

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS THAT LEAD TO THE
UNEMPLOYMENT OF TVET GRADUATES IN THE NELSON MANDELA BAY
REGION OF THE EASTERN CAPE**

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



SIGNATURE

24/09/2022
DATE

DEDICATION

This limited dissertation is dedicated to my daughter Ivizcengo Semele, my mother Nomonde Semele and my grandmother Nompumelelo Khayi: you always encourage me to become a better person.

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I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the following:

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ABSTRACT

This study forms part of the requirements for the attainment of a coursework Master's degree in Adult Education. The study is a limited dissertation which explores the factors that contribute to the unemployment of TVET graduates in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. This region presents an opportunity for such information to be collected as there are successful TVET colleges in the area and also very high levels of unemployment.

This mini dissertation contains a literature review, an outline of the research methodology employed, data analysis and themes, discussion of findings with literature support and recommendations.

The aim of the study was to unpack the factors which seem to hamper the employment of TVET graduates, through gaining a better understanding from the personal experiences of those who interact with the topic of TVET graduate unemployment on a regular basis.

The study makes use of qualitative research methods through the employing a case study approach to obtain insights from participants. Participants were purposefully selected, and interviews were conducted to collect data. Thematic analysis was done to structure the data accordingly.

These insights are thereafter used to craft informed findings and recommendations, which could possibly alleviate some of the stumbling blocks in the path of TVET graduate employment.

Key findings of the study highlight lack of soft skills, misinformation, ineffective course, skills and relations as the main hindrances on the topic of TVET graduate unemployment.

KEYWORDS

Employability – the ability to obtain inceptive employment and to maintain it as well as to acquire new employment if necessary.

Skills – are developed abilities learned from the coordination of carefully executing purposive tasks.

College – an educational establishment, particularly one that provides higher education or training.

Graduate – a person who has successfully completed their studies or training.

Unemployment – the non-utilisation of eligible candidates who are actively seeking employment

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
NC (V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NDP	National Development Plan
NSF	National Skills Fund
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Background

Adult education has become a rising trend, the economic climate, globalisation, technology and other factors have increased the need for youth and adults to continue, or sometimes even to begin, their journey in education. Economic and social development, along with the knowledge economy, rely on higher education to meet their needs (Phago and Thwala, 2015).

In developing countries, higher education attempts to rectify the injustices of the past by giving everyone equal opportunities to compete in the labour market (Chinyamurindi, 2012) through access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges.

South Africa currently has 50 public TVET colleges, which host over 1 238 000 students. These colleges rely on government funding that usually amounts to at least R8 billion annually. The financial commitment from the state ensures that public TVET colleges are hubs of crucial skills training, which is direly needed for occupation eligibility (Okwelle, Chijioke, Chukwumaijem, 2015; Kufaine, 2014).

Public TVET college education has furthermore been prioritised in many countries, and this is demonstrated through the various government interventions and collaborations with the World Bank, such as the poverty reduction strategy (African Union, 2007).

Considering the level of commitment to the TVET sector portrayed by continental governments, one might easily assume that job creation and employment of skilled labour in Africa is on the rise.

However, this is not the case, as Statistics South Africa (2019) indicates that "the unemployment rate of South Africans has increased from 27.1% in 2018 to 27.6% in 2019". This level of unemployment marks the second highest percentage recorded by Statistics South Africa, with the highest level being 31.20% in 2003. Unemployment impacts the youth between the ages of 16 and 34 years, despite their successful completion of TVET qualifications.

The Eastern Cape Province currently holds the record as the province with the highest unemployment rate in the country Statistics South Africa (2019). This contradicts the notion that TVET institutions are matching and providing in the skills needed by the local economy through developing learning material that meets the requirements of the working world (Geressu, 2017).

Africa's stance on advocacy for youth development, socio-economic participation and skilled graduates compels further introspection into the employability of public TVET graduates in regions where the TVET mandate is not achieved (Ezeji, Ugwoke, Edeh, Okanazu 2015).

1.2 Rationale

The TVET sector is fundamental to the attainment of the goals established in the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS III) of South Africa (2015). The South African government spends billions of taxpayer funds in support and aid of TVET institutions to ensure skills are available and facilities are up to standard to allow the delivery of quality teaching and learning.

The expected outcome from investing in public TVET colleges is to see the reduction of unemployment through the employment of TVET graduates, particularly in small business creation, and ultimately through SMME development by the graduates themselves. In South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape Province, unemployment is increasing, yet public TVET colleges are producing graduates who are deemed skilled and work ready.

The Eastern Cape exhibits a situation according to which the youth of this province enrol in public TVET colleges, complete their studies and graduate, and yet still end up being unemployed. Unemployment in this community contributes to many social problems such as violence and drug usage. Focusing this study on the topic of the unemployment of graduates has been interesting as there are eight TVET colleges in this province, yet unemployment and poverty are rife.

1.3 Problem statement

In the Nelson Mandela Bay region of Eastern Cape there are two successful TVET colleges, both of which attain large numbers in terms of enrolment and produce a lot of graduates. Nevertheless, many of these graduates end up unemployed.

This community is renowned for social challenges such as alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence and gangsterism, and unemployment adds to these issues. Therefore, scrutiny towards elements which prevent TVET graduates from actively participating in the job market is necessary.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were to:

- 1.4.1 determine the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET college graduates in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.
- 1.4.2 understand if there is synergy between what is taught in the TVET colleges of the Eastern Cape and what industry demands of TVET graduates.
- 1.4.3 establish if modes of delivery are compatible with the skills needed by learners.
and
- 1.4.4 identify existing and possible strategies that will enhance employment among TVET graduates, particularly in the Eastern Cape Province.

1.5 Research questions and sub-questions

The questions addressed in this study were as follows:

Main question:

- 1.5.1. What are the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET college graduates in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa?

Sub-questions:

- 1.5.2 Does the vocational curriculum of the public TVET colleges match the skills required by the labour market of the Eastern Cape Province?
- 1.5.3. Is teaching and learning structured to accommodate the skills needs of learners?

1.5.4 How can we improve the public TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province to increase economic growth and personal development of graduates?

1.6 Organisation of chapters

This limited dissertation comprises of six chapters.

Chapter 1 guides and acts as a compass for the study. It includes the introduction, the problem statement and rationale, as well as the research questions pursued.

Chapter 2 provides an in-depth description of the research question through a literature review that reflects what academia and other relevant sources have to say regarding the topic of this research study.

Chapter 3 unpacks the research design and research methodology. This chapter outlines and explains the types of data collection methods to be used in the section relating to data collection and interpretation.

