laboratories					
Sports facilities					
(c) Available services					
Health services					
Accommodation					
Food services					
Transport facilities					

**5. High school experiences: How well did your high school studies prepare you in the following skills?**

	Very well 5	Well 4	Satisfactorily 3	Poorly 2	Very poorly 1
Taking notes					
Writing papers					
Independent study					
Ability to diverse culture					
Using the library					
Using laboratories					

**6. University preparation: How do you rate your preparations for joining the university?**

	Agree strongly 5	Agree 4	Disagree 3	Disagree strongly 2	I don't know 1
<b>Course selection:</b>					
Received good advice aligned with my performance					

<b>Information from University/UZ-CHS</b>					
Adequate information about UZ-CHS received while at high school					
Information was detailed					
Information was clear					
There was a career counsellor					
Teachers were helpful					
UZ admission department was useful					
UZ admission policy was clear					
<b>Orientation:</b>					
Programme was effective/helpful					
Helped with extracurricular adjustment					
Introduced university academic requirements					
Programme information was clear					
Senior students were helpful					
My expectations were met					
Was a time of anxiety and confusion					
Helped me settle in faster					

**7. On Relationships: How do you rate your high school experiences in the following areas:**

	<b>Very high 5</b>	<b>High 4</b>	<b>Satisfactory 3</b>	<b>Low 2</b>	<b>Very low 1</b>
<b>Teacher-student relations</b>					
Teacher availability					
Teacher authority					
Teacher-student contact					
Teacher motivation					
Student motivation					
Dialogue with students					
<b>Student-student relations</b>					
Student discipline level					
Students' level of confidence					
Student autonomy					
Student involvement					
<b>Institutional climate</b>					
Free expression of opinion					
Level of time management					
Timetable flexibility					
Homework					
Level of school safety					
Sense of belonging					
Concentration					
Effective communication dialogue					

**8. During application to university and your preparations for admission to university, which factors worried you?**

	<b>Very much 5</b>	<b>Much 4</b>	<b>Little 3</b>	<b>Very little 2</b>	<b>Not at all 1</b>
Examinations					
Admission to a university of your choice					
Admission to a programme of one's choice					
Financing of your university education					
Friends and classmates going to same university					
Large student population at university					
Time management					
Being independent					
Personal security					
Completing the programme on time					

**9. Upon entry into university: How do you evaluate the following upon entry into university, i.e. How important were these aspects to you?**

	<b>Very important 5</b>	<b>Important 4</b>	<b>Moderately important 3</b>	<b>Not important 2</b>	<b>I don't know 1</b>
Reception					
Academic demands					
Social demands					
Relationship between staff and students					
Relationship between lecturers and students					

**10. Experience in the University: How did the following conditions in the university affect your concerns?**

	<b>Very much 5</b>	<b>Much 4</b>	<b>Little 3</b>	<b>Very little 2</b>	<b>Not at all 1</b>
Careers counsellors effectively addressed my concerns					
Career counsellors gave competent advice					
The lecturers were very professional in advising					
Peers are better advisors than counsellors					
Settled in the university through trial and error					
Your concerns changed in the university					
University effectively addresses your concerns					
Your study method has changed greatly					
Parents/guardians are helpful in process of transition					
Friends/peers are helpful in the process of transition					
Parents/guardians influence the process of transition					

**11. How much to you have the following been sources of frustration in the university?**

	<b>Very much 5</b>	<b>Much 4</b>	<b>Little 3</b>	<b>Very little 2</b>	<b>Not at all 1</b>
Academic					
Relationships					
Social interactions					
Sense of belonging					
Examinations					
Marks and grades					
Student-lecturer relationship					
Student-lecturer interaction					
Administration-student dialogue					
Administration-student .....					
Punctuality					

**12. Frustrations at university: How did the following differences between high school and the university helped you adjust to the new demands?**

	<b>Very much 5</b>	<b>Much 4</b>	<b>Little 3</b>	<b>Very little 2</b>	<b>Not at all 1</b>
Sticking to the timetable demands					
Selection of the programme					
Completing assignments on time					
Library facilities					

Availability of resource material					
Campus layout					
Diverse population					



**13. Personal development: As you progress with your academic life, where do you think you have the greatest opportunity to develop your talents?**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Satisfactory 3	Low 2	Very low 1
High school					
University					
Home environment					
Clubs and societies					

**14. By how much have the following assisted you in developing your potential?**

	Very much 5	Much 4	Little 3	Very little 2	Not at all 1
Freedom					
Personal responsibility					
Autonomy					
Authority					
Peer relations					
Teacher attitudes towards the student					
Participation					
Concentration					
Effective communication dialogue					

**15. Institutional Environment: Based on your experience at UZ-CHS, to what extent do you think each of the following has been emphasised**

	Very strongly 5	Strongly 4	Weakly 3	Very weakly 2	Not at all 1
Achieving your professional goal					
Advice about your educational programme by your lecturers					
Appreciation of university					
Being approachable					
Being considerate					
Being encouraging					
Being flexible					
Being friendly					
Being supportive					
Being helpful					
Being understanding					
Developing aesthetic quality					
Developing critical quality					
Developing analytical quality					
Developing creative quality					
Developing evaluative quality					

Developing information literacy					
Developing intellectual quality					
Developing personal relevance of your programme					
Developing practical value of your programme					
Developing scholarly quality					
Having a sense of belonging					
Mutual challenge among students					
Mutual respect among lecturers and students					
Mutual support among students					
Understanding human diversity					

*Adapted from GD Kuh and C.R. Pace's (1999) College Student expectation questionnaire*

**16. Evaluation: Please kindly rate your satisfaction at the UZ-CHS with the following**

General education					
Curriculum of your programme					
Library facilities					
Computer/ICT facilities					
Sense of community on campus					
Academic assistance					
Tutorials					
Lecturers					
Seminars					
Academic advice from lecturers					
Amount of contact with lecturers					
Ability to find lecturer					
Peer support					
UZ accommodation					
Financial assistance					
Campus health services					
Interactions with other students					
Leadership opportunities					
Recreational facilities					
Overall facilities at UZ-CHS					
Class discussion					
Prompt evaluation feedback					
Social-cultural event at campus					
Counselling					
Services					

## Appendix C: Structured questions for the Qualitative Component

### The structured questions for in-depth interview

1. How do you rate yourself among other students?
2. Are you happy with this programme you are doing? If not why?
3. Who encouraged you to join the UZ-CHS?
4. Who is financing your studies?
5. Are you in UZ accommodation? If yes, any improvements you wish to get
6. Are you staying out of residence? Where? What are the challenges of the place and staying out of residence generally?
7. What are the greatest challenges you are currently facing about studying at UZ-CHS?
8. Are you satisfied with the information you received about UZ-CHS?
9. Is UZ-CHS meeting your expectations of university life? If not what would you wish done?
10. Are you satisfied with the university:
  - (a) Orientation
  - (b) Academic
  - (c) Time management
  - (d) Programme selection
11. How did you choose the programme you are studying? Why are you studying this programme? If not your choice who chose it for you and why?
12. How do you find the campus environment with regards to
  - (i) Security
  - (ii) Resources
13. Is UZ-CHS meeting your university expectations? If not what needs to be done
14. What was the most memorable moment during orientation week? Which is the worst moment during orientation?
15. Who do you consult when you have social problems? Academic problems?

