



# Assessing the Symbiotic Relationship between National Development Plan 2030 and the Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges National Certificate Vocational (NCV) Programme

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## ABSTRACT

Despite the successes that are liberating South Africans and changing educational policies, many citizens are still trapped in poverty and chronic unemployment, and the country remains a highly unequal society. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the nature of the symbiotic relationship between the Technical; Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges National Certificate; Vocational (NCV) programme; and NDP 2030 objectives. The qualitative research approach was adopted with a Case study design. Purposive sampling was used to select eight TVET college lecturers. The interpretive paradigm was used to describe the nature of the relationship the college has with other stakeholders. Data was collected through individual semi-structured interviews and analysed through a thematic approach. The findings revealed a lack of communication, poor relationships with relevant stakeholders, and infrastructural and resources as attributes that impede practices within TVET colleges. The other major challenge that emerged from this study is the lack of a responsive policy system which compromises practices within TVET colleges. Based on empirical evidence, it was recommended that the college requires a fully responsive TVET policy and synergistic efforts, pulling all resources together in achieving these objectives. The ultimate outcome contributes key knowledge that advances proper communication and a healthy relationship with different stakeholders that should be established and maintained for the success of TVET colleges.

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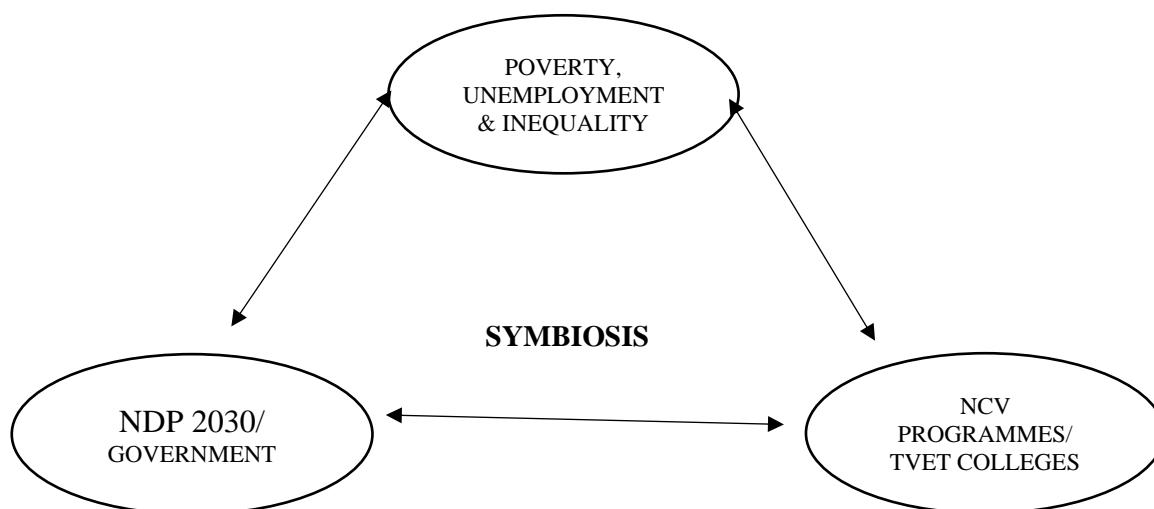
## INTRODUCTION

Past research has revealed that there is very little engagement between stakeholders in the sector and Technical and Vocational Education and Technical (TVET) Colleges regarding the objectives. The South African education system was marginalised by the apartheid government until 1994-when the education system took a complete developmental change from early childhood to higher education. South Africa suffered high youth unemployment, poverty, and inequality. This motivated the South African government to establish the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012, after 18 years of democracy, to fight the policy challenges faced by society. The TVET College is fundamental to the attainment of the NDP 2030 policy objectives. Similarly, TVET as a system for developing skills and competencies necessary for socio-economic development, national development, employment, and job creation has attracted attention from both national and international communities.

In countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Germany, TVET colleges are directly linked to higher education institutions and move all the way to industries.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in other countries like Libya, graduates from their TVET Colleges do not match the demands of the manufacturing sector. Similarly, even though Namibia has named their colleges as Vocational Education and Training (VET), these institutions do not guarantee a smooth transition to employment or entrepreneurship.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the study is to reveal the readiness of the TVET sector to achieve the NDP 2030 objectives through NCV programmes. The question that underlies the study is: What is the nature of the symbiotic relationship between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), National Certificate Vocational (NCV) programmes and National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 policy?