Chapter 4 presents the collection, analysis and interpretation of data relevant to the study.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion on the findings furnished by the data collection and analysis process and supports it with applicable literature.

Chapter 6 draws conclusions and makes recommendations that aim at alleviating the identified research problem.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The vision of the African Union (2007) is for the continent to participate in the global community, have an integrated economy, and become a peaceful and prosperous region. The catalyst for this vision is higher education as it is crucial to socio-economic development (Phago and Thwala, 2015). In compliance to these objectives the South African government provides opportunities to those who were previously excluded from participating in higher education through funding tertiary institutions such as TVET colleges and universities (Nkosi, 2014). This government strategy ensures that all qualifying persons interested in furthering their studies can do so through access to higher and further education institutions. As a result, student enrolment at higher education institutions has increased significantly in recent years. (Peterson et al. 2016). This increase has directly influenced the demand for, and intake at, South African TVET colleges as well.

The TVET college sector is considered to be an essential contributor to the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable young graduates to adapt to the changes in the dynamic world (Geressu, 2017).

This positive impact on the youth, along with the ability of TVET colleges to produce quality graduates, warrants government's immense commitment to this sector (Khandu, 2014). Furthermore, rigorous promotional efforts have been employed to showcase TVET college education for skills development (Dasmani, 2011).

As enrolment numbers increase at TVET colleges and graduate output numbers also rise, the unemployment rate among graduates has also increased (Edayi, 2015; Mncayi, 2016). This has created a surplus of TVET qualification holders in the labour pool in comparison to available job opportunities (Artess, Hooley and Mellars-Bourne, 2017; Van Broekhuizen, 2016). The burden of unemployment affects all facets of higher learning, including the TVET sector and its graduates as they count among the unemployed, despite attaining skills and supposed work knowledge (Ugwoke, Ezeji, Edeh and Okanazu, 2015).

This compelled the researcher to interrogate the factors that influence TVET college graduate employability (Papier, 2017). Understanding these factors may contribute to positive labour participation of TVET college graduates, as has been documented in other parts of the world including in the Philippines.

To obtain a full scope of the research problem related to this study, the literature reviewed in this chapter covered the following topics: TVET college environments and offerings (2.2), TVET college performance vs national unemployment (2.3), and the impact of unemployment (2.4).

2.2 TVET college environments and offerings

South Africa has 50 public TVET colleges that include more than 266 sites. The national spread of public TVET colleges is as follows (Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2014):

KwaZulu Natal has the most public TVET colleges, hosting nine colleges. Gauteng and Eastern Cape have eight colleges each, Limpopo has seven colleges, Western Cape has six colleges, Free State has four colleges, and Mpumalanga and North West have three colleges each while the Northern Cape has the lowest number with two colleges in the province.

TVET college offerings can be classified in three categories. NC (V) and Report 191 programmes, which are ministerial funded qualifications, and Occupational training which is mostly funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF) and Sector Education Training Authorities (SETA) levy grants (DHET, 2017).

Category 1 is the National Vocational Certificate (NC (V)). This qualification is offered over three levels, levels 2, 3 and 4. The NC (V) programme is considered to be an alternative pathway to the basic education grades 10, 11 and 12, with the final level of the qualification being equivalent to grade 12 in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework.

Category 2 comprises the Report 191 (R191) engineering and business studies programmes. R191 engineering studies consist of 6 sub levels (N1-N6) and require the students to undergo a minimum 24 months' work experience or a trade test in order for students to obtain their National Diploma. R191 business studies, on the

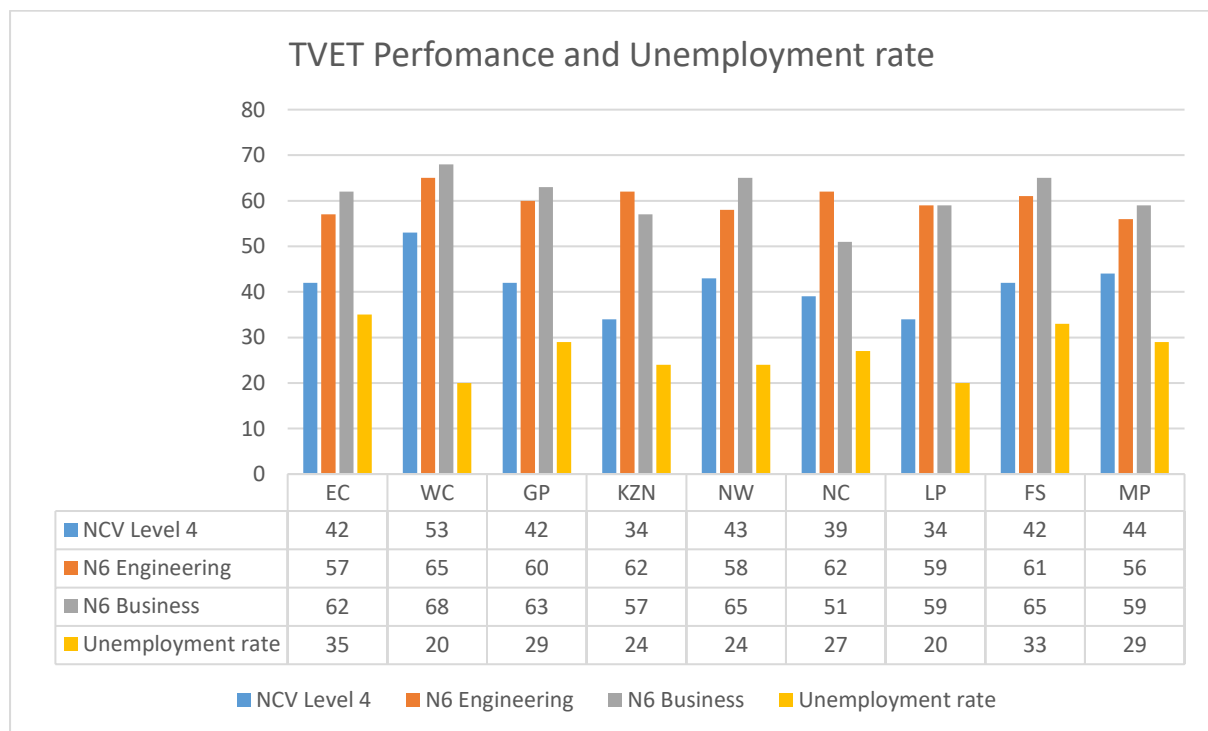
other hand, consist of three or four levels depending on the strength of the candidates' matric results, (Intro, N4, N5, N6). Furthermore, students need to obtain a minimum of 18 months' work experience in order for them to qualify for the National Diploma.

