



UNIVERSITY OF <sup>TM</sup>  
**KWAZULU-NATAL**  
INYUVESI  
**YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**ENHANCING MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS IN  
TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT  
SELECTED COLLEGES IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

**by**

**MANDISA DARGRICIA SITHOLE**

**211541029**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

**of**

**Doctor of Administration**

**(Public Administration)**

**School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**

**College of Law and Management Studies**

**Supervisor: Professor Henry Wissink**

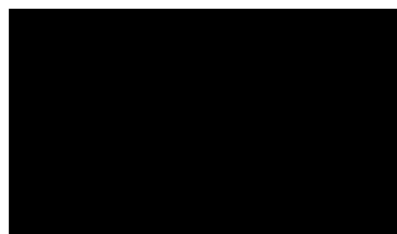
**2024**

## CANDIDATE DECLARATION

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**MANDISA SITHOLE**

Student No. 211541029

29 November 2024

## DEDICATION

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I dedicate this study to my beloved mom, whose unwavering support, love, and encouragement have guided me throughout my journey. Her strength and resilience inspire me daily.

I also dedicate this to myself as a reminder of the hard work, perseverance, and commitment that have brought me here. Whenever I doubt how far I can go, I always remember where I am coming from, everything I have faced, all the battles I have won, and all the fears I have overcome to complete this doctoral project. I salute myself for being strong enough and capable of making informed decisions to keep myself away from the destruction of certain things and individuals that could have impacted negatively towards reaching my academic goals. I come from a township where, more significantly, young people are vulnerable to full-risk behaviour, including alcohol abuse, violence, and pregnancy, which have destroyed the future of many potential youth in my community. While my friends were partying, I chose education over entertainment, which has kept me going and thriving. I am beyond grateful and incredibly proud of myself for the person I have become.

Without our Heavenly Father, I could not have completed this work. Ultimately, I triumphed not because of my intelligence and discernment but because God was beside me and protected me throughout this journey. To Him, I give all the glory.

***“I focused on educational growth and used it as a tool to keep myself away from risky behaviour.”***

(Mandisa)

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## ABSTRACT

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The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in South Africa faces systemic challenges that undermine its ability to produce a highly skilled workforce, implement effective management practices, and position itself as the preferred choice for students pursuing technical and vocational careers. The governance structures of the country's 50 public TVET colleges are characterised by inefficiencies, inadequate resource allocation, and limited institutional capacity, impeding their ability to fulfil the National Development Plan (NDP) objective of enrolling 2.5 million students by 2030. These deficiencies further weaken the sector's capacity to mitigate critical socio-economic challenges, including unemployment, inequality, and poverty.

This study critically examines the management and leadership structures of three selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal, Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET. To identify strategies for improving institutional efficiency and governance. Anchored in an interpretative research paradigm and employing a phenomenological research strategy, the study adopts a qualitative methodological approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and direct observations, with a purposive and convenience sample of 41 participants, including senior managers, college council members, and student representatives. Findings reveal systemic deficiencies within TVET colleges, including inadequate infrastructure, constrained resources, weak industry linkages, limited stakeholder engagement, insufficient technological integration, governance challenges, and ineffective student support services. These barriers significantly impede institutional performance and the sector's contribution to national development objectives.

The findings reveal structural deficiencies, including inadequate infrastructure, financial and human resource constraints, weak industry partnerships, limited stakeholder engagement, insufficient technological integration, governance challenges, and ineffective student support services. These impediments significantly compromise institutional performance and the sector's contribution to national development imperatives.

To address these challenges, the study proposes an Integrated Management and Leadership Model designed to enhance governance, foster collaboration, strengthen accountability

mechanisms, and promote transformational leadership within the TVET sector. This model advocates for strategic coordination, operational efficiency, and continuous institutional improvement. Its implementation would enable TVET colleges to improve governance, enhance educational outcomes, and increase graduate employability. Strengthening leadership and management structures within the TVET sector is imperative for advancing national workforce development, fostering economic growth, and promoting social equity in South Africa.