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In South Africa, the government is fully funding the NCV programmes in the TVET colleges and has developed policies in that regard. However, a gap exists in policies that have been developed by the government. According to the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, this resulted because there had not been proper consultation with all the stakeholders on the ground.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the management of colleges is facing challenges with the implementation of such policies. The study established the nature of a symbiotic relationship between NDP 2030 and TVET college policy regarding NCV programmes. That is also based on the readiness of TVET colleges to achieve the objectives regarding structure, resources, curriculum, leadership, and management. A symbiotic relationship can be defined as one in which people, organisations, or living things depend on each other. It is a special type of interaction that can be harmful or beneficial and can only achieve a balance by working together.<sup>4</sup> Figure 1 elucidates the interaction.



**Figure 1: Symbiotic relationship**

<sup>1</sup> H. Rasool and E. Mahembe, *FET College's Purpose in the Developmental State: Imperatives for South Africa* (Pretoria: Human Resource Development Council of South Africa (HRDCSA), 2014).

<sup>2</sup> R. Dubois and A. Athumane, "Brief on Tanzania TVET," Working Paper Prepared for UNESCO (Paris, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective, and Integrated Post-School System* (Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Luciano Gamberini and Anna Spagnolli, "Towards a Definition of Symbiotic Relations between Humans and Machines," in *Symbiotic Interaction: 5th International Workshop, Symbiotic 2016, Padua, Italy, September 29–30, 2016, Revised Selected Papers 5* (Springer International Publishing, 2017), 1–4.

### Nature of the symbiotic relationship between TVET NCV programmes and NDP 2030 policy

A symbiotic relationship is a special type of interaction that must be used by any organisation to achieve its objectives and goals successfully. NDP 2030's vision and mission require that South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved outcomes.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, by the year 2030, South Africa is expected to be enriched by universal early childhood education, high-quality schooling, and further education and training that accelerates the shift to a knowledge economy.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, TVET college and university graduates should have the skills and knowledge to meet the present and future needs of the economy and society. In addition, high school in South Africa runs from Grades 8 to 12 in many schools, but Butler-Adam argues that the school system in South Africa is still weak because only 36% of Grade 12 learners who write mathematics pass with the mark above 40% while the proportion that passes with a mark over 50% falls into single digits.<sup>7</sup> The system is also highly unequal since nearly 75% of the schools in the top quintile achieve pass rates close to 100% while in many rural areas pass rates are closer to 50% or 60%. As a result, Taylor mentioned that the school curriculum will need to be tailored to the needs of South African society, which will require principals and management teams to fulfil their roles as leaders in implementing the curriculum.<sup>8</sup> This was one of the reasons for the introduction of the NDP 2030 policy by the South African government in 2012.

In support of the National Development Plan for public FET Colleges, several pieces of legislation and policy frameworks have been adopted to reinforce the development of skills and provide support to FET colleges to deliver on their national mandate of addressing the skills shortage through skills development.<sup>9</sup> In addition, at the launch of the ANC's 2019 election manifesto, President Cyril Ramaphosa mentioned that a skills revolution was needed by opening the doors of learning to all, appointing qualified lecturers, developing their skills, and enforcing accountability. Furthermore, he mentioned the implementation of a mass apprenticeship programme across the economy, replacing “unsafe and inadequate buildings” and extending free higher education for the poor.<sup>10</sup> However, the modernisation of FET college programmes was intended to reflect stronger disciplinary knowledge-based qualifications in line with the new knowledge economy, although subsequent difficulties with the design of the NCV qualification have resulted in sharp critique by different stakeholders.<sup>11</sup>

Terblanche and Bitzer mentioned that, in 2010, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) was established in South Africa to bring hope for curriculum reform, but to date, no change has been made.<sup>12</sup> Terblanche also commented that a socio-constructivist learning framework theory seems particularly relevant for leading curriculum change.<sup>13</sup> The structure seems to be having problems in the curriculum review. Maree contended that globally TVET is increasingly becoming more important in helping economies create and generate employment, yet its position among the youth as a career choice remains that of the last option.<sup>14</sup> Choo-Yin argued that every country must develop a TVET system that fits into the conditions that prevail in that country; hence, challenges differ from one country to another.<sup>15</sup> Loynes mentioned that the then Minister of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Ms Naledi Pandor, agreed that the South African TVET college sector

<sup>5</sup> M. Alexander, “The National Development Plan: A Vision for 2030,”

<http://www.brandsouthafrica.com/government/ndp/the-development-plan-a-vision-for-2030.>, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> J Butler-Adam, “Education, Training and Innovation in the National Development Plan 2030,” *South African Journal of Science* 109, no. 1/2 (2013).

<sup>7</sup> Butler-Adam, “Education, Training and Innovation in the National Development Plan 2030.”