Category 3 includes the occupational qualifications. The duration of these qualifications depends on the specific field of work being trained for and the availability of funding.

2.3 TVET college performance vs national unemployment

The performance of TVET colleges is measured according to certification rates. Certification refers to the learners who have successfully met the qualification requirements (SAQA, 2013).

The emphasis usually falls on the exit levels of TVET qualifications, as candidates certified on these levels are recognised and are eligible to enter the job market. Figure 1 illustrates the performance of the TVET colleges in each province according to the National Examinations Database 2015 and also the employment statistics per province according to Statistics South Africa (2017).



. Figure 1: TVET performance and unemployment rate

In Figure 1, we see that for the NC (V) qualification, the Western Cape Province achieved the highest level 4 certification percentage at 52.8%, followed by Mpumalanga Province with 44.3%, with North West, Eastern Cape and Free State also achieving certification within the 40% range as they respectively attained 42.6%, 42.3% and 42.2%. The lowest performing provinces are Northern Cape at 38.5%, KwaZulu Natal with 33.9% and Limpopo Province with 33.8%.

For the R191 engineering studies, all provinces achieved more than 50% certification on their N6 level. Western Cape leads with 64.6%, KwaZulu Natal and Northern Cape follow as they tie at second place, achieving 62.1% each. The Free State attained 61%, Gauteng 60%, Limpopo 58.7, North West 57.7, Eastern Cape 57.2 and Mpumalanga achieved 56%.

In the R191 business studies, the provinces are ranked as follows: Western Cape 67.7%, Free State 65.2%, North West 64.8%, Gauteng 62.7%, Eastern Cape 62.1%, Limpopo and Mpumalanga 58.8% and Kwa-Zulu Natal 56.9% and lastly Northern Cape 51.1%.

The certification rate attained by the exit levels of the entire country indicate that the Eastern Cape Province is performing competitively in the TVET landscape, which means there is a significant supply of skilled people in the province.

Despite this good performance of Eastern Cape TVET colleges, unemployment statistics in quarter four of 2017 show that the Western Cape had the lowest unemployment rate with 19.5%, followed by Limpopo with an unemployment rate of 19.6%. These two provinces are the only provinces in the country which reflected unemployment rates of less than 20%. Free State indicated the second highest rate of unemployment at 32.6% and the Eastern Cape held the highest unemployment rate at 35.1%.

2.4 Impact of unemployment on TVET College graduates

Availability of jobs to the youth has decreased at a shocking rate since 2007. Although young people represent about 17% of the world population, they constitute 40% of global unemployment (Mayer, Moorti and McCallum, 2019). African urban areas are affected even more by unemployment and the youth with at least secondary education bear the brunt (Baah-Boateng, 2016).

Expansive youth unemployment and dire economic performance is a major concern particularly in countries with high unemployment rates, as this is considered to have a direct influence on violence, instability and social unrest in communities (Nordås and Davenport, 2013; Osakwe, 2013).

Employers take a gamble when employing young unskilled people, who will require training at the cost of the company. However this risk is lowered when the job seeker has prior education and training (Bowles and Jayadev, 2004). This should promote TVET graduates in the job market: yet this is not the case.

Unemployment of TVET graduates adversely affects graduates as well as those students who are still in the TVET system, as they do not fulfil their economic life purpose and they cannot develop their capabilities. This leads to their losing their life goals (Queneau and Sen, 2009).

Myataza (2019) suggests that unemployment-related facets such as poverty, employment status and education cost leads to the high absenteeism of TVET college students in the Nelson Mandela Bay of Eastern Cape.

TVET colleges set out to improve social standards through creating skilled people who are equipped for economy participation. However the sector is not achieving its objectives, as unemployment rates are high.

Unemployment of TVET graduates translates to the lack of achievement of student goals, the absence of a clear vision in the sector, lack of specific teaching and learning priorities and loss of stakeholders, which leads to school and sector decline.

2.5 Conclusion

The global statistics on unemployment are worrisome. Young people are forced to rely on families, state and private charities (Perelman, 2019) as work is becoming shockingly unavailable.

This puts extraordinary pressure on young people to be employed either full time or part time, in order for them to become self-sufficient and contribute to their household's economy (Bourdillon, 2008).

The scarcity of employment can be seen as a device of penury which snatches the opportunity of personal and social development from young people (Chirisa and Muchini, 2011). Moreover, the unemployment of young people can be labelled as failure of the TVET sector, as the primary objective of the TVET space is to give young people skills to become employable or to create their own employment.

In the labour force survey Quarter 1 of 2019, Statistics South Africa indicates that the Eastern Cape recorded the highest unemployment rate in the country at 37.1%. Furthermore, the education distribution of the unemployed in South Africa indicates that 56% of unemployed people had an education level below matric, followed by those with matric at 34,5%. Only 2,1% of the unemployed persons were graduates while 6,9% had other tertiary qualifications as their highest level of education.

Scholars posit provocative links between joblessness and increases in crime, political unrest, mental health problems, violence, and social exclusion. In addition, persistent youth unemployment is a harbinger of new political formations.

The bulk of South Africa's unemployed falls within the categories of TVET. As described in the Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa 2014: TVET NC (V) provides for those citizens with schooling levels below Grade 12, R191 caters to those who have attained Grade 12, and occupational training pertains to those who attain professional qualifications within the TVET framework.

The pace of the shift from elitism to mass opportunity in higher learning has notably been faster than the economic response of the country (McKenzie and Schweitzer, 2001). However, institutions of higher learning hold the responsibility to ensure that all students enrolled reach their academic objectives and potential (Fraser and Killen, 2005).

The nature of the TVET sector then compels an investigation into the factors which lead to the failure of the sector in achieving its main objectives, which are employability, self-sufficiency and economic transformation of TVET participants.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Orientation of the study

The compass of the study is the philosophical orientation which guides the researcher and the study when selecting the tools needed to conduct and to complete the research (Johnson and Christensen, 2011).

The philosophical orientation of the study is embodied in the research paradigm. A research paradigm is the fundamental perspective of the researcher, and it influences the choices and decisions made throughout the study as it tells us how meaning has been constructed from data gathered and experiences of the people involved throughout the study (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). A research paradigm is constructed by various components, which indicate the norms and values of the paradigm. An understanding of these paradigm components is essential as they determine the tone of the research study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The research paradigm employed in this study comprised of ontology, epistemology and methodology. According to Scott (2014) the philosophies of ontology refer to the suppositions that individuals use to make certain that something is real or that it makes sense. For this study, ontology allowed the researcher to determine the essence of the social phenomena at hand (Scott and Usher, 2005).

