

Critical Analysis of Post-1994 Progressive and Transformative Legislative Instruments Introduced to Build Skills and Capacities in South Africa

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Abstract

The South African government seeks to tackle poverty, unemployment and inequality via the deployment and use of quality education at the tertiary level. To accomplish this, Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET Colleges) have been strategically introduced and established as intervention tools to ensure that skills and capacities are required to address socio-economic challenges facing the country. To this end, students would be trained to receive the requisite skills to make them competent in their chosen vocation where they would utilise the skill and competency to stand on their own after graduating by establishing a vocation, enterprises, ventures where they are self-employed and even employ others, or have the skills that are deployable in the workplace with minimal supervision to discharge the job requirements. The most potent tool that underpins the realisation of this is through the introduction of post-1994 progressive and transformative instruments that speak to the effective implementation of skills, capacity and capability to fill skill gaps and shortages to deliver and fulfil the development agenda of South Africa.

Keywords: training, competency, skill shortages, capacity building, employability, development and growth.

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1. Introduction

This paper looks at the ‘Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET Colleges)’ education as a viable tool for achieving the developmental agenda of the South African government.³ The TVET Colleges have been identified to be important institutions that are capable of delivering the skills and competency that the country requires for economic growth and development.⁴ The TVET college sector was established to provide a high-quality and responsive education system that promotes the transformation of the higher education landscape to meet the developmental agenda of the South African government. The developmental agenda cuts across a broad variety of intertwined issues ranging from employment, education, gender equality, social integration, health, the environment and population to human rights, finance and governance.⁵

The South African government’s developmental agenda is well articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP 2030), ‘UN Agenda 2030, the African Union’s Agenda 2063 (AU, 2015),’ and the Southern hemispheric BRICS co-operation blueprint (BRICS 2015) which provides for transformation of technical vocational education and training. The central objectives of these instruments are to promote lifelong learning opportunities, providing ample equal access and

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³ Mirabel, K. T., Sewagegn, A. A., & Diale, B. M. (2022). „Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to Empower Secondary School Learners from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds”. *Journal of Technical Education and Training*, 14(1), 138–149.

⁴ Oviawe, J. I. (2018). „Revamping technical vocational education and training through public-private partnerships for skill development”. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*, 10(1), 73–91.

⁵ Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 2016. *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>, consulted on 1.05.2024.

opportunity to people to have affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education skilling and capacitation them for the workplace.⁶ To this end, a substantial increase in enrolment in the number of youth and adults should be intensified to produce skills needed by the industry, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. The ‘United Nations Agenda 2030 and the African Union’s Agenda 2063’ accentuated that technical and vocational education should be provided and offered to TVET institutions in either government-controlled or private, and in formal, in formal or non-formal sectors.⁷ The TVET colleges are positioned to provide this pedagogy and skills the learners require to be self-employed (employable) and be a transition for individual work worldwide.⁸ This will be a proper strategy to reduce poverty and the developmental agenda of the South African government which seeks to achieve broad inclusive opportunity for all, poverty alleviation, and tackling unemployment and inequality.

Maringe and Osman⁹ indicate that the government should develop labour market information systems and capacity for skills analysis and forecasting. This suggests the need to strengthen the links between TVET and industries for workplace learning relationships. McGrath¹⁰ points out that the TVET college education sector is a crucial vehicle for social equity, inclusion and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals. This was well articulated in the NDP, that government objectives are to eliminate poverty, reduce inequalities, and grow the economy. This NDP stresses that the developmental agenda can only be realised by drawing on the energies of its people, enhancing state capacity, inclusive economic growth, building capabilities, and promoting leadership and partnerships throughout society. The TVET college education sector has been essentially considered and is portrayed as a provider of entry- and mid-level skills to respond to national social and economic development. To this end, the TVET seeks to provide access to high-quality education for the purpose of addressing the historical legacy of entrenched discrimination, poverty, and unemployment.