<sup>8</sup> N. Taylor, *Priorities for Addressing South Africa's Education and Training Crisis. A Review Commissioned by the National Planning Commission* ( Johannesburg: JET Education Services, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> M. J. Matea, “The Evaluation of Skills Development Facilitation in Gauteng Public Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges ” (University of South Africa, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> African National Congress (ANC), “Let's Grow South Africa Together: 2019 Election Manifesto,” [www.anc1912.org.za](http://www.anc1912.org.za), 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Salim Akoojee, “Skills for Inclusive Growth in South Africa: Promising Tides amidst Perilous Waters,” *International Journal of Educational Development* 32, no. 5 (2012): 674–85; Simon McGrath and Rosemary Lugg, “Knowing and Doing Vocational Education and Training Reform: Evidence, Learning and the Policy Process,” *International Journal of Educational Development* 32, no. 5 (2012): 696–708.

<sup>12</sup> Tercia Terblanche and Eli Bitzer, “Leading Curriculum Change in South African Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges,” *Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training* 1, no. 1 (2018): 104–25.

<sup>13</sup> T. E. Terblanche, “Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in South Africa: A Framework for Leading Curriculum Change ” (Stellenbosch University, 2017).

<sup>14</sup> K. Maree, *First Steps in Research*, 2nd ed. (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> S. Choo-Yin, *Private Education in Singapore: Contemporary Issues and Challenges* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co, 2016).

was still skewed towards university and was challenged to become more responsive to the ever-changing labour market and to be more flexible in addressing skills shortages and development needs.<sup>16</sup> Lecturers should be the front runners in curriculum change or development, but if they are left out of the process, it might be impossible for them to implement it, which is why they are unclear about the NCV curriculum. Therefore, to bring change, there is an urgent need for training the NCV lecturers. Lecturers are the ones who are responsible for implementing the curriculum and making the changes in class.<sup>17</sup> In addition, knowledge and skills cannot bring meaningful change unless there is a self-understanding of the person involved in the process.

White Paper 4 indicated the dearth of managerial skills and capacity in TVET colleges.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the Finance and Fiscal Commission of South Africa observed that the sector is facing governance and management problems, especially regarding financial management. Financial accountability in the sector needs serious attention, to ensure that any additional funding to the sector would be used effectively and efficiently.<sup>19</sup> Undeniably, strong leadership is required to effectively lead the current key change drive. The current TVET college leadership is faced with various curriculum leadership challenges, such as “the dependence on the DHET to revise or replace” the old NATED and NCV curricula, revision of the funding norms and standards, a lack of infrastructure development provision, poor sector–industry relationships, unfunded occupational programmes, and the lack of building a positive TVET college brand.<sup>20</sup> According to the Meeting Summary of PMG, 11 March 2020, chaired by Mapulane, MP, ANC (PMG, 2020), three TVET colleges (Tshwane North College, Gert Sibande College and Central Johannesburg College) were summoned by a parliament committee to explain the situation in their colleges, because of continuous unrest. The other two colleges were acquitted, but Tshwane North College still had significant challenges; its management and the Student Representative Council disagreed, and members encouraged Tshwane North College Management to strengthen its relationship with the institution’s Student Representative Council. It is evident that poor communication and lack of relationships caused this problem.

The South African government is fully involved in TVET college systems, but it lacks sufficient involvement in the business and commerce sector. In addition, South African students make their career choices at the end of high school without complete insight into what is available. However, in Germany and Australia, students’ careers start towards the end of their foundational phase and Vocational Education and Training (VET), are permitted to go straight to higher education after graduating. South African universities are reluctant to accept TVET college graduates.<sup>21</sup> The important role of education in promoting more entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours is now widely recognised. However, the benefits of entrepreneurship education are not limited to start-ups, innovative ventures, and new jobs. “Entrepreneurship refers to an individual’s ability to turn ideas into action and is, therefore, a key competence for all, helping young people to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake.”<sup>22</sup> TVET colleges primarily provide training for entrepreneurship through the New Venture Creation (NVC) programmes, with a range of these being sponsored by government departments and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).<sup>23</sup> Also, these programmes tend to focus only on business start-ups and business plans. Their impact is largely unknown although early research findings indicate that most of the teaching is usually ‘*about* entrepreneurship’ (i.e., very theoretical, with virtually no practical component), rather than training for actual business start-ups. In addition, “programmes are not translating into any business start-ups and are therefore not fostering self-employment and job creation and the

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<sup>16</sup> K. Loynes, “TVET College Times. The Official Quarterly TVET Newsletter and Journal,”

[Http://Westcoastcollege.Co.Za/Wcc2/Wp-Content/Uploads/2018/07/TVET-Times-52.Pdf](http://Westcoastcollege.Co.Za/Wcc2/Wp-Content/Uploads/2018/07/TVET-Times-52.Pdf), March 2018.