In this study, the epistemological element of the research paradigm described how information and knowledge were gathered and furthermore how they are communicated to other people (Cooksey and McDonald, 2011). The methodology of the research paradigm outlined procedures and methods of investigation utilised in the process of uncovering knowledge (Keeves, 1997).

Well planned investigation approaches, designs, procedures and research methods which are used to find out something are known as methodology. (Keeves, 1997).

Summarily methodology crafted the path and flow of the information gathering process in the act of attaining knowledge about this specific problem or topic. Therefore, the entire spectrum of contributors and systems involved in the study form part of the methodology.

3.2 Research design

Research designs which are also known as strategies of inquiry, encompass various types of research approaches. These research approaches include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, provide specific direction for procedures in a research design (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011)

The research inquiry crafts the path to be followed by the researcher when carrying out a research task. This plan outlines procedures that need to be implemented when the research is being undertaken, it assists in drawing up research questions, finding relevant participants and it identifies methods of collecting information (Johnson and Christensen, 2011).

According to Creswell (2014), social constructivists believe that individuals seek meaningful perception of their socio-economic environments through experiences. These meanings are different as individual experiences differ, leading the researcher to apply complex views.

Grover (2015) adds that the constructivist approach allows varied and multiple meanings rather than narrow perspectives. This helps us to understand different dimensions and facets of a single phenomenon.

Considering the aims that the research question seeks to address, a constructive approach has been used. The study followed a qualitative research design as the qualitative research method had all the tools required this study (Given, 2008).

3.3 Qualitative research

The perspective of qualitative research is not based on points, tools or designs; rather it is based on the experiences and views of the study participants (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

Studying social occurrences and creating platforms that give a voice to the participants' feelings and perceptions is usually the focus of qualitative researchers. This arises from the belief that the social setting is immersed with knowledge, and that uncovering this knowledge constitutes an authentic scientific process.

The main elements of qualitative research are as follows (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle 2010):

- The study takes place in the natural setting.
- The objective of the research questions is to explore, interpret or understand the social context.
- Purposeful selection methods are used to seek out participants who have information regarding the research questions.
- The researcher is in close contact with the participants and usually adopts an interactive role as data collection techniques involve observation and interviews.
- Studies are reported through the narration of data.

Qualitative research is conducted for many purposes; however, the National Research Council provides categories that guide topics to be researched, ensuring that all research studies answer questions on current problems and reasons for the occurrences (Shavelson and Towne, 2002).

Qualitative researchers are responsible for devising possible research topics and developing research questions. They furthermore select and clarify theoretical or conceptual frameworks for their proposed studies. Qualitative researchers thereafter select the best suited designs and techniques and collect data using the relevant tools which allow them to inform their publics through reports and presentations.

Qualitative research uses data collection approaches such as observations, interviews, and document analysis to construct findings and to make summaries through narration (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2010).

3.4 Research strategy

The research strategy used in this study, can be described as the overall plan that defined and outlined how the process of data collection and interpretation occurred. It states the objective of the research and lays out the set tools which were put into place when trying to answer the questions raised by the research enquiry (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002).

The research strategy of this study included the research method, the population and sampling methods, and the methods that were be used to determine validity and trustworthiness.

3.4.1 Research method

Case study approach

The case study research approach is widespread in qualitative studies. This approach allows the extensive exploration of a wide range of occurrences through the employment of multiple sources of data (Oliver and Jupp, 2006).

Despite the wide range offered by the scope of the case study approach, it is usual for case studies to focus on small groups or individuals, as a “case” can refer to an individual, a group, an organisation, event/s, institutions or even phenomena (Hussain, Elyas and Nasseef, 2003).

The case study approach is a portrayal of a problematic occurrence through using specific tools that will observe and document the insights of the affected party or parties. It focuses on a particular issue which the researcher has the ability to observe (Rahi, 2017). Yin (2003) suggests that interviews, observations of participants and physical artefacts are the best and most suitable data collection methods for conducting a case study.

Considering the limited financial resources available, the limited experience of the researcher and the nature of the problem statement of this study, the case study

approach in this instance was deemed to be a suitable approach as it allowed the researcher to use data collection tools and the setting was conducive to a small-scale research study.

For this study, the researcher used interview instruments for individual semi structured interviews in order for data to be collected from the participants. Furthermore, the researcher observed systems and documents available which were considered as part of the study. The findings of the research were considered to be the standard of the Eastern Cape TVET landscape.

3.4.2 Sampling and population

Sampling

A purposive sampling approach was used in the study. In purposive sampling the choice of a participant is a result of the qualities that the participant possesses (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016).

In this study, purposive sampling was done through the usage of a critical case sampling, in terms of which one campus was used, and the results of this case may then be applied to other TVET colleges of the Nelson Mandela Bay region.

Population

The study took place at the East Cape Midlands TVET College, Heath Park Campus. Heath Park Campus is a business studies campus situated in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The programme qualification mix of the campus consists of a single National Vocational Certificate programme in Office Administration (level 2 to level 4), plus Report 191 programmes offering Marketing Management, Business Management, Management Assistant and Financial Management.

Participants were purposively selected according to the function they perform with regard to the placement and mentoring of graduates and according to their personal experience of graduating from a TVET institution. The participants comprised of four former students who graduated in the past academic year, one placement officer, one student support officer and two members of the campus management team, totalling eight participants.

3.5 Instrumentation and data collection techniques

Primary and secondary data was collected using semi-structured interviews and document review.

3.5.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to ask prominent and relevant questions which unpacked the research topic. The interviewer and the interviewee engaged in the pursuit of exploring all aspects of the research topic, as the semi-structured interview format allows for flexibility and guidance on what to talk about (Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008). The interview sessions were recorded using an applicable device.

3.5.2 Document review

Document analysis, according to which available policy and legislation were examined to see what available strategies are being implemented, or perhaps have been overlooked or are even unexplored. The findings of this document analysis forms part of the literature review and guided the data collection, analysis and interpretation of the findings.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Thematic analysis was used to analyse all results from the interview tools attained from participants during the semi-structured interviews. This method allowed identifying, analysing, organising, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Notes emanating from the various data collection methods were analysed as follows:

Field notes emanating from the semi structured interviews were audio recorded and the recordings were transcribed. The transcripts have been interpreted into themes according to the participant's responses and guided by the research question and literature reviewed.

Document review: the findings of the texts analysed have been compiled into a formal report as part of the literature review.

3.7 Credibility and trustworthiness

Researchers need to ensure accuracy in a study's findings, through applying multiple strategies that check validity. This increases the confidence of the readers (Creswell, 2009).