**Key Terms:** *Governance; Leadership; College Council; Management; Student Representatives Council; Management Structure; Technical Vocational Education and Training.*

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CFET Act</b>	Continuing Further Education and Training Act
<b>CHE</b>	Council of Higher Education
<b>CM</b>	Consequence Management
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education and Training
<b>DPSA</b>	Department of Public Services and Administration
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>FETA</b>	Further Education and Training Act
<b>HR</b>	Human Resource
<b>HRDC</b>	Human Resource Development Council of South Africa
<b>IQMS</b>	Integrated Quality Management System
<b>QMS</b>	Quality Management System
<b>KZN</b>	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>MEC</b>	Member of Executive Council
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NATED</b>	National Department of Education Report 190/191 Programmes
<b>NCV</b>	National Certificate Vocational
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NPM</b>	New Public Management
<b>NSFAS</b>	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
<b>NSNSF</b>	National Norms and Standards Funding
<b>OD</b>	Organizational Development

<b>PPQL-TVET</b>	Policy on Professional Qualification for Lecturers in Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>PLP</b>	Pre-Learning Programme
<b>PSET</b>	Post-School Education and Training
<b>RSA</b>	Republic of South Africa
<b>SA</b>	South Africa
<b>SAFETSA</b>	South Africa Further Education and Training South Africa
<b>SDA</b>	Skills Development Act
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SRC</b>	Student Representative Council
<b>SSS</b>	Student Support Services
<b>TCA</b>	Technical College Act
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UKZN</b>	University of KwaZulu-Natal
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific, Organizational and Cultural Organization
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>WPPSET</b>	White Paper for Post-School Education and Training
<b>WSE</b>	Whole School Evaluation

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

---

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Improving management and leadership systems in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges or other educational institutions is a global concern. International agencies such as the United Nations (UN) have engaged with other countries to push and facilitate the global agenda to promote TVET practices. To ensure that developing countries take part in the initiatives to improve the sector and align it with international practices. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) identify the TVET sector as a tool for creating a workforce and ensuring everyone has access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. It usually appears as one of the most critical aspects of addressing poverty, young unemployment, and educational disparity in emerging nations (Selane & Odeku, 2024). The South African government acknowledged the significance of TVET colleges. By 2030, the National Development Plan (NDP) policy documents indicate that 2.5 million students should be enrolled in colleges nationwide (Nzembe, 2017:35). The Minister of Higher Education revealed that the enrolment in the TVET sector in 2024 is currently 482 224 (DHET, 2024). Since democracy was established in 1994, TVET colleges in South Africa have experienced several transformations that have resulted in notable accomplishments.

The transformation of the TVET system has been characterised by new legislation adopted to address educational inequality, weak management, and leadership in the TVET sector (Kana & Letaba, 2024). To shape the new landscape of the TVET sector, which was formed through the merging of technical colleges to Further Education and Training (FET) colleges (RSA, 1998). The transformation presented new opportunities and challenges for managers and leadership structures. While there has been progress in efforts to transform the TVET colleges in the country, existing challenges still affect the image and status of these colleges (Sithole et al., 2022:87). This indicates that there is a need for research studies to be conducted in the TVET sector focusing on management and leadership. There is minimal literature on TVET management and leadership practices to close this gap, so a research study was conducted. To evaluate the challenges presented in the TVET sector to enhance its management and leadership systems, focusing on three selected TVET colleges (Coastal TVET, Umfolozi

TVET, and Mnambithi TVET) in KwaZulu-Natal. According to this perspective, this chapter provides an introduction under the following main headings:

- i. Background of the study
- ii. Research problem statement
- iii. The aim of the study, research questions and research objectives
- iv. Significance of the study
- v. Research Methodology
- vi. Structure of the study