<sup>17</sup> J. Lutaaya, “Exploring the Views of TVET Lecturers on the Implementation of the NCV Curriculum” (University of KwaZulu-Natal., 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Department of Education (DoE), “A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training: Preparing for the Twenty-First Century Through Education, Training, and Work” (Pretoria, 1998).

<sup>19</sup> Terblanche, “Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in South Africa: A Framework for Leading Curriculum Change .”

<sup>20</sup> Terblanche, “Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in South Africa: A Framework for Leading Curriculum Change .”

<sup>21</sup> Terblanche and Bitzer, “Leading Curriculum Change in South African Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges.”

<sup>22</sup> C. Paterson, “Entrepreneurship in K-12 Education,” [Https://www.gettingsmart.Com/2017/11/Entrepreneurship-in-k-12-Education/](https://www.gettingsmart.Com/2017/11/Entrepreneurship-in-k-12-Education/). (Getting Smart, November 13, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)., “Strengthening and Supporting TVET Colleges for Expanded Access and Increased Programme Quality. TVET Colleges Technical Task Team Final Report” (South Africa, 2014).

curriculum also appears to be outdated.”<sup>24</sup> Wedekind agrees that a curriculum that is not able to adjust to the changes in the knowledge field, technology, the conditions of the labour market, variations in regional or local or firm-specific conditions, or the needs of students, very quickly becomes outdated and potentially irrelevant, and consequently, the students enrolled in the programme are not deemed to be employable.<sup>25</sup>

The main challenge faced by many nations today is that too few young people and adults are currently able to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes they need for the changing world of work. The NDP 2030 objectives to reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality must be addressed through vocational education. Therefore, the readiness of the colleges is significant as they are tasked with the role of eliminating or reducing the problems faced by the country, and the economic emancipation of young people and adults through education. All these challenges inspired the current research project. The literature and theory presented for this study as discussed above led to the choice of methodology with different participants of the TVET College in Tshwane.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current TVET sector faces challenges that cannot be rectified overnight but require time to correct past wrongs.<sup>26</sup> TVET colleges are tasked with the job of empowering and developing the youth so they can face the economy of the country with skills and knowledge and therefore build close linkages with industry and workplaces.<sup>27</sup> NCV as a policy is aimed at addressing the high rate of youth unemployment faced by South Africa, but can it address the vision and mission of NDP 2030? Two theoretical perspectives, human development theory and social constructivist theory, underpin this study to address the challenges faced by TVET colleges globally.

TVET has been closely tied to the process of industrialisation and economic development, and therefore TVET policies have often been dominated by economic and equity perspectives.<sup>28</sup> Theoretical contestations on the role of TVET include the productivity or economic approach, which is based on neo-liberal assumptions that training leads to productivity, which, in turn, leads to economic growth. Therefore, to achieve these aims the human development theory by Mahbub ul Haq, can be applied to the TVET sector, since TVET provisioning should be aimed at sustainable development or livelihoods.<sup>29</sup> Again, the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) defines it as the process of allowing people to have many choices in life and be able to access a wide range of opportunities presented by nature. Students should have the capabilities to lead long and healthy lives, be knowledgeable, have access to resources and social services needed for a decent standard of living and be able to participate in the life of the community.

Furthermore, social constructivism, a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication, examines the knowledge and understanding of the world that are developed jointly by individuals. TVET is seen as a means of supporting the development of a range of capabilities conceived as opportunities to develop competencies that individuals, their communities, and society have reason to value.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, human development theory can only be applied successfully through interaction with others. Hence, this study of TVET Colleges is coupled with social constructivism theory to achieve the NDP 2030 policy objectives.

The government introduced the NCV programme in TVET colleges intending to respond to the NDP policy, however, many critics and challenges welcomed the programme, because lecturers were not prepared or trained for the programmes and the curriculum was not easy for the post-Grade 9 students etc. The question remains whether TVET colleges are ready to deliver on the NDP 2030 aims.

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<sup>24</sup> Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)., “Strengthening and Supporting TVET Colleges for Expanded Access and Increased Programme Quality. TVET Colleges Technical Task Team Final Report.”

<sup>25</sup> V. Wedekind, *Manual for Managing Curriculum Responsiveness in TVET*. (RSA: DHET, 2017).

