

# A NOVICE ACADEMICS' REFLECTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCTORED EXAMINATIONS: AN AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT

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## ABSTRACT

The study reflects on the challenges I, as the researcher, experienced during the implementation of proctored examinations as a novice academic in a higher education institution (HEI). Through self-reflection, I explored and critiqued my biases, preferences, perceptions and preconceptions, as I navigated proctored examinations as an academic and how they impacted my well-being and resilience. Auto-ethnography was used as the qualitative research design to explore and critique my transformational experiences. Auto-ethnography is experience-based, explores only one problem and it is not continual. The nature, extent, and significance of emotions I experienced were recorded in the form of e-mails, Microsoft teams meeting recordings and data relating my emotions and any other reflections were shared/expressed in my interaction with colleagues. I retrospectively and selectively wrote in my journal about "epiphanies" that I perceived to have significantly impacted my performance and the ultimate results of students. I used constructivist grounded theory principles to analyse my reflections and found that the challenges stemmed from a lack of preparedness, impulsive skilling process in facilitating a proctored examination, increased emotionality, and depletion of collaboration as potential risks. The process provided me with new ways of understanding what it means to learn and function during a time of disruptive change. Ensuring and maintaining academic honesty and integrity in any learning environment is vital and significant and requires educational innovation that replaces existing methodologies and modes of knowledge transmission, by providing new alternatives for teaching, learning and assessment. The authors' focus might be secondary in the minds of many social scientists who are directly contributing to our understanding of novice academics experiences in implementing the proctored examination. However, despite some limitations and ethical concerns, I urge qualitative researchers to embrace the focus on the adaptation-based approach to the resilience of novice academics in the implementation of proctored examinations.

**Keywords:** auto-ethnography, debriefing, emotionality, proctored examination, resilience, self-reflection.

## INTRODUCTION

This study is written by a novice academic, as a conscious choice, based on the implementation of proctored examinations in higher education (HE) institutions post Covid-19. The recent

effects of Covid-19 have forced the higher education (HE) sectors into unavoidable transition to fully online delivery of teaching and learning, as a result of government-imposed lockdowns that disrupted the education system. Higher education institutions (HEIs) were urged to venture outside of their comfort zones by disruption in education in order to free themselves from the limitations of the traditional, well-established educational paradigms of knowledge transfer (Pandit and Agrawal 2022). According to Pandit and Agrawal (2022), the Covid-19 incident was a black swan occurrence that upended normalcy, particularly in the educational sector. The shift to fully online settings from face-to-face and blended forms of instruction, learning, and assessment changed the educational landscape. Different approaches to pedagogy design, delivery, and evaluation continue to be crucial to what could or should be consistent to the academics' competencies (Blignaut et al. 2022). The majority of basic education and higher education systems were exposed to the new online form of education for the first time, while some who had prior exposure to this sector were presented with fully fledged online tests and lectures for the first time (Pandit and Agrawal 2022). To improve the effectiveness of subject delivery while maintaining fun and manageable teaching and learning, both academics and students needed to pick up new skills. This was accompanied by unfamiliar technological processes, changing expectations and unexpected challenges, giving students different ways to approach their academic experience (Nugent et al. 2008).

I was in charge of one of the modules as a novice academic transitioning from a classroom setting to a new role and developing new skills in facilitating proctored exams. My responsibilities were to ensure the module was well-structured and facilitated for students to achieve the outcomes. I had to ensure the module was effectively assessed online through proctored systems using the invigilator app. For the examination, I had the primary role of facilitating and processing the results for proctored examinations, despite my inexperience. The invigilator software is used as part of the Sakai Microsoft Online proctoring system to keep an eye on students' actions during assessment activities. This includes the authentication of the student and their identity, flag recordings containing speech, and generate verification codes for integration into a learning management system (LMS) to secure and maintain the integrity of an exam and its administration. My responsibility was to supervise non-venue-based assessment and control the marking process using an online marking system (JRouther), an electronic routing system that enables on-screen assessment marking. Online marking system is a tool to route assignments from students to lecturers and back to students after the marking process. The online marking mechanism makes sure that the exam marks were submitted online before the results were made public through the online exam mark system (XMO). The standard procedure required that the invigilator app report should be analysed to determine flagged

irregularities prior to uploading the final marks to the XMO, an irreversible step, which I missed in the process due to pressure placed on me to meet the target date. I had to learn to adapt to new systems of teaching, learning and assessment in a noticeably short space of time.