Post-1994 democratic government inherited a legacy of an unequal, fragmented, dysfunctional and poor educational system which precluded the black majority from having the requisite training and skills that would make them competent to be employable, self-employed, and become employers themselves. The first task of the new government was to rescind apartheid discriminatory and exclusive laws and introduce laws that enabled access for all as well as redress inequalities of the colonial and apartheid regimes. Hence, the enactment of the ‘South African Qualification Authority Act 58 of 1995 (SAQA),’ ‘The National Education Policy Act of 1996, the Skills Development Act of 1998,’ and ‘Higher Education Act of 1997.’ Further ‘Education and Training Act of 1998.’ The National Department of Higher Education has strategically established TVET to educate and train learners to address the challenges of unemployment facing the South African government.¹¹ The remarkable intervention that TVET Colleges brought to the table is that they prepare learners to acquire different skills, knowledge, attitudes and competencies to be competitive in the workplace. Powell indicates that TVET colleges mainly train young people to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are needed in the labour market. Rasool and Mahembe¹² indicate that TVET sector is very relevant to address challenges of skills shortages and

⁶ Field, S., Hoeckel, K., Kis, V. and Kuczera, M., 2009. *Learning for jobs: OECD policy review of vocational education and training: initial report*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), [https://one.oecd.org/document/EDU/EDPC/CERI\(2010\)4/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/EDU/EDPC/CERI(2010)4/en/pdf), consulted on 1.05.2024.

⁷ Arfo, E. B., 2015. *A comparative analysis of Technical and Vocational Education and Training policy in selected African countries* (doctoral dissertation), <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/items/cefd698c-c7ce-40ad-816d-13072219d744>, consulted on 1.05.2024.

⁸ Hollander, A. and Mar, N.Y., 2009. *Towards achieving TVET for all: the role of the UNESCO-UNEVOC international centre for technical and vocational education and training*. In Rupert Maclean (Editor-in-Chief), *International handbook of education for the changing world of work* (pp. 41–57). Springer, Dordrecht, https://inee.org/sites/default/files/International_Handbook_of_Education_Changing.pdf, consulted on 1.05.2024.

⁹ Maringe, F. and Osman, R., 2016. „Transforming the post-school sector in South Africa: Limits of a skills-driven agenda”. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(5), pp. 120–140.

¹⁰ McGrath, S., 2004. „Reviewing the development of the South African further education and training college sector ten years after the end of apartheid”. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 56(1), 137–160.

¹¹ Powell, L., 2012. „Reimagining the purpose of VET – Expanding the capability to aspire in South African Further Education and Training students”. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32(5), 643–653.

¹² Rasool, H. and Mahembe, E., 2014. *FET colleges’ purpose in the developmental State: imperatives for South Africa*. Pretoria, „South

poor leadership in the industries and economy.

The South African government has dedicated itself to building a developmental state by mobilising state resources toward national economic development.¹³ This means the government has placed education on top of the national agenda as an important pillar for development. The state should use education to realise the developmental agenda of the South African government. In a developmental state, the government must play a critical and guiding role by using state resources to guide economic development to realise its agenda of meeting the demands of the people. This means the state places the needs of the poor and social issues such as education, housing, and health care on top of the national agenda. This means that the state strikes a balance between social development and economic growth by using resources efficiently and using its influence to alleviate poverty, unemployment and inequality. The demand includes eradication of poor-quality education, poverty alleviation, rural development, reducing historical inequality, and reducing the unemployment rate to ensure the development of society.

In South Africa, the right to access TVET education is guaranteed and protected by the Constitution. As far back as 1955, the Freedom Charter declared that education shall be open to South African citizens.¹⁴ This suggests that the TVET sector must be open and accessible to all. The National Education Committee (NEC) held its conference to reaffirm the call of the Freedom Charter and declared that TVET shall be open to all by means necessary based on merit through scholarship and state allowances.¹⁵ This exacerbated legislative changes and governance arrangements in the creation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Training. Despite the legislative changes and fragmentation of governance structures, most of the responsibilities from the Department of Labour (DOL) were transferred to the Department of Higher Education and Training including skills-related programs. The Constitution requires that education be transformed and democratised following the values of human dignity, equality, human rights and freedom. It guarantees the right to access to TVET education for all through the provision that 'everyone has the right to further education and training by encouraging the state to take reasonable legislative measures to ensure available and accessible education. These are realisable if transformative laws and legislation that have been introduced post-1994 are effectively and efficiently implemented. The rights to access to high-quality TVET education are reasonable, and the state can be held accountable through the courts if it fails to meet its constitutional commitment to provide access to education. The fundamental policy framework on education and training was an important political milestone for the creation of democracy in education and training. This development has influenced the transformation of various policies since democracy in 1994. These policies include the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This policy was a government programme that aimed to redress the social imbalances created by the apartheid government among the people of South Africa and intended to build a future South Africa which is democratic, non-racial, and non-sexist. The RDP was the result of consultations between alliance partners such as the 'ANC, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), South African Communist Party (SACP),' and other broad-based organisations in broader society such as the Council of Churches, 'Congress of South African Students (COSAS), South African Student Congress (SASCO), and South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) (SANCO).' These organisations declared that the right to access TVET education should be retained in the Republic of South Africa's Bill of Rights, which is section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution.