## **1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Since the country's democratic transition in 1994, the TVET system has undergone significant reform in South Africa (Moodley, 2015:1). The unequal and disjointed educational system was left to the new national higher education administration post-1994. Restructuring 152 technical colleges that provided vocational and technical education was the first perhaps symbolic transformation in the educational sector ("TVET gets a much-needed boost," 2018). Before 1994, the colleges were governed by the Technical College Act No. 104 of 1981, adopted during the apartheid regime. The democratic government, in efforts to transform the educational system and vocational and training sector, identify gaps in TCA. The Act only addressed the "establishment, maintenance, management and control of technical colleges" (RSA, 1981:2). The roles and responsibilities of the three structures for effective management and leadership were not explained adequately. The matters concerning student welfare and support were excluded, and the Act did not acknowledge the Student Representative Council (SRC) structure. This meant that the students were not involved in decision-making during this period.

These issues created a fragmented, disjointed college sector, which the democratic government inherited. Under apartheid, the vocational and training system was provided in a way that was characterised by discrimination against opportunities for learning, a separation of theory and practice, and uneven distribution of funding between previously white colleges, known as state-aided colleges and historically black colleges, known as state colleges (Makole et al., 2023:50). After the elections, the technical college sector underwent a complete transformation, shaping the second landscape of 50 Further Education and Training (FET) colleges due to the merger

of technical colleges (Terblanche, 2008). According to the guidelines outlined in the Further Education Training Act (FETA) No. 98 of 1998, the FET landscape was created in 2002 (RSA, 1998). The Technical Colleges officially changed their name in 2002 and became known as Further Education Training Colleges (FET) (RSA, 1998). This name change created a framework to “boost autonomy and independence in connection to governance and to increase administrative, leadership, and managerial capacity” by combining current employees (Badenhorst & Radile, 2018:3).

The merger combined colleges with distinct organisational cultures, identities, management, and leadership styles. The appointment of managers in many of these institutions during the apartheid period did not consider qualifications, skills, or experience (Sithole et al., 2022:87). To qualify individuals to be a part of the management and leadership structures led to hierarchical power imbalances (Khambule, 2019:5). The pre-1994 systemic fragmentation and disparate treatment of races in higher education negatively influenced the post-merger FET colleges (Khambule, 2019:32). Before the merger, a few institutions had strong financial standing (Kraak et al., 2016:13). As a result, there were traces of corruption and envy among the principals of specific colleges. The misconception that a poor institution could not amalgamate with a rich one led these principals to resolve to spend all the money on any project that occurred to them (Bisschoff & Nkoe, 2005). Because newly appointed principals find it challenging to oversee the multi-site institution without financial resources, the attitudes have caused issues in the merger process.

During this post-apartheid era, colleges were administered by the Ministry of Education and Provincial Education Authorities. Consequently, the Minister of Education at that time, the late Professor Kader Asmal, oversaw the national policy and FET rules and regulations (Ministry of Education, 2003). Meanwhile, the provincial authorities were responsible for managing the finance and implementation of education. The change was meant to bring transformation and improve SA’s vocational and training system. However, the sector was still characterised by significant challenges that affected the status and image of the colleges. The democratic government adopted another form of legislation, the Continuing Further Education and Training Colleges Act (CFETA) (No. 16 of 2006). It offers regulations for public TVET colleges’ founding, management, and financing. The statute encourages higher-quality training and education. It contains guidelines for hiring staff members in TVET

colleges. It includes clauses about repeal or modification of pertinent legislation and transitional procedures.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (RSA, 2013a) stipulated that increasing TVET college's power and reach is DHET's priority and desire to make TVET the preferred alternative for many school dropouts. Enhancing access, throughput rates, and managerial capacity are essential to fortifying institutions. The DHET also highlighted the need for strong leadership and management, critical for addressing the structural disparities in the TVET sector (RSA, 2013). To ensure that all TVET colleges are adequately managed and governed, especially in the areas that require specialisation such as financial management, student support, infrastructure, facilities, and human resources. The fact that TVET institutions need to increase enrolment, broaden their courses, and increase the standard of instruction they provide is a significant challenge (RSA, 2013a). The TVET sector will face substantial obstacles in the next twenty years, especially since most TVET institutions need better organisational structures. At the launch of the White Paper, Minister Dr Blade Nzimande officially announced the third landscape of the new college sector, which reflected the renaming and transition from FET to TVET (RSA, 2013). To ensure that SA's vocational education industry is aligned with the TVET international practices.