<sup>26</sup> Z. H. Dlamini, “The Alignment and Responsiveness of Further Education and Training Colleges towards the Skills Needed by Local Businesses,” <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/14351>, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> S. Akoojee, *Intermediate Skills Development in South Africa: Understanding the Context, Responding to the Challenge*. (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2010), 2.

<sup>28</sup> L. Tikly, “Reconceptualising TVET and Development: A Human Capability and Social Justice Approach,” in *Revisiting Global Trends in TVET: Reflections on Theory and Practice*, ed. K. Ananiadou (Bonn: UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2013), 5.

<sup>29</sup> Mahbub Ul Haq, *Human Development in a Changing World* (United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report Office, 1992).

<sup>30</sup> J. Rapley, *Understanding Development*. (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 30; A. Greig, D. Hulme, and M. Turner, *Challenging Global Inequality. Development Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 15; L. Vygotsky, “The Instrumental Method in Psychology,” in *The Concept of Activity Soviet Psychology*, ed. J. V. Wertsch (Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe, 1981), 13.

The empirical literature on how other developmental states and similar middle-income countries have used the theoretical underpinnings to develop their TVET policies reveals that the success of the TVET system is based on the involvement of the government in ensuring that the purpose of the TVET system is reformed in line with phases of the country's economic development. According to Asian experiences in for instance, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, success in vocational education is built on the understanding that each stage of development requires a TVET approach that prepares the country for the next stage of its implementation path or economic development stage.<sup>31</sup>

This study focused on the symbiotic relationship between TVET NCV programmes and the readiness of TVET colleges to fulfil the aims of NDP 2030. In South Africa, the introduction of the NCV in 2007 aimed to address unemployment and deal with economic challenges faced by the country. NDP 2030 policy aims to achieve its goals through TVET colleges. Although enrolments in TVET colleges have increased in recent years, the challenges remain the same, such as infrastructure and policy implementation.<sup>32</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was employed to generate data through an investigation of the symbiotic relationship between NDP 2030 and TVET colleges regarding NCV programmes. Semi-structured interviews with two deputy principals and two heads of departments from Tshwane North TVET College were used in data collection. The respondents sampled were drawn from the college management that is two deputy principals of TNC head office and two heads of department from two campuses in different settings, i.e., township and urban area. The sampled respondents were credible sources with their knowledge and experience in college management and the NCV programme. To protect their identity, the deputy principals are referred to as DP1 and DP2, and the heads of department as HOD1 and HOD2. After conducting the interviews, data was coded and analysed with the assistance of an independent coder for trustworthiness. The researcher adopted an interpretative approach in analysing data collected as this aided the theoretical framework. The interpretative design, based on NCV programmes in Tshwane TVET College, led to the findings and discussion.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings relied heavily on primary data provided by the respondents and a review of literature by other scholars. Below are the themes and categories that were identified:

### Skills required for the attainment of the NDP 2030

Vocational education requires skilled lecturers and practical rooms to operate efficiently. The readiness of the TVET colleges should emanate from the capacitated staff and curriculums that meet the industry's needs. Analysis of the interviews indicated that lecturing capacity has not been met by the college on the NCV programme. Data collected as recorded below indicates some of the challenges the college is facing. The following are the responses of the participants:

*From my point of view, lecturers for NCV need proper training to keep up with students' and technological changes. (HOD1).*

*There is no bridging course for NCV lecturers, and on that note, lecturers depend entirely on textbooks prescribed for information and they are outdated. (HOD2).*

*The lecturing staff are expected to develop themselves as the college has a provision for bursaries. (DP1).*

*When we did a skills audit it was discovered that many of our staff lecturers are underqualified to be lecturers, and others are qualified teachers. The current cohort is 50% qualified and 50% not qualified. (DP2).*

The above responses were triggered by the fact that NCV lecturers are not well trained as far as the programme is concerned. Even when lecturers go to register at different universities to further their studies, the NCV programme is still not covered in their courses. Some of these institutions do not cover the curriculum.

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<sup>31</sup> R. Stumpf et al., *Shaping the Future of South Africa's Youth – Chapter 5*. (Somerset West: Centre for Higher Education, 2012), 15.

<sup>32</sup> Taylor, *Priorities for Addressing South Africa's Education and Training Crisis. A Review Commissioned by the National Planning Commission*, 8.