The proctoring system may monitor students while they take an online exam by accessing their webcams, screens, and microphones. It also flags suspicious activity to make sure that students are following the rules and to deter cheating (Kharbat and Abu Daabes 2021; Dadashzadeh 2021). Findings show that the online proctor had an impact on students. Having a live proctor watch them throughout a test irritated the high-anxiety students the most, and it affected their exam performance and caused some students to do worse (Lee and Fanguy 2022). The video recording of the entire exam is made available for review by the instructors or examiners, either simultaneously or González-González, Infante-Moro, and Infante-Moro 2020). Gerken, Beausaert, and Segers (2016) suggest interdepartmental collaboration should be complemented with online training, to establish an informal learning platform where academics can brainstorm and share information about online teaching and learning, as higher education institutions were transitioning from surviving to thriving in abrupt proctored examinations.

Most studies on online teaching and learning have focused on students' experiences (Goh et al. 2017); implementation of technology (Lee and Fanguy 2022; Mącznik, Ribeiro, and Baxter 2015; Van der Spoel et al. 2020); and the facilitation of online learning communities (Turnbull, Chugh, and Luck 2021). However, little is known about the experiences of implementing online proctored examinations for HE academics. A safe environment must be created in order to promote academics' self-care, support, and ability to deal with the unexpected problems that the online transition process presents to their work.

The majority of students are concerned about being watched through a webcam throughout the proctored online exam, and where the recordings and photographs that are taken will end up. Given that the online proctoring technology can record the students' actions during the exam, these worries become much more serious. Students' sentiments of dread and worry are ultimately a result of the accompanying psychological stress about being observed by a webcam. Participants in a study by Shraim (2019) mentioned their lack of computer skills, their inexperience in using Moodle for online exams and poorly worded questions with inadequate instructions as contributing factors to their stress. Similar to the South African HEIs, most students were taking proctored exams for the first time and lacked the necessary skills. Thus, capacitating both academic staff and students in the online exam process, before they actually engage in it, is of great importance (Shraim 2019). In order to negotiate the various demands being placed on them, both academics and students benefit from having "access to sources of emotional, academic, and practical assistance" (Kirby and Thomas 2022, 375).

Making the switch to academics involves new abilities and workplace modifications (Hurst 2010). The act of transitioning involves changing from one state to another, frequently by accepting a new role. In the context of South African HEIs, short training sessions were arranged to empower and update academics so they could stay current with the new status quo. A precise set of instructions with implementation phases was used to cascade information. To ensure the integrity of the qualifications offered at the HEIs, academics put in endless effort to stay current with new advances. Twitter and WhatsApp are two examples of social media platforms that could be used to improve teaching and learning.

Online assessment activities present a variety of problems and difficulties with regard to plagiarism and overall academic integrity (Hussein et al. 2020). Studies have shown technical issues such as Wi-Fi/connectivity problems or device status, like in the study of Milone et al. (2017). Similarly, in areas where poverty still exists and students lack access to technology like tablets and computers (Ilgaz and Adanir 2020). However, colleges can allow students to take exams from the comfort of their own homes while remaining under supervision (Shraim 2019). Studies conducted globally found that online proctoring remains effective, accurate and efficient in carrying out examinations (Shraim 2019; Raman, Vachharajani, and Nedungadi 2021; Jiang and Huang 2022). Admittedly, Raman et al. (2021) concede that online exams have a reputation for being successful in developed countries with highly developed internet infrastructure and proctored functions. Proctored exams also received approval from UNESCO, as it provides a training ground for the intellectual, social and psychological development of students (Raman et al. 2021).

The aim of this study is not about exploring the online exam experience associated with e-proctoring tools and how this technology can affect students' perceptions and testing outcomes. However, the study has been conducted to understand the experiences of a novice academic in implementing proctored examinations. It also reflected on how the "relational dynamics and intra-individual psychological aspects" on the experience of monitoring online exam.

## **METHOD**

### **Auto-ethnography as my research approach**

Auto-ethnography aims to systematically describe and analyse personal experience as well as cultural concepts, practices, and experiences (Joorst 2021; Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011). It incorporates thorough and rigorous self-reflection and acknowledges and values a researcher's interpersonal interactions. In contrast to just recounting personal narratives, auto-ethnography

involves a meticulously planned study design as well as data that is systematically gathered and analysed (Roy and Uekusa 2020). In contrast to ethnography where researchers analyse a culture as participant observers, Autoethnography shifts the focus to self-experience as a social phenomenon valuable and worthy of examination (Edwards 2021).