Trustworthiness, or the truth value of qualitative research, and transparency of the conduct of the study are crucial to the usefulness and integrity of the findings (Cope, 2014). Furthermore, trustworthiness of the study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot and Beck, 2014). Credibility is an important criterion in establishing trustworthiness as it asks the researcher to link the study findings with reality in order to establish truth in research findings. To ensure validity in this study the researcher employed triangulation and member checking. The form of triangulation used for the study is methods triangulation, according to which the field notes of the semi-structured interviews were compared to the outcome of the data analysis.

Member checking was used to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings. This was accomplished by taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate reflections of their contributions.

3.8. Ethical considerations

The protection of participants was very important in this study and appropriate protocol was put in place to ensure that participants were not violated or exposed to any harm throughout the study.

Strategies that used to reduce harm in this study were:

Obtaining of informed consent

Informed consent means that the participants were given enough information about the study prior to their participation. Furthermore, participants had the choice to accept or decline participation in the study (Morse and Field, 1995).

Protection from harm

The principle of justice was employed to protect participants from harm in the study. The justice principle ensured that no participant was harmed or exploited during the study, by recognising the vulnerability of participants and their contribution to the study (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2001).

The researcher paid careful consideration when employing these strategies as non-implementation of ethical considerations would jeopardise the study.

3.9 Conclusion

Qualitative research offers research methods and tools that allow the researcher to gain in-depth information through data collected. For this study the case study approach was employed as the situation of the unemployed youth of the Eastern Cape can be probed through scrutinising the current state of unemployment of graduates at the case site.

Following the data collection phase, the researcher narrated and interpreted field findings and compiled a written record reporting on the themes that have emerged and how they depicted the problem statement of this study. A full analysis of the data collected is entailed in chapter four of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, the research process was outlined, and the applicable methodology, design and tools were discussed. The focus of this chapter is to analyse the data collected and present the findings of the enquiry. This study was therefore an attempt to unpack the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET graduates in the Eastern Cape.

The main research question of the investigation was: What are the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET College graduates in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa?

The sub-questions of the enquiry were:

- Does the vocational curriculum of the public TVET colleges match the skills required by the labour market of the Eastern Cape Province?
- Is teaching and learning structured to accommodate the skills needs of learners?
- How can we improve the public TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province to increase economic growth and personal development of graduates?

The research question and the sub-questions were encompassed in interview tools in which the different categories of participants engaged, providing inputs from their perspectives.

4.2 Relevant information of participants

The study involved three categories of participants, who all have an active role in the teaching and learning of the TVET landscape. A total of eight participants were involved in this study. Category One is unpacked in Table 4.1, where the information of the campus management participants is provided. Category Two consists of the student support staff participants, and the participants' information in this category is presented in Table 4.2. Category Three consists of the student participants, and their information is found in Table 4.3.

Table 4.1 Relevant information of campus management participants

Participant	Designation	Expertise
Senior Lecturer	CMP1	Financial Management
Head of department	CMP2	Engineering and Business studies

Table 4.2 Relevant information of student support staff participants

Participant	Designation	Expertise
Student Liaison Officer	SSP1	Social welfare
Administrative and placement officer	SSP2	Public administration

Table 4.3 Relevant information of student participants

Participant	Designation	TVET qualification completed
Student	SP1	Business Management N6
Student	SP2	Office Administration L4
Student	SP3	Marketing Management L4
Student	SP4	Office administration L4

4.3 Emerging themes

Four themes were formulated from the research question and the sub-questions of this study. Information was collected from the three categories of participants namely, campus management, student support staff and students.

Participants consented to being audio recorded as they answered questions from the semi-structured interviews used to gather information for this study. The audio recordings were later transcribed, and the findings are presented in this chapter.

The research questions and emerging themes are presented in Table 4.4 and the explanations of each of the points is described below. Responses given by the participants during the interviews are provided in italics.

Table 4.4 Research questions, themes and sub-themes

Research question	Theme	Sub-themes
1. What are the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET College graduates in the Eastern Cape?	4.3.1 Theme 1 Factors that lead to TVET graduate unemployment	4.3.1.1 Lack of soft skills 4.3.1.2 Poor career guidance 4.3.1.3 Misinformation about TVET qualifications 4.1.3.4 Communication in the value chain
2. Does the vocational curriculum of the public TVET colleges match the skills required by the labour market of the Eastern Cape?	4.3.2 Theme 2 TVET graduate supply vs job market demand	4.3.2.1 Course offering 4.3.2.2 Inadequate research on skills demanded
3. Is teaching and learning structured to accommodate the skills needs of learners?	4.3.3 Theme 3 Efficiency in learning environment	4.3.3.1 Applying teaching outcomes to the real world
4. How can we improve the public TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province to increase economic growth and personal development of graduates?	4.3.4 Strategies that will boost employment of TVET graduates	4.3.4.1 Closer relations with private sector 4.3.4.2 Offer shorter courses 4.3.4.3 Uncertain

4.3.1 Theme 1: Factors that lead to TVET graduate unemployment

In the course of collecting data, the participants shared their views on the factors they believe lead to the unemployment of TVET graduates. A number of factors emerged including lack of soft skills, poor career guidance, misinformation about TVET qualifications, roles and responsibilities of staff and communication within the value chain.

4.3.1.1 Lack of soft skills

The lack of soft skills among students was identified as one of the factors that plays a role in their employability. During the interview sessions participants revealed that companies who absorb TVET students often complain about the lack of such soft skills and workplace mannerisms displayed by those students. In unpacking this point participants said:

Some of the feedback is that our students do lack in certain skills which are regarded as critical in the workplace. They do not know how to communicate well and how to address maybe their superiors in their workplace. So, there is that lack of soft skills, basic work ethics. (CMP1)

Participants further concurred that the lack of workplace skills prevents students from finding and keeping jobs.

Students find it very difficult to find work because in the job field now they want working experience, which we don't have, so we can't find any work. I would say that, seeing that we can't find work without experience, they could like let us work here for a minimum of 2 years just to build up experience for the outside world. (SP2)

This lack of workplace skills seems to be a major factor which hampers the employment of TVET graduates.

4.3.1.2 Poor career guidance

As the interview discussions took place it became evident that not much guidance was offered to the TVET students prior to their enrolling for their respective courses. When asked what influenced their choice of TVET course, this is what they had to say:

In the year 2014 I failed my matric year and had a gap year, then seeing that I'm not far from campus I came and checked what courses they have and decided to enrol in Office Admin. (SP2)

SP4 added:

That programme was not my first option. I went to Brickfields to apply for Early Childhood Development but there were no funds available for it. They told me I have to pay it myself. But then the lady referred me to this campus and said if I could - I can do my NC (V) programme and it's also a certificate in Office Administration it won't be like a matric certificate, but it's an Administration certificate. (SP4)

According to the responses given by these participants, the factors they had considered when choosing a TVET qualification were mostly related to funding and proximity to the campus. They exhibited no particular interest in the skill or course content.