Also, it was evident that some lecturers do not avail themselves of the pieces of training organised for them by the college. Grollmann (2007) agreed that two major obstacles to the professionalisation of lecturers in TVET colleges on the global level are, firstly, the low status of TVET colleges, and secondly, the general problem of increasing the status of the lecturing profession. In addition, President Cyril Ramaphosa mentioned in the ANC manifesto that a skills revolution was needed by opening doors of learning to all, appointing qualified lecturers, developing their skills, and enforcing accountability.<sup>33</sup>

### **TVET Colleges' Contribution to the Objectives of NDP 2030**

The purpose of this question was to understand the contribution the TVET sector would bring to achieving the NDP objectives by 2030. Responses from the interviews indicated that TVET has a long way to go. The involvement of stakeholders in the college operations would yield good results. Respondents mentioned the tenuous relationship with the stakeholders which made operations difficult because the college cannot operate in isolation. The following are the responses received:

*It is difficult to maintain a relationship with different stakeholders since we have different students from across the provinces and within the college also is not good. The placement of students and staff cannot be achieved, in this part of the teaching and learning plan wherein partnership is a requirement. (HOD1).*

*There is a good relationship with other stakeholders though it is struggling, as [with] many of the parents for NCV students there's no relationship at all and that causes the unrest in the college. Between the senior management at the central office and us (campus manager, HODs and staff at large) at the campus level, we have a good relationship, together with the students on the campus. (HOD2).*

*The College has a good working relationship with SETA as they are placing students for practical experience and giving them stipends. (DP1).*

*We have not done enough to expand our relationship with other stakeholders like SETAS. And with the international bodies, we have not finalised a better deal in exposing our lecturers to [be] exchange lecturers and students. (DP2).*

From the above, it is clear that college leadership is not doing enough to secure the bond between them and the relevant stakeholders. The curriculum changes require a much-needed involvement of the lecturers on the ground with their valuable experience as they deal directly with the content and students. Relationships with other stakeholders play a big role in achieving the goals of the organisation, but if the relationship is one-sided, it will cause problems among the members. According to Wedekind, the complexity of education systems in South Africa results in multiple role players having a direct role in curriculum processes.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, this multiple-stakeholder system tends to disempower the lecturers at the chalk face and in the workshops as they feel they are constrained by the competing imperatives and thus unable to respond to the needs of students and employers. This simply indicates that DHET involves inappropriate people in curriculum development and leaves the lecturers from the process. The above denotes that there is a lack of meaningful relationships with relevant stakeholders, and some lecturers lack the drive to be in class due to an array of reasons, and because they are not part of curriculum development.

### **Factors leading to the non-implementation of NCV policy**

The NCV programme has policies that help guide its operations by the Department of Higher Education and other stakeholders involved. There are a few policies such as assessment guidelines, attendance policy, a code of conduct, subject guidelines, and policies that are to be used in the successful implementation of NCV programmes. Furthermore, NSFAS has its own rules and regulations in funding college students that must be met by the funded students. Also, the communication channels among students, and between college management and NSFAS officials have been a challenge in the college. Analysis of the respondents' answers informed the researchers that many of these policies were partially or not followed at all, because of difficulties experienced in the implementation. The following responses confirm the nature of the challenges faced by the college:

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<sup>33</sup> African National Congress (ANC), "Let's Grow South Africa Together: 2019 Election Manifesto."

<sup>34</sup> Wedekind, *Manual for Managing Curriculum Responsiveness in TVET*. .

*There are policies beyond assessment and ICASS, but I know nothing of them. That is a lack of communication. (HOD1).*

*All the policies for NCV are communicated and are applicable. However, the students to deal with are not taking the instructions properly and that affects the governance. The other challenge is with the senior management at the central office. They take too long to address the student's financial issues until a lot of damage has happened. (HOD2).*

*Concerning NCV policies, we understand them very well, and all the stakeholders know them. Funding is a challenge since we enrol just to meet the set target, and we end up taking the students who do not meet our requirements. (DP1).*

*When students make enquiries with NSFAs they are told that everything is good and their monies are with the college, yet we are given certain rules and regulations to follow in administering those funds. Fights then erupt between us and the students, due to miscommunication. We need to investigate the communication level amongst ourselves in the college. (DP2).*

Miscommunication disrupts many of the relationships people have in households or institutions. Therefore, it is important to ensure that all the information reaches the ears of the relevant people on time to avoid bickering or unnecessary shutdowns by uninformed parties. According to Robinson Nqola, a journalist for Rekord North Community Newspaper, because of miscommunication and lack of quality relationships between stakeholders involved, Tshwane North TVET College campuses were closed for more than two weeks in August 2019 by the student organisations due to the non-payment of funds owed to them by NSFAS.<sup>35</sup> The students also reported that the college management had not addressed them on their demands. As a result, the above themes prove that communication between students and management is a problem in the college, and the entry-level also requires attention from the college council. Hence, the target market seems to be diluted or misdirected by the demands of funds from the DHET.