Autoethnography has been used to examine one's own struggles within a social framework that is acknowledged, to encourage human connection rather than analysis, and to assess one's behaviour (Wall 2006; Roy and Uekusa 2020). Autoethnography acknowledges that personal experiences of the researcher have a significant impact on the research process while embracing subjectivity and emotionality in the research (Anderson 2006; Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011). I used auto-ethnography to offer my perspective on the numerous volumes of proctored exam-related material. In this tale, I describe my first-hand experiences implementing proctored exams as a new academic. By using auto-ethnography, I was able to draw on my experience, bring my emotions and empathy to the reader's notice, and learn more about my coworkers and institutional protocol. It offered an evocation and understanding of the most pro-found features of the socio-emotional experience of humans. In my opinion, auto-ethnography evokes, motivates, and elicits intense emotion, profound connection and passionate identity.

### **Grounded theory**

Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). According to their theoretical perspective, theories should be supported by empirical facts in order to accurately capture human behaviour, interpersonal relationships, and social processes (Jeggels 2009). The theoretical orientation of this study is based on the epistemological assumptions of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2014). I opted for grounded theory because it asks about what happens and how people interact (Sbaraini et al. 2011). Unlike the objectivity and positivist assumptions of the classical grounded theory, constructivist grounded theory (GT) argues that all knowledge is based on interpretivist, subjectivist assumptions and that reality is fluid and subject to changes based on a participant's construction of it (Charmaz 2014; O'Connor, Carpenter, and Coughlan 2018). The rationale for my selection is based on the fact that GT provided the most appropriate way for me to explore my experiences of implementing proctored examinations. Constructivist GT allowed me to reflect on my actions and processes (Chun Tie, Birks, and Francis 2019). According to constructivism, research findings are described as constructed rather than discovered (Charmaz 2014). I used the practical application of GT concepts and processes such as code, concept, category, and theme in understanding, interpreting and organising the data in a way that leads toward theory emerging from the data (Chun Tie, Birks, and Francis 2019).

### **Data collection methods**

Interviews, participant observation field notes, document and artifact analysis, and research diaries are the conventional sources of data for ethnography (Wall 2008). The current study particularly embraced constructivist perspectives and allowed social interactions and observations of the researcher and significant others during data collection. I thought about how I had proctored tests and how I had added relevant behaviours, rituals, and emotions to the information. As Duncan (2004) contends, I evaluated my professional job using a thorough reflective notebook, e-mails, memoranda, and feedback reports. Informational exchanges with my colleagues were also included, and these were particularly effective in this study because they provided a clear picture of my own ideas and feelings.

### ***Self-reflection***

Using self-reflection, narratives were used to shape my subjective experiences within the culture of proctored examinations, to produce an account of the challenges and potential risks experienced in implementing proctored examinations. This was done against the perspective of ground theory with a focus on what was done, as well as expressions uttered, interaction processes and shared meanings.

### ***Document analysis***

In constructivist GT, the researcher's role is defined as one of active participation in the process of jointly creating the research product with participants. According to Charmaz (2014), researchers use their previous and present involvements and interactions with individuals, opinions, and research procedures to construct their theories. This is because they are a part of the world they investigate. Information and conversations saved from e-mails, Microsoft Teams meeting recordings and notes from casual discussions about proctored examinations were grouped and categorised for qualitative data analysis.

### ***Journaling as therapeutic***

Journaling served as catharsis for me in my real-life scenario; the act of writing has drastically changed my perception of proctored exams and the way I approach them. I now realize how I was negligent and what I ought to have done to prevent errors. Self-reflective journaling gave me a secure place to express my innermost thoughts and feelings and enabled me to be honest about the preconceived notions I had (Oliver et al. 2021). Auto ethnography, as Pretorius and Cutri (2019) claim, displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the