4.3.1.3 Misinformation about TVET qualifications

Data that emerged from the interviews with the student participants indicated that the students do not know the NQF level of their qualification, and they doubt the value of their certificate. Student participants said:

I heard a rumour saying that NC (V) is just a certificate, why don't you do something like this Report 191 programme, just to add something to your certificate.

So, I don't know if it's true, I didn't do research on it, but I just thought "look here I'm already in the system of this college. So, why don't I apply for Report 191 programme to put it with my certificate?" (SP4)

SP4 continued to say: *I didn't apply for any job.*

I will find work soon as I finish my N6 studies, SP3 stated.

While an N6 TVET graduate indicated that: *As a BM graduate, it's not that easy to get into the Internship programme so I chose to do this. (SP1)*

It seems that the misinformation about TVET qualifications makes students doubt the credibility of their qualifications, to the extent that they don't attempt to participate in the job market.

You get reluctance from the students themselves, they don't want to go out and find something by themselves. (SSP1)

4.3.1.4 Communication within the value chain

The inputs obtained during the data collection process indicate that the stakeholders do not all have the same information and that there are knowledge gaps that may result from poor communication and inefficient participation on the part of the campus.

When asked about the availability of partnerships the responses from some of the staff participants were:

Partnerships are not available and also, I mentioned the reluctance of businesses hampering them. (SSP1)

We are working with lot of companies. We've got partnerships with companies. (SSP2)

CMP2 furthermore responded, *The College has formed relationships with some companies that could host students for their work-based learning experience.*

Upon probing into the challenges that the campus faces when placing their students into these businesses, the responses seemed to distance the campus from the responsibility of placement. The participants responded as follows:

I can't respond on that one. (CMP2)

We've got a very small economy in our regime (Eastern Cape). We do not have enough companies to take students each and every semester. (CMP1)

I can say it starts with our government, if you can look at the rate of the unemployment in our country it is very high ma'am, but we're trying by all means so that our students can be placed. (SSP2)

The campus seemed unclear on the state or availability of partnerships or what campus level challenges were faced when placing students. This indicates poor communication within the value chain involved with placing of students.

4.3.2 Theme 2: TVET graduate supply vs job market demand

The data collected regarding what industry demands of the TVET landscape were interesting and insightful. The main problem areas identified were: course offerings, numbers enrolled, and inadequate research on skills demanded.

4.3.2.1 Course offerings

The programme qualification mix, or courses offered on the campus, was identified as a hampering factor which prevented students from finding employment. The views on the courses offered were:

Office Admin – NC (V) students – find it very difficult to find work because in the job field now. (SP2)

As a BM student I...it's not that easy to get the Internship. (SP1)

SSP2 added: I think as an institution somewhere, somehow, we need to introduce these small courses whereby people they can have skills, evidently after 3 months. I think they will get employment ma'am.

There was an overall feeling that the courses offered do not satisfy the needs of the students or the market.

4.3.3.2 Inadequate research on skills demanded

The TVET landscape is tasked with the function of equipping people with the skills needed to transform their lives through economic participation. However, the high number of unemployed TVET graduates indicates that there is a misalignment between the TVET sector and the country's job market.

The responses obtained in this study suggest that the campus does not have current information regarding the needs of the job market and the relevance of the courses they offer. Some of the comments on this topic were:

Okay... from my knowledge, there was research that was done by the college and they – the research indicated the needs of the communities we serve. (CMP1)

I think the college can work more closely with the private sector, the companies that we feel are able to place and absorb our learners and the learners and then to like try to find out what are the skills that we need to eh... we need to equip the students with, so that we are better able to respond to their requirements and their needs. (CMP1)

Uh, the current qualification mix is influenced by the needs of the community as well as the industry. (CMP2)

CMP1 further added that: *We've got about 260 students currently, so they will be leaving us and there will be another cohort that will exit again at the end of the year and remember that each student from those ones has got to do an internship for 18 months. So, when we release the next cohort of exit students – probably the ones who were placed last year, are still busy trying to complete. So, we end up having quite a lot of backlogs in trying to place the students, and also, we do find that not all the companies are willing to accept the students due to their own reasons of course.*

These responses indicate that research done by the campus does not consider the duration of the courses, the numbers enrolled, or the companies available to absorb the campus output.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Efficiency in learning environment

The number of exit level candidates produced on the campus indicate that the campus has a high pass rate. It seems that the course content is covered well but the implementation of this content in the real world is lacking as there are high levels of unemployment.

4.3.3.1 Applying learning outcomes to the real world

The numbers provided during the data collection indicate that the campus is doing well in terms of the retention and the progression of the students; however, those students could not apply their knowledge in the real world and use their skills to get or create employment.

Currently we've got just under 700 students at the campus, also about 260 students who are on their exit level, CMP1 stated, referring to the campus semester intake.

CMP2, referring to the annual intake and the semester exit level, said: *Currently I've got 1 374, then my exit level are 274.*

The campus had between 260 and 274 students who had successfully completed their lower levels by attaining satisfactory results.

When we looked into the numbers of students who were employed after completing their studies, respondents said:

We managed to place our students – about 10% if not 15%. This was according to SSP2, referring to the exit level students, so of the 260-274 student about 40 students were employed.

SSP1 stated the following: *I would say unfortunately, due to the, uh... all the situations and the factors that I mentioned, it could be about 1/3 (one-third).*

4.3.4 Theme 4: Strategies that will boost the employment of TVET graduates in the EC

The respondents had various views on how they believe the crisis of TVET graduate unemployment can be resolved. The data collected was as follows:

4.3.4.1 Closer relations with the private sector

In the view of CMP1: *I think the college can work more closely with the private sector, the companies that we feel are able to place and absorb our learners and the learners and then, to like try to find out what are the skills that we need to eh...we need to equip the students with, so that we are better able to respond to their requirements and their needs.*

CMP1 further added: *So, it needs some kind of a partnership between ourselves and the companies that place our students, so that we produce the quality output that they can actually use at the end of the day.*

4.3.4.2 Offer shorter courses at campuses

SSP2 said: *I think as an institution somewhere, somehow, we need to introduce these small courses whereby people they can have skills, evidently after 3 months. I think they will get employment ma'am.*

4.3.4.3 Indeterminate

While some respondents were confident in sponsoring possible solutions to the problem at hand, a few respondents indicated that they were unsure about what exactly needed to be done to resolve the crisis investigated in this study.