### **Entrepreneurship as a system that can reduce unemployment or create employment opportunities**

This section posed a question to the respondents about the NCV programmes capability to offer or align to job creation, and innovation by the students in the end. Hlongwa mentioned that NYDA encouraged youngsters to start businesses to create jobs for themselves and others.<sup>36</sup> The most important thing for them to do is go to school, acquire skills, and become entrepreneurs. However, a lot was said by the respondents in their responses regarding this topic. The following are some of the responses:

*Employers are sceptical about NCV students, and, in Marketing Management there is a lack of employability; Therefore, students are studying to be employed, not to be self-employed. (HOD1). Companies now consider NCV programme students in their pool of employment. Some programmes are employable, i.e., office administration, as companies are very happy with our students, especially when they do practical training during the holidays. But in other courses, it's a challenge when it comes to employment. (HOD2).*

*Very [few] students opt for employment because many of the level 4 graduate students continue to study by registering the college in N4 or various universities for different courses. Which is not good for the programme, as SETA is funding them to be self-employed after completion. (DP1).*

According to Lutaaya, there is a widespread acceptance that NCV education and training should have a particularly important impact on the enhancement of informal job creation to sustain livelihoods.<sup>37</sup> However, the requirements for the NCV curriculum to prepare students for a world of work that includes both employment and self-employment as possible options also present challenges. Entrepreneurship and small business management are currently included in some of the NCV programmes; nevertheless, there is doubt about whether these subjects offer sufficient preparation for the complex task of a business enterprise. The doubt is further

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<sup>35</sup> R. Nqola, "Tshwane North College Students Threaten 'Shutdown,'" <https://rekordeast.co.za/181540/tshwane-north-college-students-threaten-shutdown/>, May 15, 2018.

<sup>36</sup> B. Hlongwa, "Addressing the Plight of SA's Youth," *Public Sector Manager Magazine (PSM)*, <https://www.publicsectormanager.co.za/post/catchy-title-number-one/>, July 5, 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Lutaaya, "Exploring the Views of TVET Lecturers on the Implementation of the NCV Curriculum."

spread to the NCV curriculum and whether it is, in fact, in a position to contribute meaningfully to self-employment. Chitsa mentioned that the impact of the NCV is largely unknown, although early research findings indicate that most of the teaching is usually *about* entrepreneurship, very theoretical, with virtually no practical component, rather than training for actual business start-ups.<sup>38</sup> In addition, programmes are not translating into any business start-ups and are therefore not fostering self-employment and job creation and the curriculum also appears to be outdated.

The above findings thus confirm the challenges faced by the TVET sector in South Africa. Lecturers at colleges were not trained or did not receive adequate training for NCV programmes, and many of them seem to be underqualified. Communication channels are not followed or there is no communication at all by the management with relevant stakeholders. There is a lack of resources and non-functional equipment in some of the campuses for practicals as prescribed in the policy documents of the programmes. Courses are not industry-related or do not meet industry requirements due to the lack of relationships with the stakeholders. Entry-level policy needs to be reviewed as Level 2 (Passed Grade 9) students struggle to comprehend the content, which is aggravated by the language barrier. Again, inappropriate programmes chosen by management are not translating into self-employment as prescribed in the policy document.

### Discussion Summary

This study has described the nature of a symbiotic relationship between TVET colleges and the NDP 2030 policy objectives regarding NCV programmes. This research has revealed that it is important for TVET colleges to invite all the relevant stakeholders on board to achieve the stated objectives. The NCV was introduced in TVET colleges in 2007 to respond to the NDP 2030 objectives, which are to eradicate poverty, reduce chronic youth unemployment and reduce inequalities among people globally. Some of the respondents did not understand the content and functioning of NDP 2030, and those who did know about it had only partial knowledge and understanding of the impact it has on the TVET sector.

TVET Colleges are expected to have a responsive policy in achieving these objectives. The literature reveals that it is not easy for developing countries, faced with economic stagnation and limited resources, to achieve such objectives. Theories such as social constructivism and human development helped address these challenges and revealed that working as a team with different stakeholders could assist the TVET sector in overcoming the obstacles identified by the respondents in the semi-structured interviews.

College management has promised to fix structural problems and other educational requirements, but there seems to be a challenge with the implementation and where, how, and when they should start the process. Lack of resources has been a major problem in the sector for many years and it will remain so in future years. Curriculum is the engine of every programme on offer in the TVET sector; therefore, the capacity of lecturers is crucial. Instead of excluding lecturers, they should be consulted first about curriculum changes and be developed continuously to be relevant and to keep up with technological changes in the world of work and in general. Communication channels in the colleges seem to be a serious challenge for every stakeholder in the TVET sector, hence there always seem to be problems that cannot be solved.