TVET was introduced in SA in 2012 (Denhere & Molio, 2021:196). During that period, the colleges started changing their names to TVET colleges. In 2015, all public TVET colleges were instructed by the Minister to adopt the new name, and since then, the colleges have been accepted as TVET colleges (RSA, 2013). These institutions' operations must be responsible and responsive to local needs and social-economic growth. This pertains to maintaining an effective TVET college by having management and leadership that is well-trained, skilled, and competent (Lange et al., 2020:74). Increased responsiveness, efficiencies, and equity were anticipated outcomes of the procedure.

Despite numerous changes made to enhance the effectiveness and quality of the colleges, these changes have also posed difficulties for the TVET management and leadership structures over the years (Basi, 2021:39). Poor leadership, a lack of managerial expertise, mediocre performance, and unequal access to resources are the most urgent problems (Dlamini, 2015:40). To meet the expectations and adapt to change, TVET colleges need an efficient management system. Fifty public TVET colleges "were transferred to the DHET's

administration from the provincial authority” to improve the TVET sector (Mesuwini, 2015:50). A high level of dysfunctionality in provinces is experienced despite the significant attempts to redefine and transform the TVET sector. There is an ongoing conflict between management and leadership because of power struggles over decision-making, poor communication, and unclear roles and responsibilities (Mahlangu & Mtshali (2024). These factors are contributing negatively to the administration of the TVET colleges in South Africa.

Scholars argue that the government provides TVET colleges in South Africa with significant resources to make them functional and practical institutions (Sithole, 2019). Nhlapho (2017:1) argues that the little resources injected into the TVET must be appropriately used. Reports by the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) show that leadership and management cannot account for how the resources are used (AGSA, 2023). Sibiyi and Nyembezi (2018:1) maintain that the government should enhance administration and leadership in TVET. Otherwise, giving resources to TVET colleges with poor management and leadership is pointless. Effective management and leadership structures still need to be revised by the TVET colleges and require immediate interventions, as the country has only six years to meet the NDP goal. Evidence shows that the challenges presented in the SA TVET sector mainly relate to management and leadership.

### **1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

TVET in SA has undergone substantial and rapid transformations in policies, legislation, administration, and institutions in South Africa. The practical implementation of these changes has been inconsistent, primarily due to deficiencies in leadership and management capacity. These difficulties stem from gaps in capacity, accountability, funding, and institutional alignment with national reform goals. The leadership and management of TVET colleges have struggled to administer them following all the recent changes (Papier, 2021). The government is working to elevate the status of the TVET sector to make all 50 TVET colleges more dependable, alluring, and institutions of first preference. In addition, TVET colleges are recognised as a tool for socioeconomic development (RSA, 2012:47). However, this is adversely affected by poor management and weak leadership, which has led to some factors affecting the TVET colleges (Majola, 2018:4). Even though TVET colleges require effective management, the government nonetheless allocates resources to elevate their prestige and bring them into line with national goals centred on state development (Mmako, 2016:43).

The TVET resources are not used according to the allocated purpose; the Department of Higher Education (DHET) revealed in its annual reports that mismanagement, corruption, and unethical behaviour in the TVET have cost taxpayers severely (DHET, 2022). Accountability and internal control measures still need to be strengthened, as 60% of TVET colleges have subpar management and leadership systems that cannot handle the problems currently facing the TVET college sector (Terblanche, 2017:18). TVET institutions have yet to fulfil their promise to become sought-after institutions and help South Africa overcome its dire skills shortages (Dunn, 2014:60). The evidence presented in the 2013 White Paper on Post-School Education and Training highlighted the serious “issue of weak management in addition to exposing years of government neglect of the sector” (RSA, 2013). The main areas of emphasis were student support, human resources, and financial administration. Robertson (2015:67) asserts that managers in TVET colleges lack the abilities and information necessary to carry out governmental projects effectively. Poor management in TVET colleges nationwide is attributed to a lack of competent managers (Tyatya, 2017:1).