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution established values and instruments to ensure that rights are safeguarded, and it expanded even the most basic rights for all South Africans. This is a clear intention to provide an empowering legal framework for far-reaching measures of transformation and redress all past and future discrimination, injustices and inequality in South Africa. The values and

Africa: Human Resource Development Council", <https://saben.ac.za/hoostoac/2023/10/FET-colleges-purpose-in-the-developmental-state-Imperatives-for-SA.pdf>, consulted on 1.05. 2024.

¹³ Woo-Cumings, M. ed., 2019. *The developmental state*. Cornell University Press, p. 75.

¹⁴ South African Congress Alliance, 1955, June. The Freedom Charter, <https://www.anc1912.org.za/the-freedom-charter-2/>, consulted on 1.05. 2024.

¹⁵ Wolpe, H., Unterhalter, E. and Botha, T. (eds.), 1991. *Education in a Future South Africa: policy issues for transformation*. Heinemann, p. 87.

instruments were created to protect the rights of the people because they are unalienable rights. The Bill of Rights remains the democratic cornerstone in which the rights of the people are enshrined, and it encourages democratic values such as human dignity, equality and freedom. According to the Constitution, the state is under legal obligation to protect, promote, respect and fulfil the rights enshrined in Chapter 2 of the Constitution (the Bill of Rights). This suggests that everyone must have access to high-quality education and training irrespective of entrenched discrimination. The National Education Policy Act was influenced by the development of Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) (1996). GEAR was a policy aimed at creating sufficient jobs and improving the economy for the benefit of the poor. This policy influenced the TVET sector as it endeavoured to strengthen economic development and broaden employment for socio-economic opportunities in favour of the poor. The intention was to position TVET sectors to meet the needs of employers by addressing skills gaps and mismatch of graduates and employers expectations. This was exacerbated by the low involvement of the industries in curriculum design and delivery.

Similarly, the Industrial Policy Plan (2011) (IPL) was introduced to radically accelerate the provision and delivery of substantial growth of a developmental economy which focuses deliberately on progressive decisions that ensure that various investments target production sectors of the economy to reduce the decline in manufacturing and productive sectors with the aim and objective of accelerating job creation and broad employment opportunity. This is a deliberate and strategic industrial effort to encourage the development and growth of all or part of the economy, often focused on all or part of the manufacturing sector. The challenge identified was concerning skills development and training. This policy influenced TVET sector education as it played a structural transformation role in the development of knowledge, investment of infrastructure and coherence policy. This policy shares the same objectives with the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGI-SA), and Trade and Industrial Policy's Strategies (TIPS). The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) seeks to improve access to TVET education and align it to the needs of the industries. This strategy was introduced, 'By the Minister of Labour on the Advice of the National Skills Authority (NSA) in February 2001, with targets to be achieved by March 2005.' It is required by the 'Skills Development Act of 1998 and its implementation guides on the spending of levy income required under the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999.' This legislation provides the basis for the establishment of a high-quality skills development system that is cost-effective to support economic growth, employment creation, and social development to respond to national and individual needs. This suggests that the NSDP must ensure that 'South Africa has adequate, appropriate and high-quality skills that contribute towards economic growth, employment creation and social development.' Analogous to these, the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) was introduced to radically transform education and training in South Africa by improving both the quality and quantity of training to support increased competitiveness of the industry and improved quality of life for all South Africans.¹⁶ The NSDS is aimed at 'addressing the historical and inherited structural problems of the labour market and transforming the South African labour market from one with a low skills base to one characterised by rising skills and a commitment to lifelong learning. The NSDS also seeks to ensure that through responsive education and training the labour market is better able to cope with the developmental challenges in our country such as poverty, inequality, disease and unemployment. The NSDS is an inclusive strategy that addresses national, sectoral, workplace and individual needs.'