4.3.4.4 Uncertain

SP1 said: *I think there is, but I don't know how they can help us to find jobs.*

CMP2 however referred the interviewer to another office for answers, stating: *That one can be answered by Placement.*

4.4 Conclusion

The data collection process provided the participants with an opportunity to share their views on the different questions contained in the interview tools.

It also allowed the researcher to gain valuable insight on how the different stakeholders perceive the challenge of TVET graduate unemployment.

The researcher-maintained objectivity throughout the data collection process and endeavoured to ensure meaningful interaction in each interview.

The researcher did not find any documents to review on the topic at hand; therefore, the above presentation was used to craft the recommendations and conclusion which follow in Chapters 5 and 6 of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The study endeavoured to gain insights from TVET stakeholders seeking possible solutions to the main research question and sub-questions. The main research question for this study, as mentioned in Chapter 1, was:

What are the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET College graduates in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa?

The sub-questions were:

Does the vocational curriculum of the public TVET colleges match the skills required by the labour market of the Eastern Cape Province?

Is teaching and learning structured to accommodate the skills needs of learners?

How can we improve the public TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province to increase economic growth and personal development of graduates?

The data which emanated from the responses to these questions was analysed and presented in four themes. Each theme had key topics which will be discussed in this chapter and supported by appropriate literature.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Lack of soft skills in TVET products

The results of the study were based on the experiences and views of the participants (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Considering the aims of the research question, a constructive approach was used to elicit data (Given, 2008).

Participants gave account of their personal experiences and the data collected from the encounters indicated what they believed are the main factors which lead to TVET graduate unemployment.

The feedback from industry partners about the attitude and workplace outlook of TVET students who are placed in their companies was generally negative. This assisted in creating a bad image for the TVET sector and made the TVET product less competitive in the job market. This view is supported by Ayonmike and Okeke (2016), who state

that TVET graduates generally do not possess basic work skills and this often discourages employers.

5.2.2 Misinformation about TVET courses

Inadequate and poor information about TVET courses was also identified as a contributing factor to TVET graduate unemployment. The gaps in information lead to poor support and have an impact on the students' choice of programme or course. This has also led to TVET college students doubting the value of their qualification and has created confusion among staff. This ultimately causes students to be demotivated and delays their participation in the world of work. Mabunda and Frick (2020) echo these sentiments when stating that businesses and the public don't buy into public TVET colleges due to the lack of information available on the offerings of these colleges.

5.2.3 Ineffective course offerings

The insights provided by the respondents indicate that TVET colleges might overlook the needs of the job market when they are considering course offerings, and instead colleges offer courses which they know are easily filled up.

TVET colleges have targets which ensure security for staffing and procurement of infrastructure. These targets are met by attaining funding through the number of students enrolled.

The lack of research done by TVET colleges on job market needs has had a negative impact on TVET graduates as they enrol and exit the TVET system in large numbers but the demand for their particular skills is low.

This is supported by Singh and Tolessa (2019) when they state that lack of initiative by TVET institutions leads to poor outcomes from the industries. Developing countries need to prioritise industry needs to ensure that the TVET colleges offer relevant knowledge. Therefore TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province also need to consider the market requirements and align their programme offerings to the needs of industry.

5.2.4 Applying TVET skills in real life

The data collected indicates that large numbers of students are enrolled, retained and complete their TVET qualification. This means that students pass and achieve satisfactory results in their academics.

Academic success however does not automatically translate to employment or self-employment of the TVET graduate. The number of unemployed TVET graduates is very high despite their good progression and skills attainment, which tends to imply that much of what they have learned in college is not useful in their lives outside of school. Kakengi (2019) dispels this phenomenon when she states that TVET graduates would not face long periods of unemployment if there was better collaboration between the college, industry and government.

Participants in the study suggested that improvement to the quality of course material, course instruction and the improvement in the learning environment would better equip the TVET graduate, not only in passing but also for their livelihoods.

5.2.5 Relations with industry

The relationship between the TVET College and immediate industry is barely existent. Industry doesn't have information regarding the college offerings, while the college also doesn't know what the industry needs. This gap is detrimental for the TVET graduate, as supported by Ekpenyong and Edokpolor (2016) in their explanation that collaboration between the TVET sector and business industries has been proven to be a successful tool in youth development and employment.

5.3 Conclusion

The discussions entailed in the chapter focused on the data collected and themes which have emulated throughout the study. These discussions will craft recommendations in chapter six that follows, and they will further inform conclusions for the study.

CHAPTER SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief summary of the study and research findings and offers recommendations that have emerged from these findings.

A number of strategies were identified by the participants as possible interventions. These interventions, or possible methods of improvement, are believed to have the potential of changing the status quo regarding the lack of employment of TVET graduates.

The participants suggested that various gaps between the TVET College and the industry, particularly private sector, should be minimised. The gaps could be minimised through ensuring that current information flows more freely between businesses and industry, and TVET colleges.

Course revitalisation was also strongly suggested by the respondents, as they believed that if the college could offer shorter and more impactful courses, TVET graduates would thrive in the job market. Even participants who could not identify possible solutions, expressed their belief that the TVET sector has the potential to improve, even though they are not able to offer suggestions as to how this could take place.

6.2 Recommendations

As a result of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made in an attempt to alleviate the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET graduates in the Eastern Cape Province:

- TVET colleges need to work towards clear and efficient communication both internally and with prospective and current students. This will assist in eliminating confusion on instructional offering among staff and students regarding what they should expect from the TVET learning programmes and their prospects for employment.
- The student support function at TVET colleges, along with those staff members tasked with teaching and learning, needs to craft mechanisms that will place emphasis on the attitudes and behaviour of students, especially in

regard to their demeanour in the workplace, as these have an impact on how the TVET product is viewed.

- The stakeholder relations function at colleges should keep the TVET college and its external partners on par and up to date with developments and information from both sides. This will ensure that the college produces what the job market requires.
- On-course “businesses”, or business incubators, should be established for the students, to give them a hands-on learning experience which would also translate to their earning while learning.
- Curriculum offerings must be reviewed to meet the changes in the skills demands in the job market. The reason for this is to ensure updated and efficient TVET products being made available to the job market.
- The TVET space could embark on research that will ensure that the offerings of TVET colleges are relevant to the needs of business and industry.

6.3 Conclusion of the study

The study sought and examined the insights of individuals who were actively apart of the TVET space, with the aim of attaining a better understanding of the research topic, i.e., factors which lead to unemployment of many TVET graduates in the Eastern Cape Province.