High levels of managerial skills, expertise, and comprehension of the TVET industry are necessary for an efficient management structure (Rasool & Mahembe, 2014:36). Sithole (2019) states that Policy interventions have yet to fully appreciate the context on the ground and the implications for achieving a well-managed TVET sector with responsibility and optimal resource utilisation of resources. The merger and restructuring process was separate from a support and development strategy for managers, principals, and councils, particularly in weaker institutions. It is necessary to clarify the roles and duties of TVET colleges’ management structures. A well-documented management framework must be constructed to assist the management structure in its responsibilities (Magume, 2017:30).

The transition from technical, further education and training to TVET led to new policies that constantly challenged the skills and knowledge of the TVET managers (Kana & Letaba, (2024). To illustrate this statement, the senior managers of these colleges are faced with complex issues associated with diverse leadership and change management (Sithole et al., 2022). Previously, there were no expectations for TVET managers to demonstrate managerial competencies (Papier, 2021). The increasing change and demands placed on the TVET sector have impacted the roles and responsibilities of college managers, a significant problem that needs to be addressed (Kraak et al., 2016). The TVET colleges’ subpar facilities, inadequate management, and low performance have all been made public by the media.

While South Africa's TVET sector has undergone substantial policy and structural changes to improve vocational education, leadership and management, challenges have hindered the effective administration of these changes. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful implementation of reforms and the advancement of the TVET sector. Investigating the leadership and management of TVET colleges, this study aims to identify the root causes of management inefficiencies and explore how leadership enhancement strategies can improve institutional effectiveness.

#### **1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on the three core governance structures within TVET colleges: the operational management structure, the college council, and the Student Representative Council (SRC). By critically examining their administrative and governance functions, the researcher seeks to uncover key factors contributing to weak management and leadership in the sector. Furthermore, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of current leadership and management practices in addressing institutional challenges such as financial mismanagement, inadequate stakeholder engagement, inefficient resource allocation, and lack of accountability. By identifying these systemic weaknesses, the research developed an integrated model that fosters ethical leadership, sound governance, and sustainable management practices within TVET institutions.

Additionally, the study explores the impact of leadership and governance inefficiencies on student performance, institutional reputation, and overall sectoral growth. Through empirical investigation and evidence-based analysis, the research seeks to provide actionable insights and a model to strengthen leadership, enhance governance practices, and improve institutional efficiency. Ultimately, this study aspires to contribute to transforming South Africa's TVET colleges into high-performing institutions capable of effectively addressing the country's skills development needs, reducing unemployment, and promoting economic growth. Finally, the study examined the leadership and administration of the three TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), which are as follows:

- i. Coastal TVET College;
- ii. Umfolozi TVET College;
- iii. Mnambithi TVET College.

## 1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following primary research question from the above research problem guided this study:

*How can the management and leadership structures of TVET colleges enhance management systems to address challenges?*

To investigate the research problem thoroughly, the following sub-questions were pursued to make the research study more manageable:

**RQ#1:** What challenges do TVET colleges face, and how do they impact leadership and management structure?

**RQ#2:** What are the roles and responsibilities of leadership and management in the TVET colleges?

**RQ#3:** What leadership tools and management strategies have been adopted in the TVET colleges to ensure a well-managed institution?

**RQ#4:** What is the effectiveness of leadership in ensuring TVET management is supported by implementing managerial functions?

**RQ#5:** What factors impact the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal?

**RQ#6:** What measures can be implemented to improve TVET management and leadership practices in KwaZulu-Natal?

## 1.6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research study sought to achieve the following main research objective:

*Evaluate the management and leadership structure of TVET colleges to review management systems and challenges.*

Accordingly, this research study set out to achieve the following sub-research objectives:

**RO#1:** Identify the challenges TVET colleges face and their impact on leadership and management structure.

**RO#2:** Assess the roles and responsibilities of the TVET leadership in promoting effective management practices in the colleges.