cultural aspects. Being part of the system, I retrospectively and selectively wrote about “epiphanies” (remembered incidents) that I felt had substantial impact on my performance and the final grades of students. I also documented comments from cross-checking conversations with other academics. I was able to assess my interactions and contacts, which gave me the ability to reflect on my experiences.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Data was analysed by using thematic content analysis. Detailed records from e-mails, journals, observations, and conversations with peers were kept, which made it possible to write this reflective article. The goal of GT research is to build theories, with a particular emphasis on inductive methods. The creation of categories and themes through inductive analysis entails using the research data (Braun and Clarke 2006). I divided the data into smaller parts using open code, labeled these segments (concepts), looked at and compared them, and then put them under a more abstract concept (category). In order to build the themes, categories were further examined by looking at their characteristics and dimensions.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Concerns about giving away too much information about other people in the story are among the ethical issues associated with authoring an auto-ethnography (Ellis 2007). In the current narrative, additional people are consistently referenced without a hint about their identities. I also mention that I authored the story from a personal and emotional perspective. Therefore, no generalisations or objective conclusions about the characters and their behaviour in my story should be made. I appeal to readers to see the characters in my story as inner parts or recollections of my memories. Additionally, I disclosed private details about myself, which begs the ethical question of whether it is appropriate for my clients and study participants to read my article. My narrative is mostly intended to reflect on my journey of implementing proctored exams for the first time, identifying negatives and positives of my actions, and actions of others, without denying the troubles that I experienced.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Writing an autoethnography involves reviewing and documenting a researcher's experiences in the past with a focus on the culture to which the researcher belongs (Hamdan 2012). For additional confirmation, my personal experience was compared with existing research and interviews with my colleagues for double checking (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011). The auto-ethnographic technique allowed me to express my thoughts on the good and bad parts of

my experiences as a new academic processing proctored examination result. It offered some useful advice for improving system performance to improve academics' resilience. Three key themes were identified: (1) increased anxiety; (2) capacity building of novice academics; (3) my personal experience of facilitating proctored exams.

### **Increased anxiety**

Increased growth speed, reduced turnover, and improved morale can all be achieved by concentrating on employee strengths rather than weaknesses. According to Lee (2020), it is conceivable that stress levels will increase as exam proctoring environments become more unfamiliar. When exams were traditionally non-proctored and unregulated, students would collaborate and share materials online without an invigilator noticing, as they would during physical exams (Gamage, Pradeep, and De Silva 2022). Covid-19 necessitated alternative methods of assessment, which required virtual invigilation to address the usual ways of cheating to maintain the integrity of the institutions. Institutions expect that academics should keep up with the new developments, shared from various correspondence about the implementation of the invigilator app (Gudiño Paredes, Jasso Peña, and De La Fuente Alcazar 2021). Higher education institutions also put some guidelines in place to assist academics to facilitate the proctored exam results. The normal process is that the invigilator app report should first be drafted to detect and highlight any irregularities, before submitting the results for XMO capturing and sign off.

As a novice academic implementing the proctored examination, amidst other adaptations to new responsibilities, I realised that I did not follow the due process and could not reverse the activity. I tried to seek help, but, unfortunately, I could not get help to re-route scripts for verification and was informed that it would not be possible to reverse the activity. To err is human; however, it was how the situation was managed that affected me emotionally, more than the mistake committed. It made me feel less of a professional. My inner space was touched, and I felt that I was not trusted as a person of integrity at the time of facilitating the proctored exam results. My self-esteem and confidence were affected and resulted in emotional strain through embarrassment. Working from that space, my emotional distress was highlighted in other ways as well. When it affects emotions, it affects everything (George and Dane 2016). My psychological resources could not allow me to sustain and fulfil my goals. I found myself committing many more errors than before in other areas of my work and social life. According to research by Gudiño Paredes et al. (2021), when academics were asked if the supervised exam had made them stressed out or anxious, 40 per cent said they felt more pressure because of remote monitoring, and 60 per cent said they hadn't felt that pressure in a traditional testing

environment. According to Payne, Youngcourt, and Beaubien (2007), In order to direct and maintain task-related efforts, motivating and self-regulatory psychological states are critical, and that is what I lost in the process, and that is what I lost in the process. According to Amadi, Du Plessis, and Solomon (2022), it is essential that universities and colleges help and provide the necessary support in order to enhance academics' positive psychological capital as a resource.

