

**LECTURERS' EXPERIENCES OF MASSIFICATION AT A TECHNICAL
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGE: A CRITICAL
THEORY APPROACH**



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DECLARATION

I, Vashnee Singh, student number 209537435, declare that this study, lecturers' experiences of massification at a TVET college in Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal is my own original work, and is neither being assessed elsewhere, nor is it being concurrently submitted for any other postgraduate qualification. The reference style used in this research study is APA 6th edition.


Vashnee Singh

ABSTRACT

Massification of higher education is a worldwide phenomenon. This study explored lecturers' experiences of massification at a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college in a semi-rural area in northern KwaZulu-Natal, as a social group, in their context. A qualitative approach was adopted and the participants comprised ten academics with seven to twelve years' employment at the college. The four research questions were grounded in the critical theory and interpretive paradigms. The study drew on the concepts and notions of social identity theory as a theoretical frame. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, and were analysed using thematic analysis.

The findings revealed that, large class sizes and overcrowded classrooms; the poor calibre of learners, behavioural issues, emotional immaturity and development; a lack of resources; interference by unions and student representatives in governance; and poor management and leadership were among the challenges facing lecturers at the TVET college. They also cited a lack of support to confront these challenges. This resulted in high levels of tension, dissatisfaction and low self-esteem.

These findings suggest that massification has not only increased academics' workload, but altered the nature of their work. This points to the need for TVET stakeholders at government and leadership level to work with academic staff to address the issues arising from massification.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAP:	Certified Administration Professional test
DHET:	Department of Higher Education and Training
ISAT:	Internal Summative Assessment Tasks
NATED:	National Accredited Technical Education Diploma
NCV:	National Curriculum Vocation
PAM:	Personnel Administrative Memorandum
PPM:	Private Placement Memorandum
R191:	Report 191 (NATED)
SRC:	Student representative council
TVET:	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

TERMINOLOGY

Massification:	Growth of enrolment beyond institutional capacity. Massive increase in student numbers in higher education.
Higher Education:	Tertiary education culminating in the award of an academic diploma or degree.
TVET:	Institutions for post-school individuals as well as school-leavers that provide knowledge and skills for employment or entrepreneurial ventures.
Lecturer:	A person who delivers professional, specialised educational services, in the form of teaching or training at any higher education institution (RSA, 2006).

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study was motivated by the researcher's experience of massification at a TVET college. In line with the Social Identity Theory, it aimed to give voice to the lecturers' experience of massification as a social group, by exploring why they experience massification in the way they do, in their context. A social group is a group of individuals who share a common social identification of themselves, and interact with one another in such a manner that, each person influences, and, is influenced by the other (Turner, 1982).

Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, the South African government has undertaken policy reform that has resulted in restructuring across all sectors and institutions. Kanyane (2016) notes that, some of the most decisive reforms occurred within the education system, whereby a fundamental reform was access to all, particularly in the TVET sector. TVET colleges swiftly became known as the mainstream link between acquiring a quick qualification, and access to employment. Mmako (2018) found that, the TVET system as a whole has undergone major transformation due to over-enrolment, and hence, a massive increase in student numbers. This has led to institutions far exceeding their institutional capacity, radically altering the nature of TVET teachers' roles, functions, and duties.

The TVET Sector in South Africa

According to Akoojee (2016), accounts of the efficacy of TVET colleges in South Africa are less than flattering. The National Development Plan notes that, the sector is 'not effective', and 'too small', and that the 'output quality [is] poor' (The Presidency, 2012, p. 50). Other policy documents cite weak financial management, teacher ineptness, poor administration and governance, inadequate infrastructure, poor labour market results, and insufficient responsiveness to students' needs (DHET, 2012b; Akoojee, 2008). In 2012 governance reforms overturned decentralisation, transferring

responsibility from the provinces to the national Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), resulting in the consolidation of staff into government service. The intention was to lay the basis for an administrative and management overhaul, in order to re-establish effective functionality (DHET, 2012a). However, the literature shows that, regardless of the restructuring and funding improvements, the sector does not have a positive image in terms of value, outcomes, programme weighting, or control and administration (Akoojee, 2016).

Research Problem

While the ramifications of massification are dramatic, very little attention is paid to the effects on educators in the TVET sector (Wedekind, Watson, & Buthelezi, 2016) and few studies have engaged with lecturers in order to understand their experiences. The study aimed to address this gap by exploring lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group, at a TVET college. Given that group structure has important implications for identity formation (Skevington & Baker, 1989), it focussed on understanding how and why lecturers, as a social group, experience massification in the way they do, in their context, and how social groups influence their experience of massification. According to Wedekind et al. (2016), there is growing consensus that educational quality depends on the excellence and obligations of educators and thus, in-depth knowledge and understanding of the educators in the TVET sector, is necessary to identify the sector's strengths, weaknesses, and possibilities in respect of massification. Wedekind et al. (2016) assert that, higher education transformation affects TVET lecturers in a variety of ways, and that, policy makers tend to pay little attention to the downstream repercussions that changes have on them. These, often inadvertent, effects have physical and tangible consequences for the lives of lecturers and the institutions as a whole, including students.

Motivation for the study: Change driven by Massification

Throughout the span of the course work (2018), the concept 'massification' netted the researcher's interest that it is one of the most topical crucial vicissitudes in higher

education. There is a transference from the notion of exclusivity, to an opening up of access to higher education to afford every member of a society the same latitude to education (Mpu, & Adu, 2019). The manner in which massification has manipulated the TVET college under study is that, the profile of the learners has altered to a more atypical learner with diverse intentions, competencies and work prospects. Being so, at the TVET college, lecturers relentlessly bemoaned just how incessantly they have to rework and amend their modes of delivery in order to acclimate to the various needs of these different and diverse groups of learners. Lecturers ceaselessly articulated and whinged that their teaching roles, functions and duties are stonewalled due to multiple reasons. These rudimentary aspects, and results from other studies (Mmako, 2018) that the TVET system as a whole has submitted to major remodelling due to massive increase in student numbers, and subsequently, radically altering the nature of TVET lecturers' roles, functions, and duties, motivated this in-depth study.

Mpu and Adu (2019) contend that the labour markets and social strains have necessitated teaching restructurings and that the applicability of curricula has also become a major challenge. This study was thus driven by the researcher's phenomenal interest to explore the concept of massification and its causes and consequences at a TVET college. Drawing on the Social Identity Theory, the core purpose of the study was to explore experiences of TVET lecturers as a social group of massification, in their context.

Location of the study

Majuba TVET College is a good example of the transformation that has taken place since the introduction of the Further Education and Training (FET) Act in 1998 (Papier, 2011). It comprises of six campuses, namely, three business and three engineering campuses, as well as a distant learning sector. This research focussed on a business campus which has been in existence for 20 years and is situated in the heart of a semi-rural township in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Through socio-economic and infrastructural growth, it is now an economically viable, emerging township (Amajuba District Municipality, 2015). The student population of the campus constitutes students from local and surrounding towns, rural and township areas; other distant towns in the

northern KwaZulu-Natal area, and other provinces, such as Limpopo and Mpumalanga (Dlamini, 2015). From a socio-economic perspective, students come from high, medium and low income backgrounds, resulting in a diverse student population, notably with regard to educational background (Wedekind & Watson, 2016).

Main objectives

Drawing on the Social Identity Theory, the study's objectives were to:

1. Establish how TVET college lecturers as a social group understand student massification in higher education in their context.
2. Explore how TVET college lecturers as a social group experience student massification in their work context?
3. Explore in what ways do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience managing/leading within a unionised and massified student context?
4. Analyse what TVET college lecturers as a social group propose and recommend as solutions to deal with the challenges of massification in higher education in their context.

Research questions

Based on the above objectives, the research questions were as follows:

1. How do TVET college lecturers as a social group understand student massification in higher education in their context?
2. How do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience student massification in their work context?
3. In what ways do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience managing/leading within a unionised and massified student context?
4. What do TVET college lecturers as a social group propose and recommend as solutions to deal with the challenges of massification in higher education in their context?

Significance of the study

While there is a rich literature on massification of education globally, including in South Africa, very little has focused on institutions in the northern KwaZulu-Natal region. This study aimed to promote understanding of TVET college lecturers' experience of massification, in order for government and leadership stakeholders to address the issues. Grounded in lecturers' experience of massification, the study served as a platform for them to voice their views, beliefs, and recommendations. Powell (2014) and Wedekind et al. (2016) note that, research on the TVET sector has neglected teachers' experience of the transition to a mass system in South Africa. Kanyane (2016) also asserts that, apart from a few studies, research on the process of change in this sector has overlooked the people in the system, and their needs. It is against this background that this study explored TVET college lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group. Its findings could enhance understanding of the challenges they confront. Furthermore, their suggestions and recommendations could be used by government and leadership stakeholders to come up with workable solutions to address the challenges of massification.

Limitations of the study

While the participants selected for the study agreed to participate, most did not stick to the scheduled appointments. Securing appointments was a daunting task due to their work commitments, attendance of work or union related meetings, or being absent due to undergoing training or being on leave. Furthermore, student protests and strike action at the time of data collection meant that academics were not allowed on campus. These challenges delayed data collection by several weeks. Furthermore, private, quiet venues such as boardrooms and offices were not always available at the scheduled times, due to insufficient venues. Classrooms were used to conduct the interviews, but these were not the most conducive or comfortable venues, because of the constant movement of learners and thus, high levels of noise. This jeopardised the quality of some of the recordings. Some participants were reluctant to share certain information and, in responding to some questions, they were brief and not forthcoming. Many

participants revealed bias in their responses to certain questions, as they based their responses on their personal feelings and judgments.

Network coverage and data usage were further challenges. I was forced to conserve data in other important areas of work and private matters, well in advance, in order to ensure sufficient data for the interview recordings. At times, there was very poor network coverage, due to the geographical location of the college, and regular power outages, due to load shedding. Interviews had to be postponed until the network was available, once again resulting in major delays in data collection as well as the frustration of rescheduling appointments.

Thesis outline

Chapter One provides an overview of the study, the research problem and the location of the study. It presents the main objectives, the research questions and the study's significance and limitations.

Chapter Two reviews the local and international literature on massification of the higher education sector and highlights the gaps in the literature that this study sought to fill.

Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology employed. It discusses the paradigms and theoretical frames that guided the study, the selection of participants and how the data was produced and analysed.

Chapter Four presents the study's results based on the four critical research questions. The findings are presented as written data that are thematically organised.

Chapter Five presents a summary of the findings and conclusions, followed by the implications of the results, suggestions for further research, and the study's contributions.

Conclusion

Guided by the Social Identity Theory, this study explored TVET college lecturers' experience of massification in their context, and how and why they experience massification in the way they do, as a social group. This chapter presented an overview of the study, the research problem, motivational aspects, the location of the study, its main objectives, the research questions and the study's significance and limitations.

The following chapter reviews the local and international literature on academics' experience of massification in higher education.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review presented in this chapter puts the phenomenon of massification of higher education in perspective and identifies the gaps in the literature that this study sought to fill. Grinnell and Unrau (2005) note that, the purpose of a literature review is to provide deeper understanding of the research problem. The discussion is organised thematically in the context of the research problem, around particular topics or issues, rather than the progression of time. As such, the presentation shifts between national and international perspectives, within various topics of discussion, and in the context of the research problem. The aim is to place each work in the context of its contribution to enable greater understanding of lecturers' experience of massification in higher education (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Conceptualising higher education, TVET, and massification

A brief conceptualisation of the notions of higher education, TVET, and massification is pertinent.

Higher Education

According to Mohamedbhai (2014) the concepts of higher education and tertiary education are often used interchangeably to represent post-secondary education. Higher education is tertiary education, culminating in the award of an academic diploma or degree (Mohamedbhai, 2014). This study uses the term, 'higher education' as it is more encompassing, and covers all post-secondary education

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

TVET colleges are conceptualised as pivotal in terms of providing skills and training, rooted in and serving communities. They offer programmes for post-school individuals,

as well as school-leavers, providing knowledge and skills for employment or entrepreneurial ventures. In South Africa the TVET sector comprises two dissimilar sectors operating within one department, namely, the DHET (Wedekind et al., 2016). The first is the National Curriculum Vocation Sector (NCV) that offers three-year vocational (work-related) courses to early school ‘leavers’, in the equivalence of high school Grades 10, 11 and 12, referred to as levels 2, 3 and 4 at TVET colleges. The second is the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) sector, also referred to as Report 191. It enables individuals in possession of a Grade 12 certificate, to study engineering and business courses. Of the three years, the first 18 months consists of theory, followed by the practical component. The qualification is a national diploma.

Massification

Various authors define the term massification in similar ways. Jowi (2003) defines massification as the growth of enrolment, beyond the capacities of universities. Kimathi and Henry (2014) posit that, massification is a steady escalation in student enrolments that is not accompanied by an increase in budgetary provisions, and investment in facilities and academic staff, leading to a disparity between quality and quantity. Hornsby and Osman (2014) agree that, massification describes a rapid surge in student enrolment, such that, institutions are expected to accommodate larger numbers of students with fewer resources. Mohamedbhai (2014) asserts that, higher education institutions enrol students well above their human, operational and infrastructural resource capacities, and the most pertinent term to describe this massive increase is massification.

A more succinct description is provided by Mohamedbhai (2014), who makes use of Trow’s (2000) categorisation of massification. He notes that, depending on the percentage enrolment in a country’s higher education system, massified systems would mean a transition from ‘elite’ to ‘mass’ to ‘universal’. Trow adds that a national enrolment of up to 15% of the relevant age group is considered as having an ‘elite’ higher education system; one with enrolment of 16-50%, as having a ‘mass’ system; and one with more than 50% enrolment, as a ‘universal’ system. This suggests that, an elite system caters to a fortunate or talented group; while a mass system reflects higher

education as a right for those who are qualified; and a universal one, as government's obligation to the population (Mohamedbhai, 2014).

Massification: Effects on higher education academics

International Perspectives

Altbach, de Wit and Reisberg (2017, p. 9) estimate that, “worldwide, more than 200 million students are studying at a vast number of institutions that cover all possible specialisations”. They add that massification continues, as emerging economies continue to increase their enrolment rates to 50% or more, as is common in industrialised economies. Furthermore, the global knowledge economy requires world-class tertiary higher education institutions to produce students that are skilled in basic and applied research. Altbach et al. (2017) found that seven of the 13 countries included in their study had reached universal participation. Ghana, at 14%, is still in the elite phase, while Brazil (23%), Chile (37%), China (37%), Egypt (30%), and India (27%) are in the phase of mass education. While demand for higher education in these five countries is snowballing at an alarming rate, Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Russia, the US and the UK, have reached saturation point, and demographic factors may lead to further demand (Altbach et al., 2017).

Machado (2013) noted that massification and diversification of Brazil's educational system, which was influenced by the neoliberal principles promoted by international organisations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), have led to fragmentation of the academic profession. He posits that this situation is characterised by increasing bureaucratisation, weighty accountability requirements, scant remuneration, and inadequate intellectual preparation to meet academic demands. Machado (2013) argues that, accountability and bureaucratisation have reduced academics' self-sufficiency and furthermore, a growing number of professors have insecure and freelance jobs, a forerunner of a decline in the status of the professoriate. Professors are paid low salaries to teach a few courses and this has discouraged new up-and-coming generations from pursuing an academic career (Machado, 2013). Thus, Altbach and Reisberg (2017) argue that massification has led to the breakdown of the academic profession and academic community.