**RO#3:** Evaluate the leadership tools and management strategies adopted in TVET colleges to ensure a well-managed institution.

**RO#4:** Examine the effectiveness of TVET leadership in ensuring that the management is supported in implementing managerial functions.

**RO#5:** Examine the factors affecting the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal.

**RO#6:** Determine measures the TVET colleges can adopt to improve management and leadership practices.

### **1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research is significant for an assortment of reasons. The success of the TVET colleges is favourably impacted by management and leadership systems. As mentioned in the larger context of this study's problem statement, the TVET industry in South Africa faces various difficulties. As a result, the study concentrates on how crucial it is for TVET colleges to have strong management and leadership structures. Only a few research studies have been conducted on management and leadership systems in the TVET. The researcher has identified a need to enhance effective management and leadership practices in the TVET sector to address the massive challenges. The researcher believes that the college councils and management officials contribute significantly to creating a well-performing TVET college. The study will contribute to adding more knowledge on TVET leadership and management. It will serve as a reference manual for the college council, management, policymakers, the Department of Higher Education and Training, and the government.

Additionally, the study will support the TVET sector in South Africa and assist the management structures of colleges experiencing challenges similar to those of Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET. Enhance their management and leadership techniques to better adhere to government policy measures to modernise South Africa's college system. Managers, stakeholders, and relevant TVET providers can advance their knowledge and comprehension of TVET management and leadership systems. As a result of the study, an Integrated Management and Leadership Model for TVET was developed to assist the colleges and enhance leadership and management, foster partnerships, and align educational practices with DHET standards and policy requirements.

## 1.8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A provisional outline of the research methodology is provided here and is broadly elaborated in chapter five (5). In her *Mail & Guardian* article, Daugbjerg (2023) explains that research methodology refers to all the practical research approaches implemented for data collection and processing. It provides a framework plan that describes in detail how the investigation was carried out to address the research questions and objectives (Mafuwane, 2012:67). This study investigates the management and leadership system at the three selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal (Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET). Figure 1.1. provides a summary of the data collection methods adopted to investigate the research problem. This is an empirical investigation in which the researcher adopted qualitative research methods and is influenced by the interpretivism research paradigm and phenomenology research strategy.