### **Capacity building of novice academics**

The Covid-19 pandemic's recent confinement has presented significant challenges for teaching (Schneider and Council 2020), necessitating not only the adaptation of academic programs to a virtual teaching-and-learning environment but also having an impact on the use of technology, the design of activities and evaluations, and the encouragement of collaborative work (Fernandez and Shaw 2020). Many HE sectors prioritised capacity building for academics to convert and upload online exams to online exam spaces (Khavugwi and Kiprotich 2022). This was done to improve the seamless and timely deployment of proctored tests to actualise student outcomes. However, Njuguna (2022) found that in her study, both staff and students indicated that they were hardly familiar with online teaching and, suddenly, had to learn quickly how to do the examinations on unfamiliar platforms. They felt that the training was not sufficient and did not explain all the frequently asked questions.

I noticed that when things go wrong, people tend to point a finger at each other, rather than identify the mistakes and come up with solutions to rectify the mistakes. I made a mistake processing the student results before the verification process of the invigilator app was done. This was reckless of me to have done that, but I did not know and had pressure to finish marking within the ten-day turnaround period, which, unfortunately, compromised academic integrity. I received messages that reminded me of who I am and where I come from, rather than what I should do and how I should do it. The process of rectifying the mistake was prolonged because it took me time to know which doors to knock on for help, which I figured out on my own. The entire process was daunting for me for some time but served as an inspiration for my personal development.

Clear and honest feedback is essential for employees to grow their abilities, learn from mistakes and collaborate more effectively (Shahid and Muchiri 2019). Being adaptable, working with individuals with varied backgrounds, doing different tasks, and meeting deadlines more quickly are all possible ways to define intelligence (Hemon et al. 2020). The more academics rely on one another to complete their responsibilities efficiently, the more these individuals and the organisation will benefit from a positive organisational structure (POS).

Positive organisational structure is about building a framework that encourages employees to succeed. Paying special attention to workers who rely on their colleagues to do an excellent job can create a culture that encourages pleasant connections. Pratt, Dineen, and Wu (2022) contend that when employees receive adequate attention, the end results include high-performing teams that thrive and deliver person- and relationship-centered care that is secure, efficient, and independent of the agency.

Studies by Akimov and Malin (2020); Lee (2020) show that the deployment of online tests and assessments requires the creation of the proper environment to assure the validity, reliability, and security of the online assessments. Exams that are proctored online are a clever way to improve academic integrity. By employing many of the same methods used in the more general domains of psychology and business, POS rigorously aims to understand the factors that influence individuals' psychological states that are most conducive to performance, recovery, strength development, and resilience in organisations. For better performance, it is important to strengthen psychological capacities and human resource strengths that are favorably oriented (Cameron and Spreitzer 2012). The study also revealed the necessity of streamlining administrative processes, enhancing the infrastructure needed for online tests, and enhancing the technical and instructional capacity of academic staff (Gudiño Paredes et al. 2021; Khavugwi and Kiprotich 2022).

### **My personal experience of facilitating proctored exams.**

My experience of proctoring examinations for the first time was not an easy one. Prior to the exam day, students were guided through a series of workshops and training on how to register and upload the invigilator app. Documents to take them through a step-by-step process were posted online on myUnisa. I had 833 students writing a take-home examination for four hours, with an additional 60 minutes to allow them to upload their answer scripts. I had to be online the entire time to monitor and respond to student queries and provide support. This was done with the assistance of my colleagues; I would not have managed it alone. We received a flurry of e-mails from the beginning of the exam to the end of it with messages like, "How do I register for the invigilator app?", "Where can I get the question paper?", and "I am unable to download the question paper". Ultimately, 727 students managed to download their examination question paper (EQPs); however, only 716 uploaded their answer scripts successfully. Unfortunately, there were students who could not upload the invigilator app in advance, as guided during training, and they were flagged as an irregularity. Some students indicated that they did upload the app on time, i.e., 15 minutes before the start of the actual exam, but struggled when they had to use it. The WhatsApp number of the service provider was posted online and e-mailed to

individual students for support. However, only one student followed up with the invigilator app helpdesk and was assisted to upload the script on the app. In the e-mail he sent to me, he said: "I was able to contact the invigilator app helpdesk, they assisted in uploading the data collected during the examination, after I submitted on my exams platform."

One of the students tried to be difficult and mentioned that she could not download the EQP and requested that it be e-mailed to her. A link to the exam site was e-mailed to her, but she insisted that she could not find the EQP. We requested her to e-mail a screenshot of where she was on the site and we guided her, but she insisted that she was not winning. She was guided telephonically, only to realise that there was another person in her company. When asked who the second person was, she dropped her phone. When I called later to check on her, she mentioned that she had managed to download the EQP. After writing, she submitted her script via e-mail, which was dismissed, because e-mailed scripts were not allowed and would not be marked. Unfortunately, she did not submit her answer script electronically either.