Mok's (2015) study focused on the east Asian countries of Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. The study shows that, much like Brazil, Asia's higher education system has been massified through neo-liberal ideas and practices. The adoption of market-driven strategies has compromised education quality and equality. Mok (2015) concluded that, due to commercialisation of higher education and a rapid proliferation of institutions, teaching and research are carried out by academics who are not adequately qualified, are overworked with hefty teaching loads, have to teach large classes, and receive low remuneration. Hawkins and Neubauer (2014, p. 4) stated, "in many massified systems in the Asia Pacific region, academics at 'lesser regarded' institutions, are often forced to hold positions at different institutions, in order to supplement their income". This results in less professional preparation as well as energy to teach effectively. Chapman (2009, p. 91) describes such a scenario as, "a 'beggar' of the academic profession".

Machado (2013) notes that good teaching performance requires one to devote time to research and teaching, be fully involved in one's academic community, both local and international, and be available to meet students' needs. He claims that these requirements are better fulfilled when professors have full-time contracts, high academic qualifications, net equitable and/or acceptable remuneration, work in suitable facilities, and are able to participate in decision-making processes. However, Altbach and Hazelkom (2017) note that, globally, the number of full-time professors has decreased. Institutions in many countries employ part-time academics, who work in different institutions simultaneously. Truncated salaries have become routine, and professors basically earn the average salary in their countries (Altbach et al., 2017). Furthermore, according to Machado (2013), market-driven restructuring of higher education led to the replacement of bureau-professional organisational regimes by a corporate culture. Institutions are expected to become business-oriented in their approaches, practices, values, principles, and social relationships. Neoliberalism has promoted a culture centred on values like distinctiveness, competitiveness and mistrust. These values, and the emphasis on managerialism and performativity, have undermined academics' professionalism (Machado, 2013).

Varca (2009) postulates that, due to massification, the role of academics has transitioned from academician to service provider, placing enormous demands on

academics. Institutions make unreasonable demands of academics in order to fulfil the demands of students and industry. Concurring with Varca (2009), Krishnan and Kasinathan (2017) assert that governments and leadership of institutions are more concerned about their status and competing in a global economy than the needs and challenges of their academics. This conflicting or potential incompatibility between academics' authentic and/or real passion, and that which is desired by the organisation, ultimately causes the presence of emotional labour (Krishnan et al., 2017).

Krishnan and Kasinathan (2017) further argue that emotional labour occurs when there is difference between the attitude and conduct that individuals display, and their true emotions (see Hochschild, 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Massification of higher education and the consequent increased workloads lead to exploitation of academics and consequently to emotional labour. Krishnan and Kasinathan's (2017) survey showed that, 85% of their respondents faked their emotions when dealing with students in order to fulfil management's demand to keep students (customers) happy. In other words, they pretended to display job satisfaction, and add value to teaching and learning activities. This is a fake image as they suffer from low morale, and staff turnover and absenteeism are high.

Sub-Saharan Africa

According to Mohamedbhai (2008), massification is referred to as, 'expansion' in the African context, and is driven by altruism on the part of political leaders. Whilst its intentions may be noble it is important to acknowledge the burdens that increased student admissions impose on academics. Concurring, Akalu (2016, p. 260) also avows, "academics associate expansion with burdens, alienation, an enhanced workload and loss of autonomy for the professor". Teferra (2016) concurs and notes that, the expansion of higher education on the continent, has had a severe impact on the state of institutional infrastructure, and organisational and administrative proficiency. He adds that, not only do academics struggle with large classes, but, in many cases, dilapidated classrooms, laboratories and offices. Teferra (2016) argues that, the massive expansion observed in the region has not been supported by appropriate human, financial, and material resources. This has crucial consequences for the quality of higher education systems in Africa.

The various challenges identified in the literature that confront academics due to massification are briefly examined below.

Staffing

Mohamedbhai (2014) notes that, many African higher education institutions have not been able to hire supplementary academic staff in order to cope with augmented enrolment, either due to a lack of funds or the lack of qualified candidates. The result is that, staff-student ratios in some faculties have increased to as much as 1:100. Institutions have had to resort to employing part-time staff that are not always sufficiently and suitably trained or qualified to teach at higher education level. The teaching load of full-time staff has increased enormously, and, combined with increased administrative duties, this means that they have little time for research. Exacerbating the problem, the proportion of staff with PhDs is comparatively low, which means that, these academics are not in a position to promote postgraduate programmes or oversee research, both of which are vital for Africa (Mohamedbhai, 2014). Akalu's (2016) study also shows that, in Africa, while the pressure to enrol more students continues academics are increasingly expected to teach higher-order cognitive skills, and implement continuous assessment, and evaluation of student learning. Thus, in an effort to deliver value for money, academics are required to do 'more with less'. Very little funding is available for research resources and professional development.

Matovu's (2018) study in East Africa found that massification of higher education has led to a shortage of professors and associate professors, as highly qualified academics emigrate in search of greener pastures. Most universities employ part-time staff. Academics have immense teaching loads with large classes, leaving no time to conduct research, and community outreach programmes. Matovu (2018) notes that strikes by staff in public institutions in Uganda are common due to inadequate support structures, as well as poor remuneration. Akalu (2016) makes the interesting observation that academics are besieged, as they attempt to reconcile their professional identity, which they have long held dear, with a new form of identity that they are forced to embrace. Some of the participants in his study commented that, many graduate students have an erroneous understanding of the roles of a professor, with 'guidance' and 'director' two of the descriptors participants used to portray their roles in graduate classes.

Student type

The literature shows that academics bemoan the calibre of students they are receiving. Academics assert that, students are academically weaker, and do not meet specified criteria for admission, but are increasingly being admitted to universities. Students desire a laid-back approach, and are not willing or enthusiastic to engage in intellectual thinking or generate new knowledge. They lack reading skills, and do not have a hunger for knowledge. Academics contend that, educationally weaker students are being imposed upon them by government and management of higher education (Mohamedbhai, 2014; Matovu, 2018). They regard this as erosion of their professional autonomy to select their own students (Akalu, 2016).

Accreditation

According to University World News (2011), poor quality higher education provision resulting from massification has resulted in the non-accreditation of some university programmes, or non-registration of graduates by relevant professional bodies. In 2010, Nigeria's National Universities Commission, the national higher education regulatory body, withdrew accreditation of several academic departments in more than 20 universities. The assessment criteria used by the commission include the number of academics with a PhD and the available infrastructure. In 2011, the Engineering Registration Board of Kenya refused to recognise the engineering degrees awarded by three of the country's leading public universities. Mohamedbhai (2014) notes that the reasons specified by the board were that, the quality of the curricula was poor, the universities lacked qualified lecturers, and they lacked facilities to manage the escalating student numbers.

Physical Infrastructure

Mohamedbhai (2008) found that, due to the lack of public funds for expansion, the physical infrastructure at higher education institutions in sub-Saharan Africa has not increased commensurate with increased enrolment. Lecture theatres, laboratories, academic and administrative offices, and even ablution facilities are inadequate to meet the needs of the enlarged student population. Libraries have also suffered, with a critical

shortage of books and periodicals. Some laboratory equipment is non-functional and has not been replaced. Students' residences now house three or four times the number of students they were designed for. The situation has been exacerbated by a lack of maintenance, resulting in extensive degradation of the institutional physical infrastructure (Mohamedbhai, 2008).

Funding

According to Teferra (2014), the lack of funding has worsened the effects of massification of higher education in Africa. He claims that resources are stretched such that the services and quality of higher education are declining noticeably. In one extreme case in Zambia, universities received only 20% of their projected expenditure from the government. African higher education systems have a feeble finance base, and while expansion continues, effective ways of deploying available resources receive very little attention. Teferra (2014) further argues that higher education policies implemented in Francophone African countries enable universities to enrol students without taking into consideration the minimum quality standards; and to allocate a major portion of their budgets to student social support, including scholarships, accommodation, catering, transport, and health coverage. For example, in Senegal, 70% of universities' operating budgets are allocated to student social support, leaving limited resources for the maintenance of even minimum quality standards. Teferra (2014) adds that, with a cost-distribution plan in place and resource mobilisation, it is common practice and/or mandatory in many African institutions to return funds that have not been utilised, including self-generated funds, to the national treasury at the end of the financial year. This hampers initiatives among institutions to generate their own resources, or even to deploy them strategically.

South Africa

Concerns of the Higher Education System in South Africa

Powell and McGrath (2014) note that massification of South African higher education, particularly TVET, reached its peak during the period 2009 to 2013. As student

numbers soared, the role of these colleges shifted from the single focus on meeting industry's needs, to incorporate a second focus, namely, developing and uplifting disadvantaged learners and communities, by providing post-school education and training. The Portfolio Committee on Higher Education (2017) noted that student enrolment in South Africa increased from 670 455 in 2013 to 1.238 million in 2019, a 54.16% increase. That represents an average increase of 11% per annum, indicating that the country had entered the 'mass' system category.

Blom (2014) argues that, over-enrolment is the result of South Africa's current funding model, with colleges more concerned with enrolment numbers than the selection of suitable students for particular programs. She proclaims that apart from wasting financial resources, this approach is generating 'reproductions of poverty'. Massification has raised concerns about the quality of teaching and learning in the colleges, and has placed enormous demands on TVET teachers. For example, colleges enrol students for programs that require a firm basis in mathematics without checking whether or not they have the requisite knowledge. It is only after enrolment that teachers for Financial Accounting, Information Technology and Engineering programs discover students' deficiencies in the basics. Nevertheless, the DHET insists that, the TVET college sector should be responsible for the development of mid-level skills for industry and as a result, the sector is targeted for the greatest expansion in the post-school system (Blom, 2014).

Massification's effects on students and lecturers

The effects of massification of higher education closely coalesce around students and TVET teachers and these two issues thus cannot be understood as separate entities. Wedekind et al. (2016) ask the overarching question posed by both researchers and TVET teachers; 'what is the South African TVET teacher's work?' According to Grint (2005), work gives a person a sense of subjective importance; it provides one with a certain position and/or prestige, financial recompense and a means to reach self-potential. However, several studies assert that, this is not the case in respect of South African TVET teachers (Kanyane, 2016; Wedekind et al., 2016; Gewer, 2012). Kanyane (2016) posits that, while TVET has great potential, the type of students that are enrolled are not well equipped for TVET programmes and the demands of tertiary

education. According to her, due to the enrolment criteria, the calibre of students admitted to TVET colleges poses a huge challenge to teaching and learning as these students are ill-prepared for such programmes. Kanyane (2016) argues that, since TVET colleges offer NCV as an alternative to the National Senior Certificate (NSC), at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 2-4, they should admit students who have passed Grade 9. Instead, due to massification, the majority of students enrolled in these colleges have failed Grades 10, 11 and 12.

Hence, TVET colleges are typically enrolling school drop-outs, and generating multi-level classes where students vary in age, educational background, and cognitive abilities. While students with Grade 9 struggle to cope with the demands of the NCV programmes, those that have completed Grades 10, 11 and 12 repeat what they did at school in respect of the fundamental subjects, since Grade 10 is equivalent to NCV Level 2 (see DHET, 2013a, Chapter 5). This creates tension in the classroom for teachers, as, for some students the teaching pace is slow and for others it is fast, and the content may be complex or simple for some.

Thus, for the TVET lecturer, there is no consistency, as they have to constantly work towards striking a balance. For example, Wedekind et al. (2016) note that, in 2010, half of the students enrolled had passed Grade 12, and therefore, held the NSC qualification that is equivalent to NCV Level 4. This means that colleges have two target populations, namely, those with the NSC and those without Grade 12. However, the curricula do not cater for this mix, nor are the lecturers prepared for this diverse group of students. This presents a challenge to lecturers in reaching out to all students, and thus, impacts adversely on student support. Wedekind et al. (2016, p. 131) in their SAQA Bulletin Volume 15 Number 1 aver, as a result of massification and the resultant enrolment process, TVET colleges are sitting with the so called “bad kids from schools and colleges have become the dumping ground for early school leavers”. They note that, TVET teachers have to deal with a diverse range of students, who are ill-disciplined, and are only there to procure a piece of paper (certificate) that may afford them the opportunity of employment. Lecturers are discouraged by having to deal with new issues such as behavioural discipline, emotional immaturity and development, and teenage pregnancy. They are given very little support in this regard, and often have to find their own ways of coping personally, as well as in terms of their functions and

duties. Lecturers thus experience high levels of stress, dissatisfaction and low morale (Wedekind, 2016).

Infrastructural problems

The current infrastructural development approach in the TVET college sector is shaped by the earlier technical college model. This model was designed for a limited number of students at any given time. Therefore, it does not address the expanded access envisaged by the DHET's National Plan (DHET, 2013a). The NCV curriculum demands simulation of practical learning; however, in many colleges the facilities and equipment have not been upgraded to facilitate this and to accommodate large numbers of learners (Papier, 2010). Moreover, simulated learning is very equipment-intensive and a lack of equipment is one of the most significant challenges currently confronting TVET colleges. Through its post-school infrastructural expansion projects, the DHET spent only R2.5 billion of the R12.6 billion allocated by the government to infrastructure programmes on TVET college infrastructure. Hence, many colleges lack sufficient lecture theatres and classrooms, efficient information communication technology (ICT) systems and networks, modern computers, and practicum rooms and equipment (Kanyane, 2016) (see DHET, 2013b).

Brief reflection on massification and TVET lecturers

Many studies have raised the issue of TVET academics' professional well-being in terms of managing their workload, their administrative functions, and supporting students within an inconsistent and diverse student population (Wedekind et al., 2016; Kanyane, 2016; Papier, 2011). Massification has presented lecturers with the challenges of expansion and diversification, while at the same time, government policies require that institutional delivery be more workplace-integrated and industry focused (Papier, 2011). According to Wedekind et al. (2016) notable shifts in the nature of lecturers' work are placing new demands on them. They posit that this problem is not unique to South Africa as research on TVET educators in Europe shows that, not much is known about this group of practitioners, including who they are, how they are recruited, their specific roles and tasks, what competences and qualifications they are

expected to possess, their employment status, how their professional development is organised, how they are assessed, and the attraction of their profession. In South Africa, this lack of understanding has implications for lecturer identity in the context of massification (Wedekind et al., 2016).

Gaps identified in the literature

Although the expansion of higher education appears to be obligatory and inexorable, in the long run, it is self-defeating. Providing higher education to ever-increasing numbers of people is a noble aspiration as, if such individuals complete their education and obtain good jobs, they will provide a good tax base to pay for the education of future generations. However, massification has not only immensely increased academics' workload, but also drastically altered the nature of their work. While moral pressure is placed on lecturers to teach larger classes in the interests of society and learners (Allais, 2013), government and leadership of the TVET sector have paid insufficient attention to their experiences and needs, and more significantly, how massification is shaping their development. There is a paucity of research on this aspect of massification (Wedekind et al., 2016). This study aimed to contribute to addressing this gap by exploring TVET college lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group. It was premised on the belief that, educators are central to the education and training system, and that, educational quality depends on the excellence and commitment of educators (Wedekind et al., 2016). Hence, the study focused on understanding how and why TVET college lecturers experience massification, as a social group, and the way in which they do so in their context.