The methodology applied has ensured that bias and misapplication were avoided and participants could freely engage with the research questions. The data was collected and analysed, and then translated into findings and recommendations.

The study revealed that TVET colleges in the Eastern Cape Province need to create a better image by ensuring that their programmes are relevant and that correct information is readily available and accessible to all stakeholders.

Colleges must ensure that the attitudes and workplace behaviour of their exit students are in line with the skills and level of education that they have acquired.

The main limitation of the study would be that it was conducted in one region and there might be different insights from different parts of the province. Therefore further

research is encouraged on the topic of unemployment among TVET College graduates.

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Appendix A:

PERMISSION LETTER



Request for permission to conduct research at EASTCAPE MIDLANDS TVET COLLEGE HEATH PARK CAMPUS.

An investigation into the factors that lead to the unemployment of TVET College graduates in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape.

June 2021

To: Mr K.P Flanagan

Campus Manager Heath Park Campus

0419952000 / kflanagan@emcol.co.za

Dear Mr Flanagan,

I, B.S.N. Stemele, am doing research towards a Master's degree in Education at the University of South Africa. I hereby seek permission to conduct research through collecting data from participants in your campus.

The aim of the study is to gain an understanding of the challenges that render Eastern Cape TVET graduates unemployed.

Your campus has been selected because it is accessible to the researcher and the graduates that emerge from the campus also face the risk of being unemployed upon completion of their studies.

The study will entail a literature review and responses will be collected from participants.

The benefits of this study are that first hand experiences of previous students will be heard. Also a better understanding on the issue of unemployment of TVET college graduates will be gained.

Potential risks are that unemployed students may get emotionally distraught when asked about their experiences as it will touch on their personal situations.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback procedure will entail response verification whereby respondents will see their answers and verify if they have been captured correctly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B.S.N. Stemele".

B.S.N. STEMELE



Appendix B

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



Date: June 2021

Title: An investigation into the factors that lead to the unemployment of TVET College graduates in the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is B.S.N. Stemele and I am doing research towards a Master's Degree at the University of South Africa. You are invited to participate in a study entitled "An investigation into the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET college graduates in the Eastern Cape of South Africa".

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study is expected to collect important information that could assist in improving the employment rate of TVET graduates in the Eastern Cape Province.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because you have completed a TVET qualification and your experience is gainful towards this study / you currently work in a TVET college and possess inputs on the study at hand.

I obtained your contact details from your current / previous college administration system. A total number of nine participants will be involved in this study.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves audio taping of semi-structured interviews which will consist of open ended questions that will allow the participants to give extended feedback. The interviews should take a maximum of 20 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

Participating in this study will be beneficial to the participant as the reality of a TVET post academic student will be recorded. The college and the community will also benefit as they will have a better understanding of the challenges that TVET college graduates face upon completion of their studies.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The participant faces a risk of emotional distress as the interviews will interrogate the personal situations of the participants. The campus wellness section will be available through the office of the campus manager to give support to participants in need. All particulars of the participants will remain confidential.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research **OR** Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a specific designation and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the office of the researcher at EastCape TVET College, Heath Park Campus for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no reward or incentive offered for participation.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education, Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact B.S.N. Stemele on 0737315101 or email sese.stemele@gmail.com or website. The findings will be accessible for six months.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact B.S.N Stemele. on 0737315101 or sese.stemele@gmail.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr E.M. Nkoana on 0124842808 or nkoanem@unisa.ac.za .

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B.S.N.' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

B.S.N. Stemele

Appendix C
Privacy form



CONSENT AND PRIVACY PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANT'S LETTER

I _____ grant consent/assent that the information I share during the research data collection may be used by Miss B.S.N. Stemele for research purposes. I am aware that the interviews will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the interviews to any person outside the interview in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher's Name: (Please print): _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix D

Campus management interview tool



Interview instrument: Campus Management participants

1. What is the campus capacity?
2. Which programmes are offered?
3. What are the factors that have led to the current programme qualification mix?
4. How many students are currently enrolled? How many are on their exit level?
5. Explain the interventions that are used by the college to assist students to find employment.
6. Describe the challenges (if any) that are faced by the college when trying to place students in industry.
7. What are the common comments or feedback given by employers that have employed your students?
8. What do you think the college can do to improve the rate of employment among students?

Appendix E

Student support services interview tool



Interview instrument: Student Support Staff participants

1. Briefly describe the scope of your occupation.
2. Outline the student recruitment and selection process at your campus.
3. Which interventions are available to assist students on campus?
4. What support services does your institution offer to students when they are done with their campus based learning?
5. Are there any partnerships between the college and local businesses?
6. What percentage estimate of your former students is currently employed?
7. What is hampering or stagnating the employment of your former students?

Appendix F

Student participant interview tool



Interview instrument: Student participants

1. Which TVET programme did you complete?
2. What influenced your decision to participate in that programme?
3. Describe your overall TVET college experience.
4. Are you currently employed?
5. How long did it take for you to find employment? / What do you think is the reason for you not find employment?
6. Is there anything you feel your college could have done to assist you in finding work / finding work sooner?
7. Are you still in touch with your former classmates? Have they had better luck in finding work?

**NANETTE J LÖTTER PROFESSIONAL EDITING AND
TRANSLATING**

Certificate of language editing

I, Nanette J Lötter, hereby declare that during September 2022, I performed a professional language edit and technical review of the following dissertation:

Author: Sesethu Stemele

Degree: Master's Degree in Adult Education

Title: An investigation into the factors that lead to the unemployment of TVET graduates in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape

Supervisor/s: Dr E.M. Nkoana

Institution: UNISA

Editorial comments and comprehensive editorial recommendations were furnished, although the final product remains the responsibility of the author.



21 September 2022

Nanette J Lötter

MA (Linguistics and Translation) APed, APTrans

South African Translators' Institute (Accredited Professional Editor and Translator)

Cell No: 082 2024 244

Email: 50anette.lotter@gmail.com

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2021/05/12

Ref: **2021/05/12/60100729/24/AM**

Dear Ms BSN Stemele

Name: Ms BSN Stemele

Student No.:60100729

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2021/05/12 to 2024/05/12

Researcher(s): Name: Ms BSN Stemele
E-mail address: 60100729@mylifeunisa.ac.za
Telephone: 0671076556

Supervisor(s): Name: Dr EM Nkoana
E-mail address: nkoana@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 0124842808

Title of research:

An investigation into the factors that lead to unemployment of TVET graduates in the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

Qualification: MEd Adult Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2021/05/12 to 2024/05/12.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2021/05/12 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/05/12**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **2021/05/12/60100729/24/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za