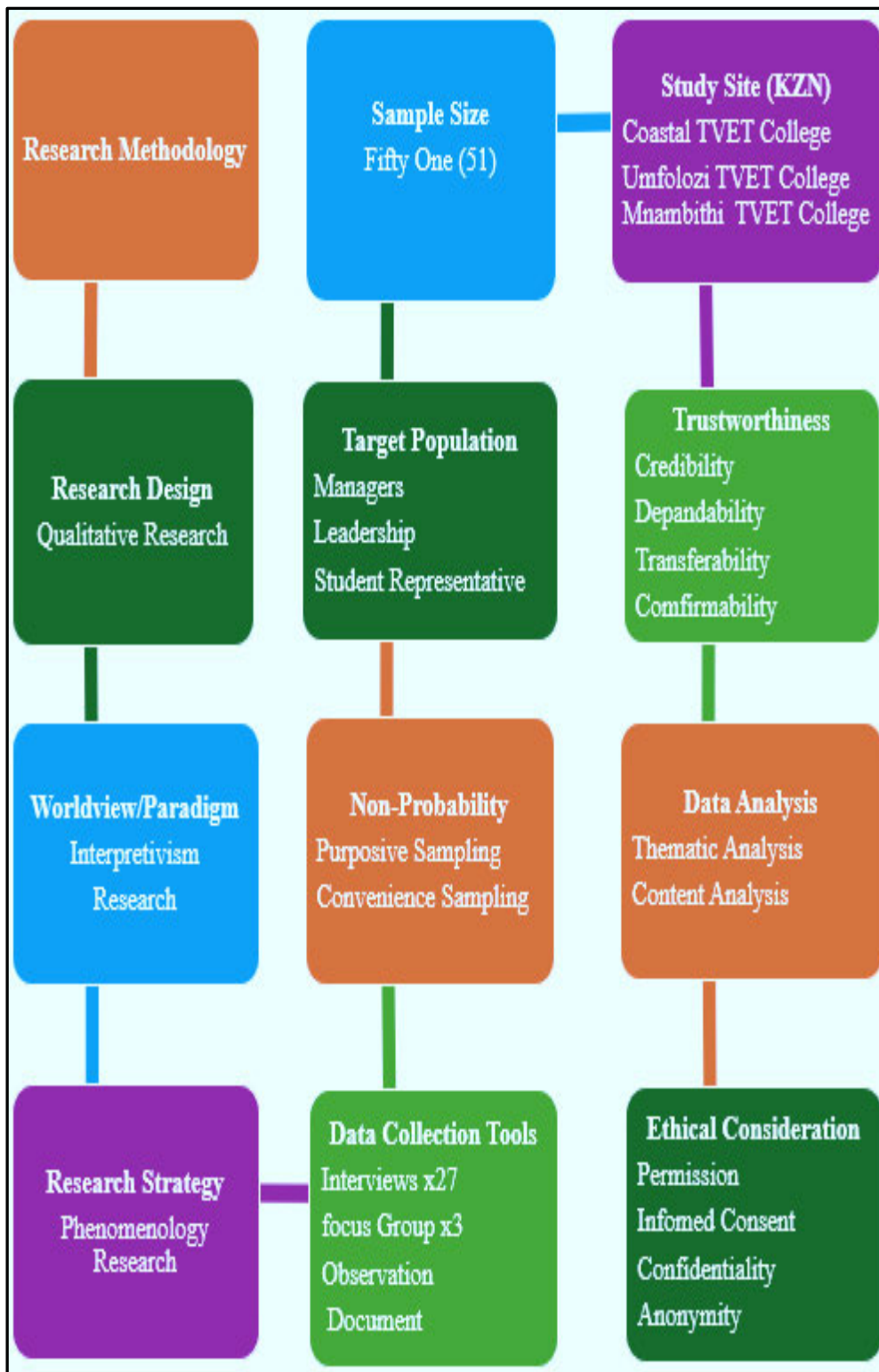
Qualitative research is an approach applied by researchers who seek to gain an in-depth understanding of the research problem through engaging with the participants who are perceived to have knowledge and understanding of the research phenomena (Daniel, 2016:92). A qualitative research design was used in this study to examine the experiences, opinions, and viewpoints of participants who are considered to have a basic understanding of the TVET leadership and management system. Interpretative research paradigms influenced the study's investigation. Interpretivism studies tend to be reliable and honest, and primary data generated through these studies may have a high degree of trustworthiness (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019:41). This study's ability to identify in-depth life experiences makes a phenomenology research strategy applicable.

The researchers had an opportunity to explore, explain, and try to put themselves in the participant's mind or image through the data analysis to reconstruct the opinions and views expressed during data collection. Bandari (2022:1) describes data collection as a systematic process of gathering observations or measurements for an academic purpose. It allows the researchers to gain first-hand knowledge and original insight into the research phenomenon by applying specific methods depending on the research design that informs the study. This study collected data using various instruments, including interviews, focus groups, document reviews and observations. The target population for this research study consists of management

officials, governing council members, and Student Representative Council members who are employed or appointed to serve within the three colleges and enrolled as students.

The sample size for this research study is forty-one (41). The study employed two non-probability sampling techniques, convenience and purposive sampling, to select a sample from the population. Purposive sampling was used to recruit the operational management officials and governing council members for face-to-face interviews. Convenience sampling was used to recruit the Student Representative Council (SRC) members. The researcher conducted seventeen (17) semi-structured interviews and three (3) focus group discussions with a maximum of eight (8) SRC members in each college. Data analysis in qualitative research is an iterative and complex process that allows the researcher to uncover the implicit meanings of the raw collected data associated with the opinions and responses of the participants (Madalani, 2016:41). Thematic and content data analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data in which a data set is searched to identify, analyse and report recurring patterns (Alhojailan, 2012:40).