Theoretical framework: Social Identity theory

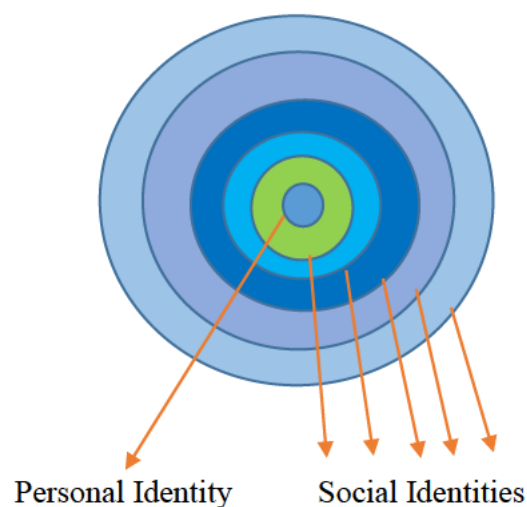
This study drew on the Social Identity Theory as a theoretical lens and centered on various scholars' accounts and explications of the theory. Hogg (2020) delineates that social identity philosophy is a social psychological exploration of the role of self-identity in group association, collective processes, and intergroup collaborations. Although the theory can be argued a 'midrange' theory, but Hogg (2020, p. 112) says, "it is explicitly charted by a belief that collective phenomena cannot be sufficiently explained in terms of isolated individual processes or interactive communication

alone”. Social identity theory was initially developed in the 1970s in Britain by Henri Tajfel, based on his scientific and exceptional keenness in social perception, social grouping, and intergroup conflict, amongst others (Hogg, 2020).

Tajfel and Turner (1979) explain that, society comprises of social groups that stand in power and status relations to one another. They believe that group structure has important implications for identity formation. Brewer (1991) (see Turner et al., 1987; p. 50) posits that, social identity entails; ‘a move towards the awareness of self, as an interchangeable prototype, of some social grouping, and away from the perception of self, as a distinctive individual’. In other words, subjective identity is the individuated self in which those features differentiate one individual from others within a certain social context. Social identities are thus, categorisations of the person into more all-encompassing social units, that depersonalise the self-concept, where ‘I’ becomes ‘we’ (Brewer, 1991).

A visual representation of social identity theory is presented in Figure 1 below. The concentric circles represent classifications of the self at different levels of inclusiveness within a particular domain. The concentric loops illustrate the contextual nature of social identity. From each point in the figure, the next circle outward provides the frame of reference for distinction and social comparison (Brewer, 1991).

Figure 1: Personal and social identities (Brewer, 1991, p. 476)



Tenets of Social Identity Theory

The basic principles of social identity theory are represented in the following assumptions (Brewer, 1991, p. 478):

Tenet one: Social identification is immensely strengthened for social groups or categories at that stage of inclusiveness which defuses the struggle between needs for distinction of the self, and integration with other.

Tenet two: Ideal individuality is free of the evaluative inferences of group belonging although, other things being alike, individuals favour positive group identities over negative identities.

Tenet three: Individualism of a particular social identity is context centred. It hinges on the context within which potential social identities are defined at a specific time, which can vary from members in a particular social gathering, to the whole human race.

Tenet four: The optimum level of group uniqueness or completeness is a function of the relative power or incline of the conflicting efforts for integration and distinction. For any individual, the comparative strength of the two needs is dogged by cultural norms, individual socialisation, and latest experience.

In view of these principles, social identities are chosen from the various bases for self-categorisation accessible to an individual at a certain time. Particular social identities may be triggered at some times and not at others. Social identity can, then be regarded as a negotiation amid integration and distinction from others. By employing these tenets I was able to: (i) identify and describe lecturers' need for de-individuation and how this need is fulfilled within in-groups, while their desire for uniqueness is met through inter-group comparisons; (ii) establish why lecturers may react in a certain manner, in terms of group identity, when positioned in social quandary situations and confronted with a struggle between self-gain and helping to preserve a combined resource, and (iii) recognise the social identities preferred by lecturers and gain insight into why they recognised that they belong to one or more social groups (Brewer, 1991, p. 475-482).

Conclusion

The local and international literature (Altbach, 2017; Kanyane, 2016; Mohamedbhai, 2014; Mok, 2015; Teferra, 2014; Wedekind et al., 2016) notes that, globally, academics are daunted by the dynamics of massified institutions. Research has shown that, massification has undeniably altered the way academics perform their duties, functions and roles as professionals. As noted in this chapter, the problems confronting them include inadequate and dilapidated infrastructure, a lack of essential resources, poor or inequitable remuneration, inefficient management, and many others. The poor calibre of learners is a major issue, as is the fact that academics have no time or resources to research areas of higher education.

Hence, from a local and international perspective, massification may seem to be a noble gesture, in terms of providing education for all, but many institutions and academics are struggling to cope with the cumbersome demands and challenges that accompany it. Workloads have more than doubled, and dissemination of knowledge and information requires drastic re-adaptation due to large numbers in classes and huge diversity in terms of age, language, and educational backgrounds. Furthermore, as Altbach and Reisberg (2017) note, academics are expected to treat students as customers and leadership and government are more concerned about their customers (students) and enrolment numbers than the quality of curriculum delivery and academics' professional well-being.

The following chapter presents the research design and methodology employed for this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

According to Williams (2007), a research methodology is a specific research method that provides techniques to collect evidence, which is analysed and interpreted in order to respond to the research questions. This chapter presents the research design and methodology employed for the study, and the rationale for the choices. It also sets out the paradigms that formed the base of the study, the theoretical perspective that guided the research and the data production methods, including the sampling technique, selection criteria and sample size. To demonstrate rigour, it discusses how data was analysed, issues relating to trustworthiness, the limitations of qualitative methods, and the ethical considerations taken into account.

Paradigms

In educational research, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) label the term paradigm as a tool used to describe a researcher's 'worldview'. This frame of mind is the standpoint, or philosophy, or frame of thinking, or established collective philosophies, that drives the implications or elucidation of research data. It is the optic through which a scholar looks at the world. Employing a particular paradigm, the researcher is able to analyse the methodological features of their research enquiry to determine the research ways and means that will be used and how the data will be analysed (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). Similarly, Wagid (2003) and Kroeze (2012) also aver that a paradigm is the base of a research study, providing grounding for one's approach and methodology and epistemology that a study aims to produce.

For the purpose of this study, three research paradigms amongst various others, are discussed in order to provide rationale for the choice of the paradigms employed. Since this study intended to give voice to the lecturers at a TVET college, by exploring and understanding their experience of massification, it was based on the critical theory

approach and an interpretive paradigm. According to Cohen et al. (2007), the critical paradigm stems from critical theory, which holds that research is conducted in order to promote the freedom of individuals and groups in a democratic society. Positivism and interpretivism as paradigms on the other hand, are the primary philosophical points of departure for research (De Villiers, 2005).

Positivism

According to Bonache, and Festing (2020) positivism is a research philosophy that seeks to explicate and predict what occurs in the social domain by looking for consistencies and underlying relationships between its fundamental elements. De Villiers (2005) (see Gregg et al., 2001), also posits, the principle of positivist epistemology is confirmation, i.e., verifying or falsifying hypotheses. Ontologically, positivism espouses a certain explanation of the world. In positivist epistemology, knowledge is understood to be complete and objective, and research is intended to create an accurate depiction of reality, detached from the researcher's perceptions and prejudices (De Villiers, 2005). In other words, methodologically, positivist research inclines towards quantitative approaches, and aims to produce generalisable results, which can be used to make accurate extrapolations. A positivist theory was not suitable for this study as it focuses on confirming hypotheses. Moreover, positivist enquiry is intended to produce an exact representation of reality.

Interpretivism

Interpretivism on the other hand, described by Bonache, and Festing (2020) is an approach based on deep-thinking phenomenology. Its purpose is to understand the meanings and individual intents of particular entities in a certain context, without imposing presumptive analytical sets and/or groups. Bonache and Festing (2020, p. 104) state, "this attempt to understand the world from the perspective of its participants cannot be carried out without the interpretative effort of the researcher, hence the 'interpretivism' in the name of this methodology". Kroeze (2012) also nicely expounds that interpretivism is a paradigm which holds that realities are generated and multiple (ontology); knowledge is fluid and conditional (epistemology), and experiential

approaches are accompanied by exploratory methods that aim to answer how and why questions (methodology).

In other words, interpretivism is research question driven, has an affinity with qualitative methods, and its goal is to provide profound insight into distinctive social and organisational situations. Given the objective of this study, namely, to understand TVET college lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group, interpretive theory was an appropriate approach. Table 1 below, adapted from Becker and Niehave (2007), sets out the key differences between interpretivism and positivism (Kroeze, 2012).

Table 1 - Interpretivism compared to positivism

Criterion	Positivism	Interpretivism
Essence	Confirmation	Generation
Conception of reality	External reality	Contextual realities
Conception of knowledge	Absolutism	Subjectivism
Conception of truth	Reductionism	Holistic and emancipatory view
Conception of reasoning	Empiricism	Interactive knowledge creation. Rationalism
Methodology hypothesis driven	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods. Research question driven
Concept of rigour	Reproducibility	Transferability

Adapted from Becker and Niehave (2007)

Critical theory

Mack (2010) asserts that, the critical informative researcher aims to not only understand or offer an explanation of behaviours in societies, but to also transform these behaviours. She posits that, education serves the interests of those who have influence, and that, educational research situated in the critical paradigm challenges the

reproduction of inequities. According to Cohen et al. (2007), the critical theory approach enables people to challenge dominant dialogues and educational enquiry. They theorise that the epistemological aspects of critical theory are that, knowledge is socially constructed through the media, institutions, and society, and ontologically, social truth is defined by influential individuals in society. Hence, one person's or group's freedom and power, is compromised at the price of another's freedom and power (Cohen et al., 2007). Similarly, Aliyu et al. (2015) state that, what counts as valuable knowledge is dogged by the social and positional power of the advocates of that knowledge. Knowledge is therefore, produced by authority, and is a countenance of power rather than truth. Therefore, the role of critical theory is to promote critical awareness and address social issues through a methodological approach that is participatory and dialogical in nature.

A combined understanding of interpretivist and critical theory

This study combined tenets of the interpretivist and critical theoretical stances. In view of the key concepts and assumptions of interpretive and critical theory approaches, these stances guided the epistemology of the study, i.e., the nature of the knowledge production and the conditions under which it occurred (Wagid, 2003). After understanding the lecturers' experiences, the aim was to suggest areas for change, making critical theory appropriate. The combination of the interpretivist and critical theories was valuable in giving voice to the lecturers at the TVET college, in order to understand why they experience massification in the way they do, as a social group and, subsequently, to provide suggestions and recommendations as solutions to their challenges.

Data production

Qualitative research approach

Given that this study was grounded within the interpretive and critical theory paradigm, a qualitative approach was employed, as it enables deep insight into a phenomenon (Cohen et al., 2007). Bricki and Green (2007) state that, a qualitative methodology aims

to comprehend the participants' experiences and attitudes. It assists in answering questions about the 'what', 'how' or 'why' of an occurrence, rather than the 'how many' or 'how much' questions normally responded to by quantitative methods. Cohen et al. (2007) observe that, the qualitative approach is centred around human nature, particularly the correlation between human beings and their environment.

The qualitative methodology employed for this study enabled in-depth understanding of the manner in which lecturers create and interpret their experience of massification, in their context. Furthermore, qualitative research allows for a social phenomenon to be explored from the participants' perspective. Hence, the qualitative approach enabled me to: (i) view homogeneous experiences; (ii) raise more and other issues through an expansive and open-ended enquiry; and (iii) gain insight into lecturers' behaviours, beliefs and assumptions (Choy, 2014). In addition, qualitative research enables in-depth description, explanation, and interpretation of the collected information. It is less structured because it articulates and constructs new theories (Williams, 2007). This approach enabled issues relating to massification of higher education to be examined in detail and in depth. The information was not restricted by questions, as in quantitative research and the data was based on lecturers' actual experience of massification, as a social group, in their context. The data obtained was powerful and more compelling than quantitative data (Anderson, 2007).

Several methods can be used to conduct qualitative research. Williams (2007) (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2001) recommends case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, content analysis, and phenomenology. Creswell (2003) notes that these approaches meet different needs. For instance, case studies and grounded theory research explore procedures, actions, and events, while ethnographic research focuses on broad cultural involvement and behaviours of individuals or groups. Phenomenology can be employed to study individuals and its purpose is to understand a phenomenon from the participants' perspective. A phenomenological approach was appropriate for this study because the main aim was to explore and understand how and why lecturers experience massification in the way they do, as a social group. However, Williams (2007) states that the challenge of using a phenomenological approach is that, the researcher usually has some connection, experience, or stake in the situation, and thus bracketing is

necessary, i.e., setting aside all prejudgments. The means of gathering data in this approach is lengthy interviews in order to understand and interpret a participant's perceptions of the meaning of an event (Williams, 2007).

Rationale for the research approach

Golafshani (2003) sets out several logical reasons for employing a qualitative research methodology. In this study, it enabled the use of a realistic approach that assisted in understanding occurrences in a context-specific setting. In other words, I was able to explore and understand lecturers' experience of massification within the context of their working environment, the TVET college where the phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally. Unlike quantitative research that produces conclusions arrived at by means of statistical measures or other means of quantification, the qualitative approach enabled me to obtain in-depth understanding and reasoning about different individuals within similar situations, regarding massification. Furthermore, unlike quantitative analysis, which produces numbers, qualitative analysis results in broad descriptions, explanations and views. Hence, I was able to discuss the results from the underlying theoretical nature of each paradigm, as well as the theoretical frame that underpinned the study. I also enjoyed the detailed interviews with the participants and the rewards thereof.

Methods of data production

As noted earlier, the methodology is a particular type of research approach adopted for a study (Williams, 2007) and refers to the theoretical, political, and philosophical backgrounds guiding the research practice (Petty, 2012). Methods, on the other hand, refer to the techniques used to acquire and analyse data to create knowledge. Once a methodology has been identified, such as a quantitative or qualitative one, various methods or tools may be selected for data collection and analysis (Petty, 2012). According to Hanson (2011), the common data collection methods used in qualitative research include individual interviews, focus groups, observation and documentary analysis. For this study, I employed individual interviews that enabled me to explore the lecturers' views and experience of massification in great depth.

Interviews

Williams (2007) asserts that, interviews are important in understanding and interpreting participants' perceptions of the meaning of an event. According to Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008), the purpose of the interview is to discover the individual's interpretations, practices, and beliefs in relation to specific phenomena that would not be obtained through the use of quantitative methods such as questionnaires. They identify three fundamental types of research interviews, namely, structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Structured interviews are essentially verbally administered questionnaires, in which a list of scheduled questions is asked, with no variation and no scope for follow-up questions to responses that warrant elaboration (Gill et al., 2008). Hence, they are quick and easy to administer, but only allow for limited participant responses and therefore, this was of little use in this study because in-depth information was required.

Jamshed (2014) describes semi-structured interviews as exhaustive interviews where respondents answer pre-set, open-ended questions. They are thus, extensively employed by researchers. The interview is conducted once and generally takes anything from 30 to 60 minutes or more. Semi-structured interviews were appropriate for this study, because they are based on a schematic presentation of questions or topics, which the participants explore. The lecturers were presented with a scheme of broad, open-ended questions, which they could easily elaborate on according to their own understanding of the questions. This yielded precise, in-depth information, with detailed insights from individual lecturers on their experience of massification as a social group. Furthermore, I acquired a good understanding of how and why they experience massification in the way they do.

The interviews were conducted in a rigorous manner in order to ensure trustworthiness. Before each interview, the participants were informed about the nature of the study as well as ethical principles such as anonymity and confidentiality. This gave them an idea of what to expect from the interview and increased trustworthiness (Gill et al., 2008). To ensure credibility, the questions asked were reliable and believable, and the manner in which they were presented was reasonable. Because of this, I was able to generate valid and truthful explanations of lecturers' experience of massification. Each

interview was recorded from start to conclusion, and each recording was transcribed verbatim.