In South Africa, TVET institutions' strategic objective was a direct response to human capital and economic development needs. The increasingly complex and unpredictable policy environment required organisations that could confront the challenges facing the South African government. The logic behind TVET was to provide an expanded programme that offers information, services and values required by the citizens. This would mean that a transformed, high-quality TVET education is an important aspect of the future success of South African citizens. The new TVET college system is

¹⁶ Kraak, A., 2004. *The National Skills Development Strategy: a new institutional regime for skills formation in post-apartheid South Africa*, In: McGrath, S., Badroodien, A., Kraak, A. & Unwin, L. (eds). *Shifting understandings of skills in South Africa: overcoming the historical imprint of a low skills regime*. Cape Town: HSRC Press. 116-139. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11910/8074>.

positioned within the developmental context with the need to drive such development to ensure that it responds to education and training in South Africa. In this regard, TVET colleges must provide access to high-quality education as a viable tool for achieving the developmental agenda of the South African government. The TVET Colleges are responsible for ensuring sufficient access to high-quality education which is relevant to improving skills for leadership in various sectors of government so that they address the challenges facing the economy resulting from increased joblessness, high numbers of unemployed graduates, underdevelopment, and inequalities.

2. Research methodology

This research used a literature review research approach. It is premised on analysis and engagement with relevant literature in the arena of law, education, and development making use of articles, books, case law, policies, white papers, legislation and journals. The methods in legal scholarship remain the traditional way of citations, case analysis and attribution of all sources. This research heavily relies on documents that are in the public domain.

3. Problem statement

South Africa is experiencing complex institutional and structural challenges such as poverty, low levels of employment, skill shortages and poor-quality education in the economy which needs skills, capabilities and competencies. The TVET colleges were established to offer access to high-quality education to learners to acquire skills and knowledge relevant to the demand of the economy for realisation of the developmental agenda of the South African government. TVET education is an intervention to solve the complex problems of poverty and inequalities which caused increased joblessness and high numbers of unemployed tertiary graduates.

4. The impact and effect analysis of TVET colleges

As a democratic country, South Africa has enthusiastically embraced TVET Colleges to provide a firm foundation for the country's technological growth, industrialisation, and nation building. TVET graduates work as engineers, middle-level officials, and technicians in a range of local manufacturing outlets and multinational corporations around South Africa, displaying this realistic approach. To overcome the issues of poverty, unemployment, and inequity caused by colonial and apartheid discriminatory policies and laws, the apathy of TVET Colleges' education sectors was terrible and catastrophic. Due to a lack of integration of TVET Colleges into the development process, South Africa is being tugged off the path of steady technical growth and true economic independence. TVET Colleges, an educational intervention intended to educate students with the required skills to make them more productive and effective in a range of professions, has attracted international attention in addition to South Africa. TVET's current duty is to ensure that this kind of education has a bright future in terms of reducing poverty, increasing employability through skill acquisition, and promoting long-term development. McGrath shows that the TVET is crucial for 'enhancing the skills of learners to fulfil the expectations of the world of work and self-employment.'¹⁷ Unlike other specialised skilled-focused education, TVET colleges have extremely defined definitions, distinct configurations, and a wide range of applications. Okoro¹⁸ states that 'all formal and informal hands-on experiences/skills obtained by students/trainees when learning a trade, craft, or other practical vocations in the school setting.' After graduation, students are expected to use their newly acquired abilities for self-employment or to improve their performance while working in

¹⁷ McGrath, S., Needham, S., Papier, J. and Wedekind, V., 2010, June. *Reworking employability: Reflections from the English and South African public further education (and training) college sectors*, paper presented at the IVth World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, Istanbul, Turkey, 14–18 June 2010.