The policy on the entry level for NCV programme students is also a serious challenge with the type of students they enrol since they are challenged by many factors, such as the language barrier, and the curriculum in relation to programme requirements. To gain access to government funding, College management enrolls all applicants, even if they do not meet the NCV requirements. This is because the higher the number of NCV students, the higher the stake to be received by the College with the NCV programme, compared to the NATED programme which receives little funding even if they register twice a year.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Relationships and collaboration among the various stakeholders in achieving NDP 2030 objectives are crucial. The working partnership between TVET colleges and all the relevant stakeholders needs to be strengthened, as indicated in Figure 2, to build colleges of excellence and to enable the supply of relevant, high-quality skills that are responsive to the social and economic needs of the country. This includes senior management, lecturers, parents, industry, and students working hand in hand in closing the gap for effective and efficient smooth running of the colleges. To this end, efficient and effective communication channels with students need to be developed.

Therefore, the TVET college must develop and maintain a symbiotic relationship with all the stakeholders mentioned below in Figure 2 to be successful in achieving the NDP 2030 policy objectives. They

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<sup>38</sup> Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)., “Strengthening and Supporting TVET Colleges for Expanded Access and Increased Programme Quality. TVET Colleges Technical Task Team Final Report.”

all have a significant role to play in the college sector to be aligned and deliver according to local and national expectations.

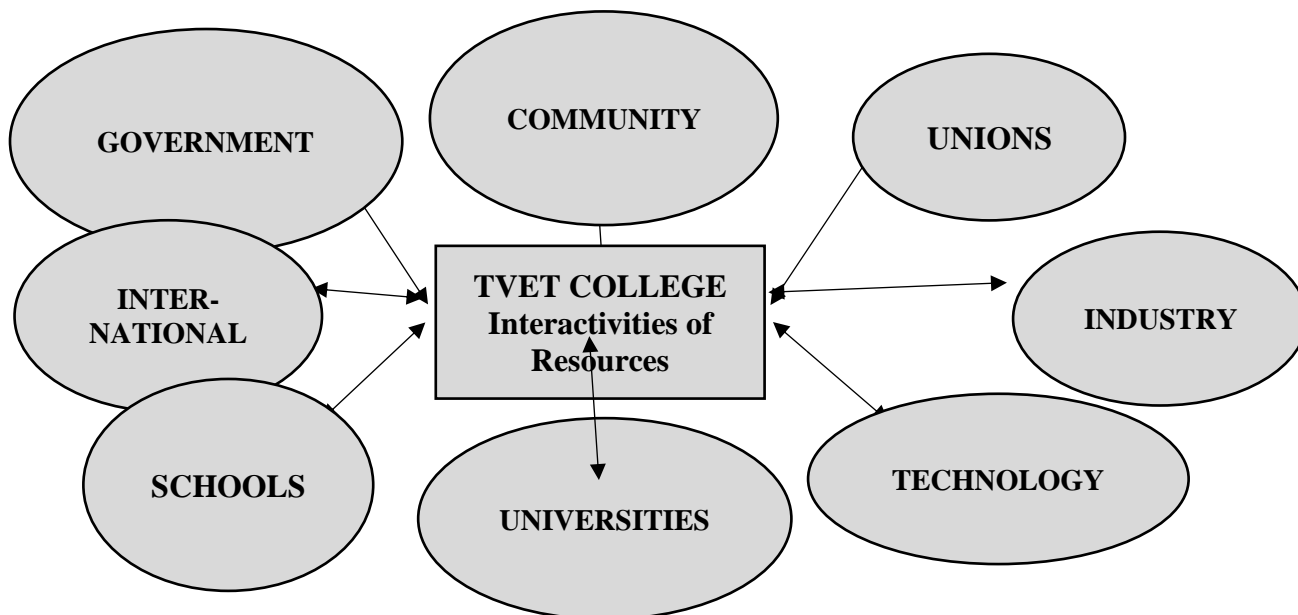


Figure 2: Framework: Recommended Symbiotic Relationship

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to establish the readiness of TVET colleges with regard to the attainment of NDP 2030 objectives, through NCV programmes. However, an ideal symbiotic relationship cannot be maintained when some of the stakeholders are overlooked. They all have a significant role to play in the TVET colleges, directly or indirectly. Based on the recommendations made in Figure 2 below, it is crucial to involve all the stakeholders for the full achievement of the NDP 2030 policy and NCV programme objectives. The study was limited to the policy implementers, that is, senior managers of the college and the HODs at the campus level.

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