Sampling

Samples in qualitative research are usually purposive and this study adopted this method. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique, with members nominated on the basis of their knowledge, relationships and expertise with regard to the research topic (Langkos, 2014). Participants are thus carefully chosen in order to generate useful data (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2015). I had to ensure that, the participants selected were credible and reliable. I carefully selected participants who varied in age, gender, ethnicity, status or position at the institution and years of service, making sure that they represented both sectors i.e., NCV and R191. Union and academic representatives were included among the participants. I deliberately selected participants from various categories in order to establish whether their challenges and conflicts were based on massification, and to determine how it influenced their experience as a social group.

Another significant aspect of sampling, is the size. While quantitative research requires sufficiently large sample sizes to produce statistically defined quantitative estimates, smaller samples are used in qualitative research. This is because the general aim is to acquire information that is useful for understanding the complexity, depth and context surrounding a phenomenon, rather than to represent populations, as in quantitative research. I selected a total of ten participants, namely eight lecturing staff, and two heads of department (HODs). The general criterion for determining when a sufficient sample size has been reached in qualitative research, is saturation. I continued interviewing until nothing new emerged from the data, the point known as saturation (Bricki & Green, 2007).

Trustworthiness of the study

To ensure the rigour of qualitative findings, qualitative researchers consider dependability, credibility, transferability and confirmability (Anney, 2014). To confirm the trustworthiness of the findings, I accounted for personal biases, which I

considered a potential influence on the findings. Furthermore, I acknowledged biases in the selection of participants, based on their position at the institution, such as HODs that may speak from the perspective of management, and attempt to defend the management team. I ensured meticulous record keeping, and that interpretations of the data were consistent and transparent. Audio recordings of the interviews allowed for repeated revisiting of the data to check for emerging themes, and to remain true to the participants' accounts of their experience of massification, as a social group. During data analysis, I established and sought out similarities and differences across all accounts, to ensure that different perspectives were represented. In order to support the findings, verbatim descriptions of participants' accounts were included in the analysis and presentation of data. I obtained respondent validation by inviting the participants to comment on the interview transcripts, and whether the final themes and concepts created adequately reflected their experience of massification (Smith, 2015).

Data analysis

Thematic data analysis

The purpose of analysing data is to detect patterns and draw important conclusions (Bricki & Green, 2007). Thorne (2000) characterises data analysis as the most complex phase of qualitative research, and the complexity that surrounds it requires rigorous and methodical approaches to produce worthwhile results. There are various means of analysing data, including grounded theory, hermeneutic and thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that, in grounded theory, data collection and analysis processes run parallel. In other words, the data analysis process begins at the same time as the data collection process, meaning that, further data collection must be grounded on what has been previously analysed. This approach was not suitable for the study, because I was not seeking to compare two separate sets of data that must be gathered at different phases of the study, but instead, was seeking to interpret a set of data from various interviews to answer the research questions. Myers (2004) states that, hermeneutic analysis is referred to as the dialectic between the understanding of the text as a whole, and the interpretation of its parts, in which descriptions are guided by explanations. According to him, hermeneutic analysis is best used to understand the organisation as a whole. For this study, this meant that, understanding an HOD or lecturer, would have

resulted in understanding the institution, and vice versa. Hermeneutic analysis thus, focuses on a wider research context and takes into account the entire background environment of the research during data collection. It was therefore unlikely to be appropriate for analysing the data collected for this study.

Thematic analysis is appropriate when analysing large sets of qualitative data (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Alhojailan (2012) posits that, thematic analysis is regarded as the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations, codes, and themes. It allows one to identify the frequency of a theme or code across the entire content, and thus, identify similarities in data. Based on these principles, I adopted a thematic analysis approach. This enabled the data to be arranged in such a way that I was able to identify codes and establish themes, while working with large volumes of data. This process yielded in-depth, relevant answers to the research questions (Marks & Yardley, 2004).

By grouping each individual response, consistent with each interview question, I was able to identify and establish the codes emerging from the participants' views and descriptions of their experience of massification. For example, many participants emphasised the following issues: over-enrolment, overcrowding, NSFAS, the enrolment process, student type, management type, and union. These codes were applied or linked to the data, collectively, as summary markers for analysis and discussion. Furthermore, I was able to recognise the recurrence and frequency of codes or phenomena that individual participants drew attention to (Alhojailan, 2012). For example, some participants showed a pattern in their responses to various questions. One participant referred to 'management' in almost all her responses, commenting on the management style, inefficiency or attitude. Another displayed a similar pattern with other codes, such as NSFAS. Because this participant felt that, massification and its causes and consequences resulted from the government financial aid scheme, she constantly made reference to NSFAS in her responses to various questions. This enabled me to gain insight into the participants' predominant views and experiences of massification. Thematic analysis revealed the various, structured themes that emerged from the data, such as: (i) over-enrolment and overcrowding of classrooms, resulting in huge diversity in students' age, education levels, and competency levels; (ii) student financial aid, NSFAS and its impact on students' motive for enrolling at a TVET

College; (iii) the enrolment process and procedures, resulting in student type, competency levels and disciplinary issues; (iv) a lack of resources; (v) management style and efficiency; and (vi) unions that present different ideologies. By arranging the data thematically, I was able to consolidate multiple sets of data, with each research question carefully discussed in relation to the relevant themes pertinent to the question, and ultimately answer these questions. Based on the lecturers' views, descriptions, and explanations and working with themes, I was able to seek and present similarities and differences between the participants' perspectives, provide logical discussion and inferences, and identify how the study contributed to the theoretical frame of reference, namely, social identity theory (Blacker, 2009).

Limitations of qualitative research

The process followed was time-consuming, and at times emotionally and mentally draining. Setting up interviews was a frustrating task, because participants were not always available. They often cancelled or postponed appointments without proper notification. During the interviews, certain important issues were overlooked or withheld by some participants due to fear of placing particular information on record (Choy, 2014). Transcribing the data verbatim also proved to be a stressful undertaking for various reasons, such as dealing with large volumes of data and the fact that it was difficult to understand certain terms and expressions due to people's accent, the speed at which participants spoke, and their choice of words as English is not the first language for the majority of participants. Hence, transcribing verbatim was time consuming and arduous. Data collection was at times disappointing, particularly when the desired result was not achieved. Furthermore, in order to ensure truthful representation of the participants' accounts, the data had to be accurately interpreted. This called for copious amounts of time, accuracy and perfectionism. Hence, interpretation and consolidation of large amounts of data proved to be a complex process (Anderson, 2010).

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant authorities at the university, and permission was granted by the rector of the institution to conduct research at the TVET

college. The ethical issues taken into account included consent and confidentiality, and truthful representation of participants' information. Each participant freely consented to participate in the interviews, and willingly shared their knowledge and information, without being coerced or unfairly pressurised before or during the interviews (Bricki & Green, 2007). Participants were fully informed of the study's objectives and assured that their participation and responses would be treated as confidential, and used only for the purpose of this study (Langkos, 2014). Furthermore, the identity of all participants was and will continue to be protected at all times. Although I am able to identify the participants from the information given, I will not make the connection known publicly; the boundaries surrounding the shared information will be protected (Cohen et al., 2007). I have also taken the responsibility of making sure that I represent the participants, who are also my colleagues, in an ethical and just manner. In other words, the data presentation and analysis and discussion of the results is unbiased, unaltered and truthful.

Conclusion

The qualitative methodology employed enabled me to explore and gain in-depth understanding of the convolutions and density of lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group (Williams, 2007). By adopting this approach, and guided by the interpretive and critical theory paradigms, I was able to fine-tune any pre-conceived notions of the topic, extrapolate the thought processes of the participants, and analyse and understand their experience of massification from an in-depth perspective. This was achieved by conducting personal, semi-structured interviews with various participants that were purposively selected (Jamshed, 2014). Employing social identity theory as a frame of reference enabled me to succinctly understand lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group, and the various identities they adopt, while being members of particular social groups. Hence, I was able to understand how these social groups influence lecturers' experience of massification, in their context.

The following chapter presents the study's results in the form of a discussion, with each research question discussed in line with the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology, including the data collection technique, sampling procedures, and data analysis. This chapter presents and interprets the data produced from the ten participants. Six themes emerged from the data analysis process. For each of the research questions that guided the study, the themes that answered the question are presented.

The following themes emerged from data analysis:

Theme one: Over-enrolment and overcrowding of classrooms, including classroom diversity in terms of wide age differences and students' divergent education and competency levels.

Theme two: Student financial aid, namely, NSFAS and its impact on students' motive for enrolling at a TVET college, including protests and strike action.

Theme three: The enrolment process and procedures and enrolment criteria for admission of students to the college, student type, competency levels and disciplinary issues.

Theme four: Lack of resources in terms of over-enrolment of students at the institution.

Theme five: Management style and efficiency of the TVET college.

Theme six: Unions (different ideologies presented by different unions).

Findings and discussion

Research question one:

How do TVET college lecturers as a social group understand massification in higher education in their context?

Theme one: Over-enrolment and overcrowding of classrooms, resulting in huge diversity in terms of wide age differences and students' divergent education and competency levels.

Regardless of their post level, faculty or years of service at TVET level, all the participants shared related viewpoints in their understanding of the concept of massification. They predominantly described it as over-enrolment beyond the capacity of the institution and over-crowding in classrooms, due to the high demand for skills and knowledge. One participant stated:

My understanding of the term massification is that, it is the over enrolment. By over enrolment I mean enrolling beyond the capacity of our classes. If I remember, the little knowledge that I have, the PAM document says 1:30, meaning 30 students per 1 lecturer. So you'll find that in most of our class lists, we get like 35, 38, and that causes a lot of challenges, especially in our small classrooms. (L3, Lecturer, participant 3)

Another said:

Massification is when the college has high numbers of students, exceeding the projected numbers. In a nutshell I would say it's an over enrolment due to the demand of education. In this community that we live in, you find a high number of students who want to enrol, so as a result we end up having massification, whereby there is a large number of students who are interested in doing courses in NCV and NATED. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

Concurring with the above views, a participant commented:

In my understanding, massification is whereby we are enrolling more students, more than the numbers that we are able to handle in terms of our resources and the capacity that we have in terms of our infrastructure. So massification for me is just an open period whereby we are saying..., we are enrolling all the students. Everyone that is being able to attend. So, those are the people that we are giving an opportunity to, who have never been to tertiary, those who don't have a place to study. So that is my understanding in terms of massification. (H1, HOD, participant 8)

Another participant touched on some of the challenges of massification as well as diversity within a class:

I basically have a very broad understanding and interpretation of massification, in the sense that, for one, we as lecturers, we now have large numbers of students in class, going up sometimes to 42, 43, where previously we would work with 25 to 26 learners. So massification I think is trying to give opportunity to all different learners from different sectors an opportunity to gain formal education. But also there has been

a lot of challenges that I have experienced, due to what we call massification. For example, coming from a school to a TVET where colleges are involved in massification, the challenges that we have with administrative work, with carrying out our duties, learner performance, teacher/learner interaction in the class, has come to a point whereby, massification has actually given us a whole new perspective to work with and to be in a position to educate learners. Unlike previously where, if you took for example a Grade 10 learner, you would expect the age group to be between 15 and 17, not older than that, but with massification, because it works with learners that are choosing to take a specific field of study, age is not considered, social background is not considered. So therefore, you actually sit with a variety of learners in a class. I use the word variety because not all learners are on the same level, with regard to age, with regard to their academic record and with regard to their understanding of the content matter. So massification is good in the sense that learners are given an opportunity for formal education, but with that, it has come with a lot of challenges that we are faced with, be it in the classroom or be it with managing our administrative work and our preparation of content distribution to learners. (L1, senior lecturer, Participant 1)

From a different perspective, one academic argued that information from the Minister of Education points to a huge influx of students at TVET colleges:

My understanding of the term massification; I think comes from the statement that the Minister once made, stating that the students must go to TVET colleges in large numbers. So I understand that the term massification is whereby the students are coming in large numbers, looking for spaces and courses that they can further their studies in. (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

Another participant associated her understanding of massification with the undesirable stigma attached to TVET as institutions where learning is effortless and less demanding than high school. Therefore, the majority of students who are not coping in high school are encouraged to enrol in TVET:

Some of the parents don't even understand that students still have to finish high school. So they think that when a child reaches Grade 9, they have to go to a TVET college so that they can just merely get a job. I feel that even some of the teachers at schools, if they see that they cannot cope with some learners, they just convince the learners 'go to TVET college because now you cannot cope with high school syllabi'. I feel that we are treated like a 'special' school, but

we are not. So that is why we have so many students that are flocking in, coming from high schools, after doing Grade 9, because they feel that when they come to a TVET college, it's a 'special' school, it deals with practicals only. However, we have a considerable amount of work that is theory. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Theme two: Student financial aid, namely, NSFAS, and its impact on students' motive for enrolling at a TVET college.

Even though participants' concept of massification leans more on over enrolment, they also point to a deeper perception of the causes of massification, one of which is the student financial aid, namely, NSFAS. They claimed it is a key cause of massification, as students enrol at TVET colleges because they are motivated by money, like mentioned above, page 3, that the type of students enrolled have 'diverse intentions'. Likewise, participants upheld the notion that most students are not at college for learning purposes and subsequently achieve a qualification, but are there merely to profit from the NSFAS scheme. Furthermore, once they receive funding for a particular period of time, they are no longer attentive to their studies, resulting in a significant increase in failure and dropout rates:

Especially with the issue of NSFAS, some of the students are not here for studying. They know that they will receive cash from NSFAS, that is why they are here. They are not 'all' here to study. They come here because they are motivated by the money that they will receive. You will find that during the first trimester, they will give their full commitment. After they've received this money, that is when absenteeism is on the rise. So it presents us with a challenge, as they come in numbers to register because they know that they will receive money. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

Another participant explained:

Why do I say the dropout rate is very high? I know specifically in the NCV programs the learners are only enrolling because they are motivated by the NSFAS funds. Once the money keeps coming in, then you start seeing a lot of what, 'of the dropouts'. So this over-enrolment is also motivated by the element of money. They [students] got this 'thing' that I am going to be in the college, I will register, then I will get paid, like a monthly salary as well. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

A participant commented that, student protests and strike action are also driven by the issue of funding:

The other part about funding for learners is that, as our institute is based with NSFAS learners, but this funding has taken another turn, where learners assume that because they are enrolled at the college, they will obtain funds. When they do not get these funds, then it turns out ... they have mass protests, strike actions, they stay away from classes and they tend to neglect their studies. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

In summary, to answer research question one, the participants understood massification as over-enrolment of learners within the institution and overcrowding of classrooms. It is enrolment beyond organisational resources and infrastructural capacity. The findings also show that they associated massification with various causes and consequences. For instance, they felt that students are enticed by the benefits of financial aid. Furthermore, academically weak high school students are influenced to quit school and enrol at TVET colleges. Finally, there are misconceptions that TVET is an easier route to acquire a qualification. Hence, each year there is a huge influx of individuals in search of tertiary education, including those who have not previously had the opportunity to do so, high school learners that have not made good progress and/or individuals who are motivated by the promise of funding.

Research question two:

How do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience student massification in their work context?

Theme three: The enrolment process and procedures and enrolment criteria for admission of students to the college, student type, competency levels and disciplinary issues.