¹⁸ Okoro, O. M. *Principles and Methods in Vocational and Technical Education*, University Trust Publisher, Nsukka 1993, p. 45.

the industry. Winer¹⁹ views TVET as ‘a formal learning experience that modifies learners’ technical skills, human abilities, cognitive understanding, attitudes, and work habits to fit into workplaces and facilitate steady advancement in employment.’ TVET, on the other hand, is seen by Okoro as ‘a learning process that instils in the learners vital abilities and basic scientific knowledge.’²⁰ TVET college education is a planned educational intervention aimed at instilling essential skills in learners that will enable them to be more productive and effective in a variety of economic activities.

According to Lauglo,²¹ the TVET is inextricably tied to employment and national growth. Learners’ talents can be enhanced through TVET, placing them in a better position to obtain work. TVET increases trainees’ employability in society. TVET adoption could serve as a weapon to address social exclusion in locations where the cost of higher education is out of reach for the majority, as well as an antidote to youth unemployment in overcrowded job markets, in addition to its poverty-reduction potential. Furthermore, if TVET colleges are strategically positioned, they could play multiple roles in promoting economic growth, social development, upgrading traditional education, empowerment, wealth creation, poverty reduction, and skills enhancement. TVET college education in South Africa is well-fitted to support youths and adults in becoming self-sufficient, while individuals working in the field are aided in skill upgrading to reduce high job turnover and the threats of obsolescence.

5. Preparing graduates of TVET colleges for the workplace

Recent government policies, such as the 2013 White Paper on Post-School Education and Training, emphasize the importance of public TVET colleges in ‘strengthening relationships with the workplace to improve learners’ chances of obtaining both practical training experience and longer-term employment.’ According to Papier²² the employability of college graduates is an important milestone for economic progress. However, several studies have been undertaken to look at the training of learners who qualify as artisans to obtain a job, and what their prospects are in the eyes of employers when it comes to artisans’ readiness for work. Papier indicate that such research, in combination with the evaluation of employer needs, ‘aims to connect employers with TVET colleges to provide students with employment options.’ According to McGrath²³, reduced conceptions of employability ‘narrowly focus on skills required by employers, neglecting also personal and economic factors that influence the availability and take-up of work possibilities.’ They define employability as ‘an individual’s competence to find work, keep it, transition between tasks within the same organisation, find other work if necessary, and ideally receive suitable and properly satisfying work.’ This means that businesses, TVET colleges, and other stakeholders such as SETA must collaborate to provide jobs in learning spaces for TVET students, hence expanding youth employment and contributing to community economic growth.

Since the introduction of the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) in 2007, attempts have been made to fit a new and distinct curricular framework onto the artisan training pathway. Preparing learners for the job has been a long and difficult process. The industries, on the other hand, were more familiar with the conventional artisan development route through their employers’ NATED programs, and their perceptions of college training were mostly based on their experience with NATED graduates and personal experience with having travelled that path. Apprenticeships, which are beneficial cooperation between the workplace, educational institutions, the government, and other social partners, require this lesson. The successful implementation of the TVET system requires

¹⁹ Winer, R. K., 2000. „Rung by up the health career ladder”. *American Vocational Journal*, 48(7), 18–27.

²⁰ Okoro, O. M., *op. cit.*, p. 46.

²¹ Lauglo, J., 2006. *Research for TVET policy development*. In WEnt, https://unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/IntLib_DiscP_PolicyDev.pdf, consulted on 1.05. 2024.

²² Papier, J., Needham, S., Prinsloo, N. and McBride, T., 2016. *Preparing TVET college graduates for the workplace employers’ views*, in André Kraak, Andrew Paterson and Kedibone Boka (eds.) *Change management in tvet colleges.*, JET Education Services, 2016, p. 83-102, <https://www.africanminds.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/JET-TVET-text-and-cover-web-final-1.pdf>, consulted on 1.05. 2024.

²³ McGrath, S., Needham, S., Papier, J. and Wedekind, V., *op. cit.*

collaboration through leadership by bringing together important stakeholders and role players to forge a common front to ensure broad socioeconomic development and growth.