I also received e-mail from private addresses: "Is Joyce and Lebo (pseudonyms) one and the same per-son?" I would respond and say: "Please identify yourself and use myLife e-mail. Private e-mails are not allowed." I continued to receive e-mails from students requesting to submit their scripts via e-mail, because they failed to upload on the relevant exam platform or on the alternative link that was provided to them, even after the examination. All students who failed to upload their scripts on the relevant exam platform were then advised to apply for an aegrotat and a relevant e-mail address was provided.

Despite recent advances of the proctored exams and the online support provided to academics, many challenges persist. Students struggle to use the invigilator app and, consequently, the system regards them as being absent for the examination sitting. If you fail to use the invigilator app, you have to apply for an aegrotat. Once the student is flagged for any form of irregularity by the invigilator app, the academic must assess the seriousness of the misconduct and make the final decision on whether this constitutes an instance of academic misconduct or malpractice (Selwyn et al. 2023). The assessment procedure manual was introduced to give effect to the Institutional Assessment Policy and to be aligned to all other institutional policies, processes, and procedures. Despite the fact that automated online proctoring is generally thought to be more convenient for students, research has revealed psychological difficulties, such as low self-efficacy and a high need for peer support, which were thought to be indirect antecedents that affected both academics and students' online learning (Hussein et al. 2020). Furthermore, research shows that self-leadership partially mediates the relationship between the fulfilment of fundamental psychological needs, academic self-efficacy, and career adaptability (Hussein et al., 2020; Şahin and Gülşen 2022). Self-

leadership is the capacity to manage and direct one's own thoughts, feelings, and actions in order to reach objectives and lead a happy life. These issues force HEIs to adapt to rapid digital transformation and disruptive technological developments in order to maintain their competitive positions and provide high-quality formal, non-formal, and informal learning opportunities in a time of crisis.

Infrastructure issues, such as unreliable operating computers and poor internet connectivity, further complicated the deployment of proctored exams. Low bandwidth connections can make proctored exams difficult and unpleasant, especially for students who live in remote locations with no access to the internet (Mak, Krishnan, and Chuang 2022). In its initial stages, it was widely believed that the proctoring software was not accurate enough to be completely trusted, particularly when it came to taking high-definition pictures of student ID cards, detecting sound and movement, or identifying objects (Selwyn et al. 2023). I saw that although some students were flagged for trivial interruptions, others were not, even though they were talking about the test.

It is interesting to note that this study experienced the same challenges many academics experienced, as noted from conversations with colleagues. Some academics expressed that they needed time to adapt to the implementation of proctored examinations. The release of students' academic performance results was delayed for many departments and academics had to work extra hours to sort out the errors made in the process of evaluating the proctored examinations.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to help other qualitative researchers in academia implement and profit from GT methodology in their studies, I provided details about my experience in this constructivist GT study. Academic honesty and integrity must always be ensured and upheld in any learning environment. One approach to solving this problem is through online proctoring. The auto-ethnographic approach revealed my opinions regarding the benefits and drawbacks of the experiences of academics in the adoption of proctored examinations and provides some practical suggestions for enhancing the systems performance to foster academics' resilience. I hope that this study will provide a solid foundation for ensuring that proctored examinations are harnessed and provide relevance to practice, reduce the procedural burden and ease academics' anxiety associated with proctored examinations. It is recommended that ongoing capacity building be maintained, as there are systemic changes continually being introduced to advance the support of proctored examinations. An adaptation-based approach to the resilience of novice academics in the implementation of proctored examinations opens for future research.

In summary, this study is intended to open avenues for the exploration of a research area

in the experiences of academics on proctored examinations as a new phenomenon in online settings, on which little research has been done. However, this study has its own limitations as the research was limited to personal reflective experiences of one individual. The depth and insight gained from such a study cannot be repeated using quantitative methods. However, it should be highlighted that qualitative studies do not attempt to present research findings that are generalisable; rather, they aim to portray research findings that reflect the realities of the participants who gave their comments on proctored examinations. The study concentrated on the transitional phase from conventional exams to entirely online proctored exams, especially during the first year of its implementation. Although the study only covers the initial stages of proctored exams, baseline data was gathered to serve as a foundation for future advancements.

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