Yet another prime cause of massification as attested by the participants, is the enrolment process. They tendered, the inferior and shoddy enrolment practice and procedures, accompanied by the minimal admission benchmarks applied are accountable for institutional massification, and subsequently students' poor academic performance. Data revealed that based on the latter, lecturers are not reacting amicably to

massification and one of the causes for their negative approach is the nature of the students admitted to the institution. The participants however did note that, massification is a means of responding to society's needs, namely, granting countless an opportunity to gain formal education, as mentioned on pages 2-3, ... 'opening up of access to higher education to afford every member of a society the same latitude to education' (Mpu & Adu, 2019). On the other hand, participants articulated their dissatisfaction with the consequences of teaching academically impoverished students:

It seems as if the calibre of students has totally taken a nose dive. The calibre of students that we have at the moment is very, very poor, not in economic terms but in academic terms. (L5, lecturer, participant 5)

Another participant felt that the low pass requirements at basic education level mean that students are academically under-prepared:

We get a person who's obtained a 30% pass; passed with 30%, we take them and allow them to study in the institution of higher learning. Do you think these students are adequately academically prepared for higher education? (L5, lecturer, participant 5).

The participant quoted below placed emphasis on the enrolment criteria and process:

The one thing that I would really like to change, if I had the power would be the calibre of learners that we take in. I am not saying that some learners are better than the others, I would be wrong to say that, I would say; 'how we enrol learners', the criteria that we have. Although there is massification, although we need to educate as many learners as possible, we should be able to guide the learner according to what we think the learner will be good at. We should be able to help the learner to choose specific interests that we have and guide them in such fields. A common practice currently is where a faculty gets full according to popularity and thereafter other faculties are filled in by learners that are not even interested in that. So, I would like to change that and work according to the learners' interest in developing the learners themselves. Not putting them into a course that we see they need to study. So when it comes to the selection and enrolment, that must be very, very stringently done, so that you know at the end of a course you have a genuine product from a learner that has absorbed as much as he is required. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

Other participants also argued that, due to the poor enrolment process, particularly improper screening and selection, and the minimal enrolment criteria, the college has

quantity but lacks quality. Furthermore, students are inappropriately placed in courses, which is a recipe for disaster for the institution as a whole. One participant expressed the following views:

Without proper screening and selection, students are enrolled in courses of which they find themselves not coping, so during the year many dropout and/or fail. This is affecting the institute's pass rates as well as throughput rates and thus also giving TVET a poor reputation. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

A lecturer articulated that:

The reason we have high failure rates, is because we just keep on enrolling learners. But at the end of the day we don't get the quality out of our students. So the problem that we [are] having is that, we having more quantity and less quality. It's like input is too much but the output does not speak to the input that we have. (L3, Lecturer, participant 3)

Another lecturer argued that, the poor pass rate is reflected back onto the lecturer, without careful consideration of the causes:

I think it's quite obvious, the effects are a disadvantage to us [lecturers] because at the end of the day, it rolls back to you [lecturer]. You are viewed as incompetent because of the calibre of students that you have. When the students fail, you are also viewed as incompetent because one; the question is, 'why are your students failing?' It's never about the students, it's always about the lecturer. (L5, lecturer, participant 5)

Concurring with these views, a participant argued that, the results of the Cap Test, a component of the enrolment process, are not significantly considered, or are not taken into account at all for admission purposes, and the college enrolls students that are not competent to handle tertiary education:

Cap Test is supposed to weigh whether a student qualifies to be here or not, but according to me the Cap Test does not work for us. The reason why I am saying that, is because we have students in class that I feel have stopped schooling at Grade 5. It is evident in the competency levels as well as their communication abilities. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Other concerns raised included behavioural disciplinary issues, and health and safety within the college and the classrooms. For instance, a participant explained that, due to the large class sizes, control is a challenge:

Let's start with how massification can affect my roles in the classroom. Number one, when you are in a classroom, I'm expecting 30 learners, but if I've got a group of learners that are like 39 or 40; one, it becomes chaos to teach such learners. Also the issue of health and safety, our classes do not have enough ventilation, on summer days it is too hot, you cannot conduct proper learning at that particular time. Furthermore, it is difficult to discipline a large number of learners within a classroom. Because at the end of the day as a lecturer or as a teacher, we must control the behaviour of the learners in the classroom and ensure that there is proper participation. But if there is a large group of learners, it becomes a problem. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

Another academic concurred:

Yes, they [students] are not adapting, and you as a lecturer are so limited, you cannot discipline them in any way. So now that causes a lot of problems for us as lecturers. Government or the Higher Education Department, they make so many policies that are hard to implement. Hence, it affects us as lecturers. It affects the way we [are] supposed to deliver the content to students, because you have these huge numbers of students that are frenzied, making noise and doing whatever they please, and you cannot discipline them. Still you have to teach them, while there are so many in class, that are ill-disciplined and disruptive. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

A fellow participant expressed frank views on this issue:

Discipline is non-existent, there is total lack of discipline in this institution. I'll give you an example. When you walk around this institution, the students are smoking dagga, can you imagine that? Also, how will we know if they are not smoking something other than dagga? According to me, a person smoking dagga is not in their right frame of mind, so can you expect that person to come to class, if at all they do, and pay attention, be attentive in class? (L5, lecturer, participant 5)

With respect to student type, a participant stated that, the type of learners and the diversity within a single class hamper teaching and learning:

For me personally with the influx of students coming in here has a very big impact on me where we've had to make ourselves cope with the situation; whereby we have to implement different teaching strategies, we have to now understand learners from various perspectives, understand the different backgrounds that they are coming from. So it is a situation where we have to now cope psychologically for ourselves. We have to adapt our self to learners so that we

are able to interact with various age groups and competency levels within a ... class. At the same time with the class periods that we have which is 55 minutes each, we have ... different learners with different intellects, different pace of learning, so it's actually very difficult to cope with this. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

From a management perspective, the participants stated that, while they are making every effort to cope with massification, several impediments stonewall them:

In the meantime, we are just handling it and coping with it in the ways that we can. But we are not doing justice in terms of quality education that we are delivering to the students. When we say that we are coping with the influx; we are coping because we go out of our way to make sure that students get teaching and learning in time and also we use whatever resources that we have in order to make sure that we integrate theory into practice but ... we need more ... resources and infrastructure to be able to cope with the number of students. Even human resources as well, not only physical resources, because the number of students that are being handled by each lecturer, they are more than enough. They are unable to handle one-on-one in terms of their students in teaching and learning and delivering ... their syllabi. (H1, HOD, participant 8).

Another HOD commented:

We are trying. I can say that we are trying. But if you take a look at the end results ... which is our output, it is not good at all. Because of the number of learners that we have within the college and each one and/or group has their own grievances, results in the college experiencing an enormous amount of strike actions by the students, whereby they are demanding various items from the government. This situation now ends up being a burden to us [management]. As a result, as HODs, our time is consumed in trying to minimise these strikes and student problems. But, as a college we are trying. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

One academic reflected on the impact of strike action on lecturers' functions and duties:

I will make an example of a lecturer being charged for submitting marks later than required. Without the supervisor asking what was the reason, why the lecturer had to submit late; for instance, in this term we had so many strikes so we couldn't finish the syllabus in time and yet the due date for submitting of marks has already passed. So obviously the lecturers will submit late. They will not meet the deadline. So the supervisors put more pressure on the staff, not taking into account or consideration that there are other matters that

resulted in them not finishing their work in time; like the strikes. So in those cases we intervene as well to say, ‘the lecturer was not supposed to be charged’, maybe the proper channels were supposed to be followed, to say, ‘when is the person going to be ready to submit?’ (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

Theme four: Lack of resources in terms of over-enrolment of students at the institution

The study’s results show that, among others, a significant consequence of massification is the dearth and depletion of resources. Again participants expressed, it is a component of massification, hindering them from performing their duties and functions in a proficient manner. For example, one participant expounded her concerns in terms of TVET being vocational:

Massification has to be reviewed. You would find that the learning resources are very, very insufficient. Because TVET is vocational, they [students] are expected to be prepared for a working world as we call it, but at the level of teaching, you would find that very many times there are limited resources available. Let me take an example of learners doing Hospitality. Hospitality industry requires learners to be able to practically prepare dishes, prepare a venue and stuff like that. But in a year of a level, learners are only given two or three practical application tasks and which may not cover all the necessary practical applications as required by the syllabus. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

Another participant commented:

At times resources are not enough, it affects my duties as a lecturer. Let’s say for example there is not enough printing paper for me to print question papers for my students, that affects my function as a lecturer, because those students must revise. We want to perform our duties, but the unavailability of resources makes functioning a challenge. We don’t have enough paper, the machine is sometimes out of order, but we want to run assessments and resources are not available. So it becomes a problem. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

A significant aspect in terms of resources that participants noted was the lack of computers and computer laboratories. They claimed that, overcrowding in computer

rooms disadvantages students, as not all of them would have direct access to a computer:

The challenge is, there is not enough money to fund all these students. It seems that financial resources are not enough to accommodate the high volume of students that we are having. Also we are having a challenge when it comes to operational resources. You find that as we have over-enrolled, our classes are only able to accommodate 30 students and it's worse with the computer venues. It is supposed to be, each computer each student, they cannot share a computer. So when we have over-enrolled, it becomes problematic because they cannot all be accommodated. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

Another lecturer shared similar views:

Most of the challenges that I've noticed are due to the influx of students. We do not have enough resources. For instance, if I can make an example; we always complain about the number of computers that we have in the computer labs. In a class we've got 30 computers, but you find that we've got 38 to 40 learners in class; which leaves many learners not having access to computers. (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

One participant argued that, massification was 'forced' on academics and expressed his frustration with the lack of resources:

In a way I feel that this is being pushed onto us, because you will find that the learners are not getting enough funding, the resources are not enough, even the lecturers in computer labs are complaining that there are not enough computers and computer labs. Also the issue of stationery, remember with our NCV students, they receive books. However, there is a shortage of stationery and there is shortage of text books, so that becomes a problem on its own. So we fight for resources that are not even there, and the procurement processes take a long time to process, thus we are unable to assist those learners as well. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

Concurring with these sentiments, an academic remarked:

The classrooms are overcrowded, the resources for teaching and learning, especially when it comes to our NCV programs, we are integrating theory into practice, the resources that we need for students to do practicals are not enough for this. Not enough for the number of students that we have. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

An HOD elaborated that, the lack of resources is further complicated when unions are involved:

It's the lack of funding that has been caused by massification and also it's the resources. Because students are unable to fit into one room for practicals, the unions will also stand in defense of their members as well to say that, 'our members cannot do practicals in this environment, the resources are not enough'. Those are the things that ... affect us as managers or HODs in terms of teaching and learning. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

Another HOD commented:

To function properly, it means that we must have enough infrastructure and we must have enough resources. So, that also impacts on our duties that we are supposed to perform, because we don't have enough infrastructure. The lecturers normally come back to us, requesting our assistance, but we are unable to assist because we don't have enough classrooms for the learners, we don't have enough chairs, we don't have enough desks for the learners. It's a major problem for the institute as a whole. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

In response to research question two, the participants' statements point to a range of challenges that arise from massification. They attributed their negative emotional state and lack of enthusiasm towards their jobs to over-enrolment and minimal admission criteria for enrolling students who they claim, are not adequately prepared for TVET education and training. The huge diversity within a class in terms of age differences, competency levels and educational background, have made teaching and learning a complex and arduous task. Behavioural disciplinary issues and the academics' perceived lack of control further undermine their self-esteem and professional identity. Attempts to keep up with their administrative duties that have doubled, and efforts to re-adapt and re-adjust their interaction with the students, and their teaching strategies, have added to their tension and lack of motivation. Compounding these issues is the dearth of resources that hampers them from performing their functions and duties. Therefore, lecturers respond to massification with a sense of disdain and resistance.

Research question three:

In what ways do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience managing/leading within a unionised and massified student context?

Theme five: Management style and efficiency of the TVET college

The participants noted that massification has inadvertently brought about disorganisation and ineptitude within the management and leadership style in the institute. They avouched lack of support from management in terms of teaching and learning, claiming that, management does not exhibit empathy in understanding the effects that massification have had on academics. For example, one participant said:

Why am I saying that we are not coping; the management is not even coming up with means to assist us to overcome this situation that we are having. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

A senior lecturer concurred:

The most important thing that we must receive is support from management or upper levels of supervisory positions. However, we as level one lecturers are challenged for support from our management teams, we are challenged to get resources. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

Another lecturer stated:

Yes, I am frustrated. It is frustrating because you have to deal with things such as incompetent learners, ill-disciplined learners, absenteeism, strikes and so forth, but then management will still persist on receiving assessment marks. They don't even come to class to see what's going on there, they don't. If you have a register that has 58 learners, its either you take it or you leave. That is what they [management] say. (L7, lecturer, participant, 7)

While not countering the above claims, but in support of the management team, and to justify management's experience of massification, an HOD postulated that, their duties and functions are at times stonewalled:

Because of massification, there is always interference from unions with management styles. Also having two different programs within the establishment has a huge influence and impact on the operations of the campus or of the college, because we have to accommodate Report 191 lecturers and

we also have to accommodate NCV lecturers. In other words, what I am trying to say is that, massification influences our management styles and efficiency. For instance, we have a great number of students in NCV and a large number of students as well in Report 191. Hence, our staff population is huge and diverse. Adding to that we have various union affiliations. So these aspects affect and influence our functions as HODs, because, we have to now manage people [lecturers] who are coming from different unions, different levels of understanding, different levels of education and different levels of backgrounds as well. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

Speaking about student numbers, another HOD remarked:

Because of the number of students enrolled based on NSFAS, we end up having numerous strikes during the course of the year, whereby learners are demanding payment and various other conditions from the government, of which now ends up leaving us, management with a burden to assist these learners. As HODs, we have to now assist in trying to minimise student strikes and protests, as well as try to minimise all their conflicts and grievances. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

Lecturing staff also raised concerns regarding a lack of management skills and knowledge. Some felt that high enrolment figures, overcrowding, and the problems lecturers experience are due to inefficient management and added that appropriate staff should be appointed to management positions:

There wouldn't be massification in the first place if our management team is proactive. If our management was proactive and they plan strategically, they should be able to plan ahead. (L5, lecturer, participant 5)

One participant claimed that a considerable amount of teaching time is wasted due to management and administrative inefficiency:

My duties are affected, because at the beginning of the year, when we are supposed to start with classes, but our administration department and management team takes up a lot of our tuition time, while trying to figure out how to run the system that they use to generate class lists. That consumes a lot of time for teaching and learning. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Another participant added:

Most of the lecturers, it appears are having more education than our managers. So, if the requirements of a rector for example, says, you need a Diploma in Education, for me that

is not sufficient, because it means that, that person already does not have management skills, to be able to manage the college as a whole. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

Other participants also noted that members of the management team lack the necessary academic qualifications and training to lead the establishment:

I believe that for one to be a manager, one has to have managerial skills and besides managerial skills, one has to be trained as well. Through my observation, some of the managers, they lack managerial skills, and information. So if I had to change one thing, I would definitely change our management. (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

A lecturer commented:

Because of the system, if you recruit someone that does not qualify for a position, then they would not know what to do and furthermore they would not know how to handle situations of massification. They wouldn't, because firstly they don't qualify to be in a leadership and/or management position. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Theme six: Unions (different ideologies presented by different unions)

The results show that, among other consequences of massification, as discussed in this chapter, there is a rise in union and SRC involvement in the operations of the institute. What's more, data pointed to unions and the SRC also influencing massification and hence, additional consequences to a certain extent. Strong lines of division appear to be drawn between members of different unions. Participants argued, when unions with different ideologies and belief systems operate in the same environment, this is detrimental to staff working relations, teaching and learning, as well as leadership style and efforts to manage the institution effectively. One participant stated:

For me massification has to some extent been very, very negative because I'm answerable to management, but the number of union meetings that you have to attend has increased. Teaching time is taken away, where you have to attend these meetings as an employee and member. You have to then also be aware that there are ... student bodies that are affiliated with unions and political parties, where they also call up student mass meetings. So your teaching time is regularly disrupted. (L1, senior lecturer, participant, L1)