6. Development of curricula and high-quality training

Papier assert that ‘Strong curricula must be offered with quality apprenticeships.’²⁴ This standard curriculum should be derived from the apprentice’s professional work responsibilities, be developmental, and serve as the foundation for both the enterprise and the vocational school’s vocational learning processes. Allowing employers to lead curriculum creation is beneficial because employers are familiar with the fields’ needs. This implies that employers had a direct voice in all aspects of the apprenticeship, from the curriculum through recruitment, qualifications, and evaluation. Accordingly, McGrath²⁵ reveal that ‘the employers may undervalue the generic abilities required for mobility.’ According to Papier²⁶, quality training is a ‘cornerstone of good apprenticeship programs.’ Apprenticeships must be designed ‘to develop high-quality, adaptive, and self-sufficient apprentices with strong work identities, while also being cost- and time-effective.’ To offer trainer certification in South Africa, vocational teachers, trainers, and assessors must all be well trained. As a result, apprenticeship programs should frequently require the apprentice to spend time learning outside of the workplace at a publicly funded vocational institution. As a result, apprenticeship programs should often require the apprentice to spend some time learning off the job at a publicly sponsored vocational institution. McGrath²⁷ stated that ‘quality control must be carefully applied to apprentice training to guarantee that the employers engaged to deliver on their training responsibilities.’ Employers should not be discouraged from participating if the quality requirements are too rigorous.

Apprenticeship systems should attempt to allow trainees to move around and offer new career opportunities. According to MacGrath²⁸, ‘Access to underpinning knowledge and the workplace curriculum should assist apprentice development.’ Apprenticeships should also provide, ‘possibilities for involvement, teaching, and learning.’ As a result, certification outcomes should be appropriate for their intended purpose, recognised by higher education institutions and professional bodies, and linked to professional qualification routes. Employees in the industries who are responsible for apprenticeship progress should be chosen for career paths and advancement. According to Papier²⁹, ‘engineering firms are “required by the industry to interview employees or new entrants with a range of practical, academic, and attitudinal skills to be employable.” Thus, a formal college syllabus is expected to cover the basic academic and practical training needed. The NCV, which does not offer pupils enough practice, is a source of concern for businesses. Students fail internal exams given by the business as part of the employment interview in most situations, according to the industry. Students with NATED theoretical qualifications, despite some of these students having obtained a workshop, are concerned about this. The industries and TVET, on the other hand, are more employable because the industries have less work to do. Most industries emphasize the importance of employees being able to effectively invoice and conduct fundamental administrative responsibilities within the company. Some industries, on the other hand, have been loud about the need for greater cross-cutting abilities that are outside the scope of the traditional curriculum.

7. Encouraging businesses to offer apprenticeships

Papier³⁰ indicate that “the employers are critical to the success of apprenticeship training.” As a result, the most necessity of a successful apprenticeship system appears to be incentivising

²⁴ Papier, J., Needham, S., Prinsloo, N. and McBride, T., *op. cit.*, p. 83-102.

²⁵ McGrath, S., Needham, S., Papier, J. and Wedekind, V., *op. cit.*

²⁶ Papier, J., Needham, S., Prinsloo, N. and McBride, T., *op. cit.*, p. 85.

²⁷ McGrath, S., Needham, S., Papier, J. and Wedekind, V., *op. cit.*.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Papier, J., Needham, S., Prinsloo, N. and McBride, T., *op. cit.*, p. 85.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

businesses. It's difficult to develop an apprenticeship system without maintaining an incentive system because training and cost-balancing aren't updated regularly to keep companies interested. Employers' incentives to supply apprenticeship positions are based on the benefits they hope to get and the expenditures they expect to incur. Employers may be hesitant to give apprenticeship positions because of the potential expense to themselves. Employers, on the other hand, can benefit from apprentices doing productive work as well as from being able to discover good potential employees for recruitment purposes.

According to Field³¹, employers face two types of apprenticeship costs, first; apprentice wages and second, training resource costs. ' This includes teaching materials, the time of experienced employees, the blunders and wasted resources of unskilled apprentices, the remuneration of training professionals, and administrative expenditures. The cost of an apprenticeship is decided by the quality of the training provided, whether apprentice supervisors receive extra training, and whether supervisors are granted additional status and remuneration in recognition of their role.