Another participant commented:

Talking about the union affiliations; to be the 'ruling' union, there has to be a large number of members. So that also has an impact on how the institution is operating. They [the union] will make sure, because they are the ruling union at the college, they will hire [lecturers] as much as they can. That also leads to massification because as we have more lecturers, it necessitates more students. So in order to accommodate these lecturers, we end up over-enrolling students because we cannot be letting these lecturers go. Hence, in order to accommodate them, it is said, 'let us over-enrol' and thus, that also leads to massification. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

One participant stated openly that:

At the beginning of the year, we have so many students that want to enrol. So, after enrolment when our class lists are full and the college is no longer taking any more students, but [we] still have these huge number of students that have no space; now that is when these unions and what not come in; they make a huge destruction, because they are now forcing that the college take these students. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

To support the argument made in the previous excerpt that, 'student bodies are affiliated with unions', this participant stated:

It's both the unions and the SRC, because the SRC students affiliate in trade unions and political parties, where they draw their power from. So having acquired some authority, they are able to dictate to the college [management and lecturers] what to do. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Like political parties, unions seek to dominate, creating animosity among employees, with negative effects on working relations. Hence, colleagues may not share the same sentiments and views regarding their experience of massification, simply because they belong to a particular union and would therefore follow its ideologies. For example, one participant commented:

Maybe some might, some may not. The challenge starts where we have many different unions. Massification, it might not work for others, or work for others, but for me, I will say it is really not working. Massification is really affecting the TVET colleges. For those who are benefitting they will say it is not a challenge, but it will soon come to a challenge when the PPM [Private Placement Memorandum] will be implemented. The PPM is also determined by massification. So those lecturers who will be affected, where they stand to possibly lose their jobs, or for some, not have their contracts

renewed, they will be supporting massification. But for those who are not affected, they will say, massification should be non-existent. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

Another lecturer concurred that lecturers that belong to different unions may not share similar sentiments about their experience of massification:

I think as I have said earlier on, mostly some of my colleagues, they 'play the man, instead of the ball'. So I doubt if they would support all of what I have said regarding our challenges of massification. Some may support some of my claims and beliefs while others may not, because we are affiliated to different unions, which have their own beliefs and agendas. So I doubt that my colleagues will support everything that I say and my views of massification. (L4, lecturer, participant 4)

A lecturer commented on the effect this situation has on working relations:

When it comes to the current situation, lecturers associating with dissimilar unions, the unions are politically affiliated with varying beliefs and ideologies and each union wants to dominate the sector. Even in politics that's how it is. In the context of the institution, every union wants to be dominant So that affects the relations between the staff members. It also affects the relations ... between members of staff in the same department affiliating with different unions. ... When relations are not conducive among staff members, the working environment is tense and not conducive, creating demotivated staff. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

Elaborating on this argument, the participant added:

We have post level 1 lecturers who are affiliated to a specific union and we have a senior lecturer associated to another. Technically these members of staff are oppositions. In their duties they are now oppositions, because of the political ideologies each union has. This has an impact on their working relationship, even in their personal relationship. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

One lecturer argued that because each union has its own principles and policies, the Department prefers one union within a sector:

[The] department is saying that there must be one sector, one union, but we do not have such. There are various unions, each with their own agenda and policies of how they do things. So it depends on the person that is being employed; what do they want and what does the union, or how does the union fight for those people. So the more people that come into the college, the more they demand for a certain union.

For instance, we had a situation whereby one of the unions was claiming that all posts 'belong' to them. That is presenting us with a problem [as] ... it does not promote good quality learning, because it's like now posts are being offered and/or given to people who belong to a certain union. So that as well creates a negative way of looking at the unions. (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

Different union affiliations within the institution also have a significant effect on management functions and decision making, affecting teaching and learning and the overall management of the college. An HOD remarked:

When it comes to unions, because lecturers come from different unions, you'll find that union A will demand something else and union B will be demanding something else from us. And you will find that you have a group of lecturers who want to follow instructions, do what is supposed to be done and the other group does not follow the instructions because they've been given information by the union to say that, 'do not follow this, we will fight for you, you cannot do it'. So, you've got in your division, half of your subordinates will do what is supposed or expected to be done but half of them will not. So you end up saying; 'I will use members from union B because they are cooperative, they do what is supposed to be done', then union A, I will say, 'don't even bother because that one won't do it'. So this type of situation is affecting our duties and our working relationships as well. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

Another HOD commented on the authoritative power of the unions:

In as much as it's our right to have our unions, but the unions should not have more power than management, because you find that in our institution, the unions have more power than management, ... which ... causes more problems when it comes to functioning and decision making. It's very difficult for management to manage people, because people say; 'my union said I should not do this', or 'my union said I must do this'. Hence, these type of situations are constantly a hindrance to operations and decision making. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

A lecturer stated that, unions focus on debating and disagreeing with each other, including management, instead of placing emphasis on decisions that will steer the institution forward. They inflate the challenges of massification by interfering with management decisions:

The number of unions is not a problem, but it's how the unions behave in terms of dealing with the challenges that are

put before us. You see, if as unions we would ‘play the ball and not play the man’, our working lives will be much easier, because when the problems are before us..., to say, this is the challenge, let us deal with the challenge, irrespective of who or where a solution is coming from. We should just embrace it and appreciate the fact that it will move the institution forward, rather than looking at, how does this benefit my union? (L4, lecturer, participant 4)

Therefore, in response to research question three, lecturers’ experience of massification not only centers around overcrowded classrooms or lack of resources, but also arises from management issues and union activities and stances. With these two entities always in conflict, lecturers’ overall experience of massification is worsened. Given different union affiliations amongst staff members, including members of the management team, there are divisions amongst the staff. There seems to be more focus on union power, than agreeing on resolutions to respond to the challenges confronting lecturers as a result of massification. The situation is thus complex due to the on-going struggle for power between unions, and unions and management. The data also reveals that ineffective management results in a lack of efficient planning and poor decision making. Staff conflicts and grievances are likely to continue and even escalate due to poor management. Given that TVET is currently the focal point for providing skills to society, teaching and learning will remain centered around massification. Judging from the data presented above, lecturers’ experience of massification is not casual or occasional, but rather a daily occurrence, and as their challenges and grievances mount, resolution is less likely. This situation has a negative emotional effect on lecturers and undermines their professional self-image.

Research question four:

What do TVET college lecturers as a social group propose and recommend as solutions to deal with the challenges of massification in higher education in their context?

Theme two: Review of student funding strategy

The participants offered recommendations and suggestions regarding the government policy on student funding. These included the proposal that the government urgently review its policies and procedures, and that funds should only be provided for tuition. Furthermore, participants felt that funds should be allocated according to strict criteria. For instance, a student could be required to successfully complete a whole level in order to receive funds. According to the participants, this would help to draw the line between the students that are serious about obtaining a qualification, and those that are motivated by monetary gain. One participant stated:

When it comes to funding, students are misusing NSFAS. I think funding should be strictly based on the tuition fees, as it was before. Yes, there are students who are really in need of these funds, but let this be reviewed and ensure that these students really need it and [are] not misusing these funds. Since they come with the idea that, 'once I will receive this money then I will leave', it is compromising the quality of education as well as the reputation of TVET. As the numbers drop and many fail, our stats just drop as well. This also severely affects our throughput rate. So government has to urgently review the issuing of NSFAS to students. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

Concurring with these views, another participant offered the following suggestions:

One of the policies that I feel should be introduced, if not implemented, is where funding must be given to learners based on a set of criteria which a learner must meet in order to qualify for financial aid. A learner should have to completely pass one level then be able to receive monetary funding for that, and as the learner progresses, that's how the money should be allocated. This will prevent a lot of strike actions and mass protesting from learners that we currently experience every so often. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

Another lecturer commented:

Government needs to critically review the policies that they are currently utilising for issuing students with financial aid, because the main reason why learners are supposed to enrol at TVET, is to acquire an education and/or qualification. However, if they are receiving free money for accommodation, free money for meals, free money for textbooks, free money for tuition, it's highly problematic on its own, because, according to me, the government does not even have enough capital to cater for all those things. So maybe government should focus on tuition only. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

Theme three: Review of enrolment processes and procedures including enrolment criteria for admittance of students to the institution

Various recommendations and suggestions were made with regard to adjusting the enrolment process and the enrolment criteria, in order to improve its efficiency, and thus admit better-prepared students. For instance, various participants pointed to the need to improve the screening and selection process, conduct pre-interviews and introduce a points system, whereby learners are scored against their pass mark at high school. They maintained that this would improve class grouping and place students in appropriate courses, according to their interests and competency levels. A points system would also enable the college to admit academically better-prepared students:

One of the recommendations, is that, when it comes to grouping, there is a screening process in place. That screening process that we use during enrolment, must be very strictly adhered to. When screening is done and the grouping is done accordingly, then teaching becomes easier; simply because you have a group of learners that have a common interest, they share a common general knowledge, they share a common social background with regard to their age, so they can relate to each other. So grouping should be very, very importantly taken into consideration; how learners are grouped for the specific classroom. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

An HOD stated:

The selection processes that we are using at TVET colleges needs to be re-addressed. Re-addressed, for both individuals who have not completed high school for the NCV sector and those who have matriculated for the NATED sector. We should have a points system in place, whereby, students are selected based on the points they have scored. Also consider doing aptitude tests and pre-interviews. All those things are very important. (H1, HOD, participant 9)

Elaborating on the points system, she argued:

Without proper screening and selection, students are enrolled in courses which they cannot cope with and during the year many request a change of course, or they dropout and/or fail. This is affecting the institution's pass rates as well as throughput rates, ... thus ... giving TVET a poor reputation. (H1 HOD, participant 9)

Another HOD concurred and added that the DHET needs to thoroughly review admission policies in TVET:

They [DHET] need to review their enrolment criteria policies for TVET. If it can be re-adjusted with a certain set of standards that will guide our admission of students, TVET will also attract a much better calibre of students. This will also help draw the line between learners who are actually keen on studying and those who are not. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

Arguing from a different standpoint, a lecturer maintained that students should be enrolled at TVET colleges within their home area as this would assist in addressing institutional massification:

Students have this idea to go out and study because they want to be on their own. So, for example, students from Vryheid prefer studying at Majuba TVET, instead of going to study at Mtshana; and that is the challenge which results in massification. So that is one of the enrolment policies that the Department has to reconsider and ensure that all students should study around where they are residing. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

Theme five: Improving management approaches and efficiency

The participants also offered recommendations aimed at improving management support for academic staff as well as fostering greater efficiency among the management team. Speaking from various perspectives, they argued for more proactive management, more support for teaching and learning, and the need for management of the college to work in close collaboration with the DHET. It was also suggested that line management at the institution should be reviewed and adjusted and that the two divisions, namely the R191 and NCV sectors, be separated in order to enhance their efficiency. One participant stated:

My recommendation is ... effective management or implementation of an efficient management team, in terms of their knowledge, skills and experience as leaders, as well as effective management of the resources. These must be applied in such a way that it will create a conducive teaching and learning environment and eliminate conflicts amongst lecturers, amongst students, amongst all stakeholders. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

Another lecturer recommended:

In terms of management; they should have regular divisional meetings with staff and plans are to be submitted in advance in order to identify red flags in advance and the control of overall operations should be monitored more closely. (L4, lecturer, participant 4)

Turning to interim measures, an academic suggested:

Governance and leadership needs to relook at their policies, their scope of work, and the resources ... available. These strategies should enable them to plan properly for the next academic year. I am referring to the senior management of the college together with our Department of Higher Education and Training. Also I recommend that in the interim they should supply us with park homes for extra classrooms, and invest more funds [in] ... the resources that are needed to best help in teaching and learning. Furthermore, decrease the number of our line managers, as I have said earlier on that there's a repetition of positions unnecessarily. For instance, having two senior lecturers, while those funds could be utilised for something else that will better the college as well. (L8, lecturer/academic representative, participant 8)

Taking a bird's eye view, a lecturer suggested the separation of the NCV and R191 sectors, into two smaller divisions and/or components of the institution:

NCV and R191 should be two separate divisions within the establishment, in terms of better management control and efficiency. By reducing the number of staff and students, management of a division can be more effective. If you look at other campuses of Majuba TVET as a whole, they are much smaller in terms of student numbers and staff members; that I think in that case, they can be rightfully managed by one campus manager, but for our situation, I think it requires two sets of management. (L3, lecturer, participant 3)

Theme six: Clarification of the role of unions in TVET colleges

Various recommendations and suggestions were forthcoming regarding union involvement at the college. However, the participants' comments were based on their individual experience of massification. This suggests that, all stakeholders should attempt to make massification as pleasant as possible, considering the challenges it raises and that unions should resist 'unionising' everything. One participant stated:

Just for me, massification is actually a very, very good concept in terms of the learners benefitting. But at the same time, it would be important for management, unions, all the stakeholders, is to make massification as pleasant as possible for the educator as well. So massification; it can be a very, very good, as we'll call it, 'invention', if it is implemented in the right way, and everybody adheres to whatever is expected of massification. That I think would be very, very important, because we are in a generation where the people have to become employable rather than educated. (L1, senior lecturer, participant 1)

Another recommended:

College as well as institutional leadership should be more open in terms of taking ideas from lecturers, because in as much as they are PL1s, they have great ideas, as they are the ones implementing the classroom policies. Additionally, union members and/or representatives should refrain from 'unionising' everything. A person getting a job, must be a suitable candidate, who qualifies, not because I'm an ['X'] or ['Y'] union member. Such things need to be fixed, whereby, they [management] recruit candidates, or when they recruit managers, it is strictly by merit. (L2, lecturer, participant 2)

One lecturer called for unions to stop interfering in all the college's operations:

If we can let go of the idea of unions being involved in everything, because they are having considerable impact on the running of the college. If we can run the college without much interference from unions; in as much as we cannot shy away from union associations, because they are there, standing for workers, but, let them not assert their full effort on the operation of the institution. Let them exist where they are needed, not full force even where they should not intervene. (L6, lecturer, participant 6)

An HOD recommended that the DHET should impose some restrictions on unions' power:

Perhaps, if DHET, or let me just say even the government, because this does not only affect the TVET colleges, it affects almost all organisations; if government implements a principle stating that unions must have a 'say' up to a certain level, they cannot go beyond this level, that will be acceptable. But now it's like a freelance to them because they intervene on all levels; teaching and learning, the personal level, the infrastructure of the college, the way the college is being governed and so forth. (H2, HOD, participant 10)

Conclusion

The participants recounted their experiences of student massification of higher education grounded on various means, namely, their individual experiences, their subjective scrutiny of this phenomenon, and on the experiences of co-workers. The results show that massification has given rise to numerous challenges for the TVET college lecturers. These include amongst various others, teaching large classes, managing an augmented administrative workload, and having to deal with academically under-prepared and unproductive students. As a result, they experience ill-discipline in the teaching space, unmotivated and apathetic learners, and high absenteeism. As regards their experience of massification in relation to management style and unions, they pointed to a privation of support from government and college leadership. Massification has carelessly subjected them to an ineptitude management and leadership team. Furthermore, union and SRC involvement in the operations of the institute has risen, thus adding to the consequences of massification. Additionally, on-going student protest actions and strikes also hamper teaching and learning. What's more, in terms of academic and infrastructural operations, there is a dearth of resources. While there is huge demand for skills and training, physical infrastructure, and operational and capital resources are lacking to meet the basic needs of academics on the one hand, and demand for tertiary education, on the other.

In reality, it would appear that massification of higher education is here to stay and is something that academics have to acclimatise to, given South Africa's growing population and the number of learners passing matric and seeking tertiary education. On the other hand, too many learners are either exiting high school after completing Grade 9 successfully, or failing Grades 10, 11, or 12, and thus, pursuing skills and training at TVET level. Massification has the noble aim of providing skills and training to the general public, such as those who are not coping in high school, those who did not have the opportunity to complete secondary education, and the less privileged as well as previously disadvantaged individuals. However, it has had severe consequences, particularly for academics, who now have to adopt multiple roles as educators, while steering the distribution of knowledge.

The submissions made by the participants could mend the situation. These include review and adjustment of TVET policies in terms of: (i) the amount of funding awarded to this sector, (ii) adjusting enrolment policies and principles, and (iii) strategic distribution of NSFAS funds. With regard to the curriculum, it was advised that long syllabi should be avoided and that more practical tasks should be included that prepare the learner for the world of work, which is, after all, the objective of TVET and massification. The current content and teaching methods are not in line with the aim of massification. Other aspects that should be given serious attention are the recovery of historical debt from students, so as to improve the fiscal state of TVET colleges and maybe utilise this money to provide much-needed resources and classrooms. In addition, college administration and the government should deliver more backing to academic staff and the class sizes should be reduced, as the core objective should be to address unemployment and prepare learners for the world of work.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This study explored lecturers' experience of massification, as a social group, at a TVET college. Critical theory and the social interpretive approach, which are participatory and dialogical methods were utilised to enable the participants to give voice to their experiences of massification in their context. The previous chapter presented the study's results in relation to each of the research questions. This chapter summarises the findings, guided by the four research questions. The study drew on the concepts and notions of social identity theory, which comprises four basic principles. Therefore, each research question is discussed in line with a particular tenet, pertinent to the question. This chapter also highlights the implications of the findings, offers suggestions for further research, and discussed the study's contribution to knowledge and to the theoretical framework.

Summary of findings

Research question one:

How do TVET college lecturers as a social group understand student massification in higher education in their context?

***Tenet three:** Individualism of a particular social identity is context-centered. It hinges on the context within which potential social identities are defined at a specific time, which can vary from members in a particular social gathering, to the whole human race (Brewer, 1991, p. 478).*

The study established that, regardless of their post level, faculty or years of service at TVET level, the participants shared related views on their understanding of the concept of massification. The predominant description was over-enrolment beyond the capacity

of the institution and over-crowding in classrooms. Furthermore, they stated that, massification is not only a cause but also a consequence, which is why they associated their understanding of it with several other phenomena such as: (i) Student funding (NSFAS) and its undesirable effect on students' intention to enrol at the college, (ii) enrolment of students and the admission criteria, (iii) the management style and efficiency of the TVET college, (iv) a lack of resources in terms of over-enrolling students; and (v) union affiliations presenting dissimilar ideologies within the institution. The participants also connected their understanding of massification with misrepresentation of information on the part of the DHET, which encourages members of society to attend TVET colleges in large numbers, because they offer opportunities to those who have never attended tertiary institutions, those who do not have a place to study, or those seeking a place to study. Therefore, students are under the impression that, if they successfully complete Grade 9, and/or fail to succeed in higher grades at high school, they can simply attend a TVET college, with the hope of attaining a qualification as rapidly as possible, and subsequently, a job. Hence, the massive demand for spaces and courses at TVET institutions.

The participants also noted that high school teachers encourage learners to leave school and enrol at TVET colleges, particularly if they are not coping in high school. As a result, a larger number of learners flocks to TVET colleges each year, after completing Grade 9, and/or not competently completing Grades 10, 11 or 12. This creates the impression that a TVET college is a 'special' school, comprising of less theory and more practical effort, and is therefore academically more laid-back than high school. It is highly misleading as much of the work in TVET programs is theory based, and theoretical knowledge is part of the practical component.

The participants referred to the Personal Administrative Measures (PAM) document, which is determined by the Minister of Education in terms of the Educators' Employment Act (1998), and the Regulations made in terms of the Act. It stipulates a ratio of one teacher to 30 students. However, they noted that they still receive class lists of up to 50 or more students. Disciplinary action or probable dismissal could result if they do not accept this situation. This was captured by a lecturer who argued:

If you have a register that has 58 learners, its either you take it or you leave it. That is what ‘they’ say. (L7, lecturer, participant 7)

Hence, the findings revealed that, while massification is based on noble intentions, it creates a complex set of challenges for both lecturers and management of TVET colleges, be it managing the institution as a whole, lecturers managing their classrooms and administrative duties, or lecturers managing content delivery to learners. For example, ‘diversification’ is a bone of contention with regard to teaching and learning. While there were previously 25 to 28 students in a class, lecturers are now expected to teach 40 plus students who are not all at the same level with regard to age, their academic record, and their level of competence and ability to understand or grasp the subject matter. While the rationale for this situation is that TVET education provides for students that opt for a specific field of study, when it comes to selection and admission criteria, age, academic background and high school pass rate are not properly considered. This adversely affects classroom groupings, to the detriment of teaching and learning. Lecturers expressed frustration at having to deal with such immense diversity. Their duties have virtually doubled, administrative work has increased and their teaching skills and abilities are constantly under self-review. Overall, massification has forced them to rethink the way they deliver subject content to students, as well as their interactions in the class.

In summary, with respect to research question one and in line with tenet three of the social identity theory, lecturers’ experience of massification has given them a whole new perspective on their understanding of the concept. In the context of the TVET college under study, there is no straightforward understanding of massification. It is understood collectively, as one inclusive social group, based on their experiences of the causes and consequences of massification. Although dissimilar social identities exist amongst lecturers, in other categories such as their roles and functions, which are context specific, their circumstantial experience of massification is correlative and interchangeable. Therefore, inclusively, as a single social group, they share a set of similar assumptions, ideas and viewpoints that constitute their understanding of massification.

Research question two:

How do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience student massification in their work context?

Tenet one: Social identification is immensely strengthened for social groups, or categories at that stage of inclusiveness, which defuses the struggle between needs for distinction of the self, and integration with other (Brewer, 1991, p. 478).

Drawing on this principle, the study's results showed that, lecturers respond to massification as an inclusive social group, but consisting of individual identities within several social group identities. This occurs when individuals are placed in a social dilemma and faced with conflict between protecting themselves, and/or for self-benefit, or for helping to preserve a collective resource.

The data analysis revealed that the participants exhibited overarching feelings of discouragement, and were in conflict with the causes and consequences of massification, which they regarded as a stumbling block to quality teaching and learning. Their concerns pivoted on not being able to produce quality students in their respective fields of study, in terms of industry requirements. Participants noted that this is the result of several other forces that influence their experience of massification and therefore, the manner in which they respond to it. For instance, the results confirm that the TVET college inherits 'academically poor learners' because of the low pass marks required in basic education, namely, 30%. As a result, there is a massive influx of learners into the college, but the calibre of students has declined. The participants argued that the TVET system and college admission criteria sanction students with a 30% pass mark being admitted. While there are some students of good academic quality, the majority struggle to cope. Likewise, the lecturers blamed the calibre of students and overcrowding on NSFAS funding, claiming that students enrol in TVET because they are motivated by monetary gain. Hence, during the first trimester, they give their full attention to their studies, but once they've received cash payments for transport and accommodation, absenteeism and dropout rates increase significantly.

Another issue raised in relation to NSFAS funding was student protest and strike action, which are often triggered by issues relating to funding. Students assume that because they are enrolled in the college, they will obtain NSFAS funding and resort to protest action when this is not the case. They stay away from class and disregard their studies.

Given the low calibre of students and overcrowded classes, the participants raised concerns relating to discipline. One stated some students smoke dagga at the college and that, if such students do attend class, it will be difficult for the lecturer to teach them or expect them to focus. These and other behavioural problems among students that impede teaching and learning cause frustration and a sense of loss of control among teaching staff.

A central issue raised by the participants is that massification has led to a shortage of resources and infrastructure. In TVET, students are expected to be prepared for the world of work and must be familiar with practical applications and industry requirements. However, the colleges do not have sufficient resources to fulfil these requirements. For example, learners doing Hospitality must be able to prepare dishes, prepare a venue and plan a restaurant. But in a year of a level, learners only undertake two to three practical application tasks. Other examples of the lack of resources cited by the participants included a shortage of computers and computer labs, insufficient printing paper and text books and a dearth of stationery for ISAT, a compulsory component of the syllabi of the NCV Program set out by the DHET. These deficits make functioning a challenge. The participants added that, most of their resource related challenges were due to the influx of students. For instance, there were 30 computers in a computer lab, but computer lecturers have 40 plus students in a class; leaving many without direct access to a computer.

The participants thus argued that, despite the altruistic intentions underpinning massification, it is working to students' disadvantage. Teaching 40 to 45, and sometimes even 50 students in a classroom designed to accommodate 25 to 30 students creates chaos and represents a health and safety risk for lecturers and students, as there is insufficient ventilation and air circulation, particularly on hot summer days.

All lecturers are expected to complete the syllabus in the time set by the DHET and the institution, adequately prepare students for the examinations, and conduct the scheduled number of theoretical assessments. Where applicable, this includes several practical assessments. However, the participants noted that the chalk and talk approach does not work in a classroom with students of diverse ages, educational levels, and social and cultural backgrounds. Lecturers thus have to adapt their methods to suit each class grouping. Their duties have expanded in that they have to be a mediator of learning, and in some cases take on the role of parent in order to support students.

The new demands placed on lecturers are time consuming and emotionally draining. Poor quality teaching and learning occurs due to time constraints and poor quality assessments are conducted. Marking assessments is an enormous challenge because of the large number of learners. Assessment results are often delayed and lecturers are sometimes charged for non-compliance, without much consideration of the circumstances. The pass rate is a further issue. The participants stated that, they are expected to produce a 90% pass rate. If their pass rates are low, they are regarded as incompetent and are accountable to management. One participant stated frankly that, 'at no time is it about the student or the circumstances, it is always about the lecturer'.

In summary, these results show that lecturers are forced to cope with the situation by adopting different teaching strategies, and supporting students by understanding learners and their dissimilar backgrounds. As a result, lecturers' response to massification, as a social group, is relative to one another, because their experience is interchangeable.

Therefore, in substantiation of tenet one of the social identity theory, there is no individuation as regards the participants' response to massification. In as much as there is awareness of the distinction, or variation of each one's identity and social grouping, lecturers are at a full level of inclusiveness, because of their interchangeable, contextual experience of massification. That is, even though dissimilar individual, and group social identities exist, centred on lecturers' post levels, different faculties, various union affiliations, and divergent belief systems, in terms of roles and functions as TVET

college teachers, their experience of massification is interchangeable and correlative. Therefore, in as much as they belong to one or more social groups within the college, their experience and involvement in massification is inclusive, as one social group. Hence, the manner in which lecturers respond to massification, as a social group, is essentially similar.

Research question three:

In what ways do TVET college lecturers as a social group experience managing/leading within a unionised and massified student context?

Tenet four: The optimum level of group uniqueness or completeness, is a function of the relative power or incline, of the conflicting efforts, for integration and distinction. For any individual, the comparative strength of the two needs, is dogged by cultural norms, individual socialisation, and latest experience (Brewer, 1991, p. 478).

Essentially, this principle suggests that, the ideal similarity of lecturers' uniqueness or all-inclusiveness, is in relation to the strength or effort between their opposite or contradicting efforts, and their need for integration and adaptation with others. For each lecturer, the virtual strength of their two needs is determined or measured by institutional cultural norms, individual socialisation with other colleagues, and their most recent experiences of massification at the institution.

Based on the data analysis, several factors influence lecturers' experience of massification. For instance, the participants stated that, as the implementers of teaching and learning policies in the classroom, they should receive more support from government and college leadership. As level one lecturers, they do not receive empathetic support from the management teams in dealing with large classes and vast disparities in students' age and educational backgrounds. Instead, pressure is placed on them to comply with assessment requirements and produce good results, while performing administrative functions and duties and ensuring quality teaching and learning.

The study's findings suggest that it is cumbersome for lecturers to report to several levels of management. Furthermore, most members of the management team at the college were 'acting' in their positions and as such, were not keen to be accountable for resolving impediments and conflicts relating to teaching and learning. Members of the management team argued in their defense that they are often stonewalled in performing their duties. They pointed out that planning and organising large volumes of students from both the NCV and R191 sectors, consume much of their time, energy and focus. They added that they are dealing with staff with different levels of understanding, resulting in communication barriers. Furthermore, they have to also contend with individuals affiliated to different unions, and thus, disparate belief systems. Unions represent their members according to their own beliefs and ideologies, causing conflicts and divisions amongst staff. This undermines management judgement and decision making.

The fact that staff belong to different unions with very different ideologies affects working relations as well as teaching and learning. As members of various unions, they do not share similar perceptions and attitudes regarding massification. The findings show that, while some lecturers and members of management may attempt to resolve issues of massification, others may not, since it is working in their favour in terms of job security, because the PPM document is determined by massification. Contract and/or part-time lecturers, whose contracts are not generally renewed, and are employed on a needs only basis, will support massification. Invariably, union representatives insist on retaining certain staff members, but accommodating these lecturers calls for more students. Hence, a larger number of students are enrolled, stretching institutional resources and infrastructural capacity even further.

The results also indicated that each union wants to be the dominant one, negatively affecting relations between members of staff within similar departments, but in different unions. For instance, post level one lecturers may belong to a different union from their immediate senior lecturer and/or HOD. The participants claimed that, technically they are in opposition. In their work related duties and functions, they categorise themselves within social groups that they can identify with, based on their

personal beliefs, as well as that of their union. A typical example cited by one of the participants was that; ‘while union “A” demands one thing, union “B” will demand another. As a result, there is a group of lecturers from union “A”, who are willing to comply with instructions and perform their duties and functions accordingly, while members of union “B” are not agreeable to follow direct instructions, simply because, they have been directed by their union not to do so’. Hence, in a division there will be subordinates who are compliant and function as expected, while others portray an attitude of resistance and/or non-compliance. In such a situation, immediate supervisors have a tendency to lean towards more willing staff members and overlook the dismissive members of the other union, with negative effects on optimal operations of the institution as well as teaching and learning. While it is every employee’s right to join the union of their choice, this scenario exacerbates the challenges of massification by interfering with management decisions. It is not the number of unions that is the problem, but how they deal with challenges facing staff. If, unions would, ‘play the ball and not play the man’, as one participant put it, the operational environment would be much more favorable. The participants argued that, all staff are equally affected by the causes and consequences of massification, and the challenges should therefore be dealt with collectively. Regardless of who or where a solution originates, it should be considered as a potential resolution, with the intention of driving the institution forward, rather than always bearing in mind how the circumstance benefits the union or its status.

The participants also noted that massification has resulted in student protest and strike action. As stated previously, students expect cash payments for transport and accommodation. When they do not receive such payments, or when payment is delayed, they resort to destructive protest action and strikes. This prevents lecturers from covering the work set for a teaching term or teaching period, between the required assessments. Deadlines are not met and they are held responsible.

Based on the data analysis and utilising tenet four of the social identity theory, it can be concluded that, TVET college lecturers experience massification as a single inclusive social group. However, as exclusive individuals, and individuals as part of social groups, they have dual needs. On the one hand is their opposing and contradicting

efforts as individuals within the social group that they identify with, to resolve the challenges of massification, and on the other, their individual and social group needs for assimilation with other social groups, that is, colleagues and management. For each social group, the virtual strength of their two needs is determined by institutional cultural norms, individual socialisation with other colleagues, the strength of union influence and dominance, and their most recent experience of a cause and/or consequence of massification. In other words, staff members' individual social identities are the distinguished self in which those characteristics differentiate one lecturer from the other, differentiate lecturers from management, and differentiate members of one union from the other. Therefore, whether as lecturers, as management, and/or as members of a union, their social identities are simply groupings or placement of the self into more all-encompassing or broader social units, that neutralises the self-image, where 'I' becomes 'we' (Brewer, 1991).