8. On-the-job training

In addition to basic academic requirements and specialised vocational qualifications, the sectors require attitudinal skills. Practical skills are also valued in the sectors, albeit they are not needed for abilities that are taught on the job regularly. Despite the requirement for formal degrees, most organisations offer employment and development based on years of industry experience rather than formal certificates. Most employees are employed for entry-level jobs and are expected to progress over time. An employer views lifelong learning as a need for advancement in this way. As part of the process, learners are expected to have a basic awareness of business procedures and principles such as budgeting and management systems. Businesses place a great value on attitude skills when it comes to employment. According to Papier³², most students from TVET colleges 'lack job-seeking skills in the industries.' This shows that students commonly present themselves in an unprofessional manner, with low-quality CVs, and are unable to demonstrate their industry knowledge or interest during interviews. On the other hand, some career advice for students appears to be inaccurate about the nature of labour in the industries. This continues to irritate industries, particularly when it comes to job placement during interviews. Some firms have complained that some students do not appear to take practical placements seriously, which hurts the businesses and management.

According to the industries, students entering the sector must be adaptable in terms of time frames and employment rotation. Students must be willing to start at the bottom and keep a good attitude while learning about all elements of the profession. Papier³³ further stated that 'concerns were voiced that some students feel that certain vocations are beneath them and do not have a strong customer service ethic.' Several sectors consider the capacity to take the initiative and follow through on instructions learned in TVET college education to be vital skills for working autonomously. This also improves the employability of candidates and their chances of advancement. In addition, new entrants or learners into the sectors should be people-oriented, motivated, and have a lively personality. The availability of employment placement in the industry is determined by the market cycle. Learners must establish their worth, and judgments will be made based on predetermined criteria, even if they are unable to commit to a specific number of placements. Suitable individuals would be required to participate in internship programs. When asked what would improve college students' work preparedness, learners should show that they have the correct attitude and grasp the demands of the industry. Many graduates will learn that management positions and promotions are earned via hard effort, creativity, and proof of the industry's desire.

Many companies in this industry provide their training programs. Some of the qualifications, however, are not readily available at public TVET institutes. Technology universities provide

³¹ Field, S., Hoeckel, K., Kis, V. and Kuczera, M., *op. cit.*

³² Papier, J., Needham, S., Prinsloo, N. and McBride, T., *op. cit.*, p. 85.

³³ *Ibid.*

programs that result in high employment rates for their alumni. According to the industries, TVET college students with a specific qualification suffer in the sector because this certification does not provide any distinct relevant focus. Employers expect newcomers to bring specific abilities and know how to apply them to help the economy. Industries are eager to place students, but they also want a say in the process.

9. Employee involvement in the TVET colleges' education sector

The South African Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector faces significant challenges in terms of the production, recruitment, and retention of all types of academic and teaching professionals. According to McGrath³⁴, TVET Colleges had a substantial student enrolment compared to staff complement. According to Mmako and Schutz³⁵ 'Doing particular tasks without the requisite job resources leads to stress.' As a result, there is a lack of organisational commitment to complete complicated tasks in an increasingly demanding environment. Despite these advancements, Mmako and Schultz³⁶ identified a 'skills gap in the capabilities of lecturers given the competence required for effective lecturing.' As a result, they must be able to deal with big groups, remedial classes, and mixed-ability classes, and they must be knowledgeable in both the theoretical and practical parts of the courses they teach. TVET Colleges also faced the challenge of supporting and maintaining excellent student learning experiences, effectively increasing the demand for qualified academics. The 'White Paper on Post-School Education' noted various challenges in connecting with the TVET college education sector, resulting in a lack of academic growth competence among instructors. These had several negative implications, including a loss of motivation and a lack of involvement from the personnel. Employees at TVET colleges should treat their immediate managers with respect. Mmako and Schultz³⁷ stated that 'this would boost employee engagement by focusing on managers leading by example, which produces enthusiasm and inspires people to work more, and to develop a positive relationship with a caring manager.' Employees also want to know that their immediate supervisor is interested in them as individuals and cares about their well-being. Fostering a culture of mutual trust and encouraging employees to do their jobs well is one way to achieve this. Another option is to allow employees to have the closest possible interaction with their immediate management. One strategy to establish a new positive attitude is to focus on employees' job-related expectations and inspire them to share work-related knowledge with their co-workers. Managers must have an influence on their followers' participation through strong and sound management practices that inspire followers to generate ideas, take initiative, and provide input to their business.