Research question four:

What do TVET college lecturers as a social group propose and recommend as solutions to deal with the challenges of massification in higher education in their context?

Tenet one: Social identification is immensely strengthened for social groups, or categories at that stage of inclusiveness, which defuses the struggle between needs for distinction of the self, and integration with other (Brewer, 1991, p. 478).

Utilising the above tenet, the study's findings suggest that, TVET college teachers' suggestions and recommendations in an attempt to resolve their challenges, which are the result of the causes and consequences of massification, are all-inclusive. Their propositions and solutions lean towards resolving a common problem within the context of their social setting. Although several social groups exist within the establishment, with each individual having their own identity, as well as each social group having their own identity, ultimately, they are fighting for a similar cause.

For instance, with regard to student funding, namely, NSFAS, the participants indicated that, government should review its financial aid policies because, currently, the majority of the students are misusing NSFAS funding. They are motivated by monetary gain. Hence, the participants proposed that, funding should be for tuition only, as it was previously. They felt that this would assist in drawing a line between students that enrol in TVET to study, with the intention of exiting the system with a qualification, and those who enrol for monetary gain. According to them, this would reduce the level of massification and some of the challenges thereof. However, the participants also indicated that, there are students who are in dire need of these funds, and that they should be given due consideration. They highlighted that, if government and leadership of the college were to work together revisit the financial aid policies, this would significantly improve the quality and/or calibre of learners at the institution, and probably reduce the drop-out and failure rates. Moreover, they posited that, by distributing funds for tuition only, parents and guardians would be more actively involved and committed to their children's education, because they would be expected to make a financial contribution.

Following up on the issue of NSFAS, it was recommended that, to avoid misuse of these funds, the DHET should consider stipulating that students enrol at TVET college within their home area. The college is currently enrolling students from across the country, resulting in institutional massification. Furthermore, when students live far from home, they demand payment for transport and accommodation, and as noted earlier, when this is not forthcoming or payment is late, they resort to protests and strikes.

The participants recommended that, in order to improve the calibre of students enrolled at the college, a points system should be adopted for selection purposes. They added that, the college should critically examine the criteria applied to admit students to TVET programmes. It was noted that students should be selected based on the points they score, calculated against the percentage score for each relevant subject obtained at high school. For example:

Subject	Percentage	Calculation	Total score
English	45%	$45 \div 10 = 4.5$	4.5
Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy	30%	$30 \div 10 = 3$	3

Candidates should also have to meet the individual admission requirements for the course or qualification they wish to register for. The participants argued strongly that adopting a points system, and using the results from aptitude tests would reduce the number of learners that enrol in TVET who are not serious about studying, and furthermore, motivate up-and-coming students at high school to put more effort into their studies. Currently, at the college, the aptitude test is a mere formality as part of the enrolment process. Furthermore, proper screening and pre-interviews should be conducted in order to place students in the most appropriate course, and according to their choice and subjects completed at high school. Currently, candidates simply choose the most popular course, based on hearsay. They lack understanding of what the course actually entails, only to find that, during the year they cannot cope; hence, they either drop out or fail. This is affecting the college's pass rates, as well as throughput rates, and thus giving TVET a poor reputation.

One of the recommendations was that, screening and selection should be strictly adhered to in grouping a class of students for a particular qualification, as random placement of candidates without considering their pass marks at high school, the subjects completed, and the grade completed, results in significant student diversity within a class, in terms of age and competency levels. Selection and placement based on careful screening would make teaching easier, because the group of learners will have common interests, and share common general knowledge, and competency levels. It will also share a common social background with regard to age and education level, and hence, students will be able to relate to one another.

The participants' recommendations included the need for more support from management as well as more efficient management teams. However, participants made their suggestions from various perspectives. Suggestions included the need for the management team to be made up of individuals with the necessary management

experience, knowledge, skills and leadership qualities; that management's objective should be to create a conducive teaching and learning environment that will minimise conflict among all stakeholders within the establishment; that there should be a proactive management team that takes into consideration lecturers' experience of massification; and that plans must be communicated regularly to staff members and teaching and learning must be monitored more closely in order for management to be more aware of lecturers' challenges, conflicts, and impediments to teaching and learning. With regard to effective control of the institution as a whole, that is, managing staff effectively, as well as the huge influx of students and the operations of the college, it was recommended that, the college be divided into two separate divisions, NCV and R191 to promote a more effective and efficient system. Taking a bird's eye view of the whole organisation, the participants claimed that their sister colleges are much smaller, and can thus be managed by one campus manager. However, in their college, because of the large number of students and lecturing staff, lines of management, and infrastructural operations, there should be two sets of management.

With regard to the problems raised by different union affiliations, with each pushing their own ideologies in response to their members' complaints, conflicts, and difficulties due to massification, the participants stated that, it is important that union members and representatives work with management and other unions within the college. This would assist in making massification more workable for educators. Furthermore, in order to address the causes and consequences of massification, and for optimal working relations, members should refrain from 'unionising' everything. Suggestions, ideas, and recommendations should be made for the benefit of the institution as a whole, not for the benefit of the union, in terms of its status and/or domination.

Conclusion

Given that we live in an era where members of society need to be employable rather than merely educated, TVET has been proposed as a viable option to instill the knowledge and skills required to work in a specific trade or industry. However, the

study's findings reveal that, educating large numbers of students at one time is a complex and arduous practice and experience for educators. College lecturers are frustrated and emotionally drained by grappling with issues such as the poor calibre of learners, behavioural discipline issues, emotional immaturity and development, a lack of resources, and over-crowding. Furthermore, they receive little support from the government or college leadership and are compelled to devise their own peculiar means of coping in a highly diversified classroom, as well as on a psychological level. They thus, experience high levels of tension and dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. Correlating with the results of this study, Wedekind et al. (2016) assert that, a lack of understanding of TVET college teachers, such as their specific roles, duties and functions; the competences and qualifications they are expected or required to possess, and their employment status has implications for lecturer identity. They proclaim that massification of higher education in South Africa's TVET colleges have brought these issues to the fore.

The findings of this study are in line with those of others scholars (Blom, 2014; Kanyane, 2016; Machado, 2013; Mohamedbhai, 2014; Wedekind et al., 2016) who illustrate that, while the expansion of TVET seems to be essential, in the long run, it is self-defeating. If TVET is to fulfil stakeholders' expectations, the link between students and their knowledge and skills, that is, TVET college teachers, needs to be thoroughly understood, particularly in the context of their experience of massification. Rapid massification has amplified their workload, and altered the nature of their work. Moral pressure is exerted on lecturers to teach larger classes in the interests of society and learners. Government and leadership of the TVET sector in the South African context have overlooked lecturers' involvement in massification. For example, how does massification shape and develop TVET teachers' professional identity, or what does it mean to be a TVET teacher? The small number of studies on the transformation of the TVET sector, have not focused on the people in the system and their needs. Therefore, TVET teachers are not accorded the credit, acknowledgement and deliberation that they deserve. This has fostered low self-esteem and a lack of professional distinctiveness.

Implications

This study has shown that massification, and its causes and consequences, have imposed enormous pressure on TVET lecturers. The findings suggest the need for the stabilisation of staff and/or lecturers' working conditions to be given maximum priority. Adjusting and integrating existing higher education policies should take place based on a critical understanding of their experiences, because they are the implementers of policies. The government and college leadership also need to urgently review the enrolment criteria employed at TVET colleges in order to improve the calibre of students. Inadequate preparedness of students and misconduct are linked to TVET teachers' sense of helplessness, undermining their enthusiasm and dedication to the teaching profession.

In summary, it is imperative that management at the TVET college be improved and that the institution receive support to improve its capacity to meet the needs of lecturers and students. It is strongly suggested that a more equitable funding model be deliberated upon since this study, and others (Blom, 2016) revealed that massification is closely linked to funding, and hence poor selection of students. A massive injection of funds may be required as TVET is not producing individuals that meet industry's requirements.

Suggestions for further research

Further research could involve an overarching study on the distinctive conditions under which TVET lecturers work and whether or not they are successful and why. According to Grint (2005), work is perceived as a representation of personal value. It provides status, economic reward and a means to realise self-potential. By no stretch of the imagination can this be said of TVET college lecturers. Further sub-questions could therefore include: What is the actual work of TVET college teachers?

Contributions of the study

Contribution to content and knowledge

This thesis has contributed to the discourse of massification in higher education by providing in-depth understanding of lecturers' experiences of massification in the South African context. The participants' testimonies, insights, and descriptions of how and why they experience massification in the way they do, could assist stakeholders to improve TVET college lecturers' operational settings within the dynamics of a massified system. The study demonstrated that, in as much as massification is a noble notion, in terms of delivering knowledge, skills and training to society at large, the imbalances and inequalities within the TVET system due to massification are numerous and far-reaching. It is thus argued that, if government and leadership at all levels of the TVET sector seek to produce active, responsible and knowledgeable citizens, much closer attention should be paid to the knowledge distributors and/or providers, that is, TVET college lecturers. The study's findings show that, in South Africa, there is a crucial need to recognise TVET college teachers' experience of massification; appreciate their involvement in the process; and take cognisance of how massification has altered their roles as professionals.

Methodological contribution

Contributing to the qualitative research design and methodology, the findings showed that, semi-structured interviews and the interpretivist paradigm facilitated and strategically guided the study to produce in-depth, rich data and understand massification from TVET lecturers' perspective. The study thus achieved its objectives. Furthermore, it showed that the critical theory approach not only enabled the researcher to address lecturers' issues in relation to massification as a social group, but also helped to promote critical consciousness of their understanding and perceptions of massification, holistically. It was demonstrated that lecturers' professional autonomy, authority, and status are compromised by a massified educational system.

Theoretical contribution

Finally, the study's findings contributed to the theoretical frame, the social identity theory, which enabled the researcher to understand TVET college lecturers' (i) understanding of massification as a social group; (ii) why they respond to massification as a social group in the way they do; and (iii) why they experience massification as a social group in the way they do. The basic principles of the social identity theory validate the study's findings, firstly, because the theory is concerned with those aspects of identity that derive from group membership, and secondly, because social groups stand in power and status relations to one another (Brewer, 1991). In other words, in as far as lecturers' involvement in the causes and the consequences of massification is concerned, they form part of one inclusive in-group within the establishment. Even though their individual and social group identities may vary broadly and/or narrowly, as various social groups, they are equally affected by massification. This being the case, they prefer integration and assimilation in order to establish a conducive operational environment. However, within this in-group, there are various other social groups that emanate due to additional circumstantial dynamics, such as power and status that influence them to experience massification in a specific way. It is within these social groups that their distinctive social identities play out.

A significant finding from this study was that, group formations are established when it comes to their experience of massification on the one hand, and relations between colleagues on the other. For instance, membership of different unions created divisions between lecturing staff, and management and different union affiliations, triggering division and conflict between the management team and lecturing staff. The social identity theory states that, personal identity is the individuated self, but, within a given social context, they depersonalise the self-concept, where 'I' becomes 'we' (Brewer, 1991). There is a notion among staff that, be it as lecturers, or members of the management team and/or as members of particular unions; there is a certain inclination to be part of social groups that stand in power and status relations to one another. For instance, post level one lecturers, who may join the dominant union, may be in a position to resist adjustment and directives that compromise their wellbeing. However,

if they place themselves as members of the inclusive, social in-group of the college as a whole, there is a shift towards a perception of self as an interchangeable example of some social category, and away from the perception of self as a unique person (Brewer, 1991).

Therefore, in view of each tenet of the social identity theory utilised with each research question, lecturers' social identities are selected from the various facets or bases for self-categorisation available to an individual at a particular time. Their specific social identities may be activated at some times and not at others. Thus, it can be said that, social identity can be viewed as a compromise between integration and differentiation from others. Employing the tenets of the social identity theory enabled the researcher to understand how lecturers' experience of massification has influenced their need for de-individuation, and how this need is satisfied within in-groups, while their need for distinctiveness is met through inter-group comparisons (Brewer, 1991).

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APPENDIX 1



25 June 2019

Ms Vashnee Singh 209537435
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Singh

Protocol reference number: HSS/0433/019M

Project Title: Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college lecturers' experience of massification at a Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) Institute: A critical theory approach.

Full Approval – Expedited Application


Your application dated 22 May 2019, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 1 year from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Dr BL Shawa
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr A Pillay
cc School Administrator: Ms S Jeenarain, Ms M Ngcobo, Ms N Dlamini and Mr SN Mthembu

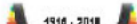
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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APPENDIX 2

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Page 001 of 01 ZB Nkabinda Tel: 031 376 4888 Date: 25.04.2019

Dear Ms Vashne Singh

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your letter dated 23 April 2019 and the following research topic refers:

Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college lecturers' experiences of massification at a Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) Institute: A Critical theory approach.

You are hereby granted permission to conduct research on college lecturers. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

All the best in your studies.



Mr SJ Mlotshwa
 Principal

25/04/19
 Date

reaching greater heights together

APPENDIX 3

Participant Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Greetings Colleague

Thank you for participating in my research study. The topic is:

College Lecturers' experience of massification at a TVET College, a critical theory approach.

All participant information and identities will remain totally confidential. All recordings and transcripts will be kept confidential and remain protected by the researcher as well as kept in safe keeping with the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Each participant will be 'code named' during the data analysis and presentation process so that participants actual names and teaching details will not be disclosed.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Protocol Reference number: HSS/0433/019M).

In the event of any concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at:

singhvashnee@gmail.com or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I _____(Surname and Initials) have been informed about the study entitled ‘Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college lecturers’ experience of massification at a Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) Institute: A Critical theory approach’, by Vashnee Singh.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study. I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at / singhvashnee@gmail.com.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researcher then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby provide consent to: Audio-record my interview

APPENDIX 4

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Welcome: The primary goal of this interpersonal interview is to understand TVET colleges lecturers' experience of massification.

Length: 45-50 minutes

Themes: Understanding of massification
Response to massification
Experience of massification
Recommendations

1. How long have you been employed at this institute?
2. Over the past years and currently we are having a huge influx of students at the college. In light of such high student numbers, what would you say is your understanding of the term massification?
3. In your opinion how do you think the lecturers including yourself are handling and/or coping with the influx of students seeking higher education?
4. As a TVET college teacher, in the classroom and in the institute, would you say that your roles, duties and functions are affected? If so, can you explain, describe and provide examples where possible?
5. Now that massification is so rife, how do you think HE policies need to be restructured and integrated in order to redress lecturers' challenges and issue such as quality, funding, etc.?
6. This is a huge institute... comprising of two different sectors, R191 (NATED) and NCV, various union affiliations and multiple levels of management. Do these aspects influence your experience of massification and if so, how and why?
7. Do you think your colleagues share the same views as you, do you think they feel the same? Do you think they would support your views? (trying to locate them in a particular identity).

8. How can the imbalance of great numbers of students seeking entry into the college in the face of inadequate human and material resources be addressed to the benefit of all?

9. Taking into account all that you have mentioned (recap-refer to notes) what are your suggestions, recommendations and/or solutions?

10. If you had the power to change one thing at this institute, what would it be and why?

Thank you for your time and sharing your views for this research.

****Note: Additional follow-up questions will be asked, as appropriate, with each participant. These will be clearly recorded and documented.***

APPENDIX 5

Turnitin Originality Report

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