10. Synthesis

In general, it has been assumed in South Africa that TVET will contribute to human capital and economic development. Furthermore, because it is primarily aimed at increasing employability, the TVET sector is recognised as a critical component of the process of achieving social justice. In other words, the assumption that skills development is critical to socioeconomic development has influenced South Africa. The primary mission of TVET colleges is to provide intermediate-level skills, thereby contributing to economic development. TVET colleges are also expected to help disadvantaged people and societies overcome the social inequalities caused by the apartheid regime by providing skills and training. The other mandate of TVET education is to provide entrepreneurship training for the informal sector; it is also regarded as a second chance to enter higher education. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) plans to increase student enrolment to

³⁴ McGrath, S., Needham, S., Papier, J. and Wedekind, V., *op. cit.*

³⁵ Mmako, M. and Schultz, C., 2016. „An employee engagement framework for technical vocational education and training colleges in South Africa”. *South African journal of higher education*, 30(2), 143–163.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

2.5 million by 2030³⁸. This represents an increase from the approximately 737,880 students enrolled in both private and public TVET colleges in 2020. According to DHET, targeting students from low-income families, who frequently face poor-quality education and unemployment, may help achieve the goal of addressing both poverty and social inequalities. According to the South African Constitution, everyone has ‘the right to further education, which the state must make progressively available and accessible through reasonable measures.’ Thus, the constitution guarantees citizens access to and availability of further education, including TVET. TVET colleges in South Africa cater to various types of students and their unique educational training requirements. These range from those preparing for employment and self-employment to those wishing to pursue a university degree later in life. The colleges also strive to meet the needs of students seeking vocational qualifications, reskilling, and upskilling training. TVET colleges are defined by DHET as ‘flexible institutions that offer a diverse range of courses ranging from a week’s training to qualifications that take several years to complete.’ There are National Technical Education Diploma (NATED) and National Certificates (Vocational), NC (V) programs, and graduates with a National Certificate Level 4 may be eligible to study at a university or university of technology. TVET colleges, as a result, exist at the crossroads between compulsory education, higher education, and the world of work. The majority of South African TVET colleges have multiple campuses. There are currently over 50 registered public TVET colleges in both urban and rural areas. According to the DHET, the Department of Higher Education and Training oversees the operation of TVET colleges, provides financial and professional support, conducts examinations, conducts assessments, and certifies most programs. Other programs have industry-based independent quality assurance.

11. Conclusion

TVET college education presents a potent opportunity to turn these colleges into fully functional skills development entities capable of responding to a variety of needs in a developing South African community. Indeed, a zealous pursuit of enrolment growth of TVET colleges to focus on actual skill development in response to community needs is essentially imperative. To achieve this, there is a need for diversifying learner cohorts, curricula, and alternate learning techniques and types of learning. The reality of chronic unemployment, skill gaps, and shortages in South Africa suggests that colleges must take a new approach, beginning with communities rather than ending with them. The institutionalisation of TVET colleges needs to ensure that the government’s developmental objectives must be felt. To this end, funding of the institution to perform and discharge its institutional ability and competency to satisfy instructional and infrastructural needs are also imperative. More importantly, TVET colleges should be able to ensure the curriculum implementation at the institutional and policy levels hence having the ability to translate curriculum into practical reality. Graduates of TVET colleges must ‘prove themselves,’ and must participate in industry internship programs. The placement procedure is tied to ‘filling the voids’ in organisations left by workers who have left the system. In terms of job placement, there is a need for a stronger connection between industry and institutions, and businesses should be included in the process sooner rather than later. Potential interns must be presented to organisations before being placed to gain a better understanding of the rigours of the job and make an informed decision about accepting a placement. TVET colleges demonstrated their commitment by merging the skills that were identified as lacking a focused work-ready program that students may participate in before being placed. Employers will be unsurprised by the students’ comprehension of, among other things, time on the job, punctuality, and a generally nice demeanour when asked about their thoughts on the students’ placement. Students should demonstrate their part during the program in giving them a head start on what they can expect on the job by respecting the specific work-ready abilities to which they have been exposed.

³⁸ See in this regards <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/DocPolicies.aspx>, consulted on 1.05.2024.

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