Chapter five provides a broad, detailed discussion of the research methodology and design adopted for this study on TVET management and leadership systems. Figure 1.1. provides a summary of the data processing and analysis process that was undertaken.



**Figure 1.1. Summary of Research Methodology Adopted in this Study**

Source: Researcher (2024)

## **1.9. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

Seven chapters demarcate this study, where the structure of the study is as follows:

### **Chapter One: Introduction and Background to the Study**

This chapter serves as the introduction to the research and provides background information about the study. The chapter introduces the topic, background, research problem, research questions and objectives. The significance of the study, as well as the research report outline, are explained in this chapter.

### **Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework Underpinning Leadership and Management**

This chapter discusses the concepts followed by a distinction between management and leadership. The chapter goes on to describe the theories of leadership and management practices.

### **Chapter Three: International Perspective of the TVET Sector**

This chapter provides an overview of the types of TVET models. The international perspective of the TVET, agencies that promote the TVET agenda, and challenges presented by the TVET globally.

### **Chapter Four: Historical Foundation of the TVET in South Africa**

This chapter includes an exposition of TVET colleges in South Africa, the historical foundation and TVET status. The key legislation that governs the TVET, role players, and challenges presented in the TVET sector in South Africa.

### **Chapter Five: Research Design Methodology**

Information on the research design and data collection techniques is covered in this chapter. The data was gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire, focus group, and observation as part of the qualitative method. This chapter also includes an overview of qualitative data analysis methods, ethical considerations, and limitations that underpin the study.

## **Chapter Six: Presentation of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

This chapter provides an interpretation of the results gathered from the qualitative analysis.

## **Chapter Seven: Discussion of the Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusion**

This closing chapter provides a succinct presentation of the findings of this research study, together with its recommendations and a brief conclusion.

### **1.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This introductory chapter provided an overview of the research context, situated within the historical and contemporary environment of the TVET college sector in South Africa. The study's objective, scope, and central and subsidiary research questions and objectives were explained. Then, a brief overview of the research methodology and data collection techniques was given. The study aimed to describe the factors that contribute negatively to the management and leadership duties at TVET institutions, but they need to be better defined.

The next chapter will present the theoretical framework, including specific theories that guide the research and the literature review on TVET management and leadership in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

---

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a broad overview of the existing theories underpinning management and leadership. A theoretical framework is an essential element of the research study as it allows for a fundamental review of existing theories that shape a roadmap for developing an argument. It describes the theory that explains why the research problem under investigation exists. The study adopted leadership and management theories, as in the TVET sector, essential structures play a crucial role in enhancing management and leadership. The motive for adopting a combination of these theories is because of the weaknesses associated with each theory when used in isolation. This study focused on management and leadership structures established within the TVET colleges and their impact on ensuring an effective management system in the TVET sector. What follows is a discussion of management and leadership theories, beginning with defining the relevant concepts.

#### **2.2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

##### **2.2.1. Leadership**

Leadership is the production of a positive influence, non-incremental change, which includes the development of a vision to drive change and a strategy encouraging those involved to make the vision a reality without impediments (Gutterman, 2016, 2023a:2, 2023b, 2023c). It is the development of a coalition of passion and momentum to propel change forward. Effective leadership commences at the outset, even before the commencement of work. Toma et al. (2020:51) agree that a leader is someone who tells subordinates about the plans and policies so they can get to work. Effective leaders should stay in touch with their staff, listen to their concerns, and work to find solutions. A leader must consistently hear the opinions of their staff and, in the event of a dispute, persuade them to agree with him or by providing pertinent clarifications (Toma et al., 2020).

When disagreements arise, resolve them amicably and prevent the entity from suffering unduly. Frantz et al. (2022:137) mentioned that leadership roles in higher education are primarily based on the needs of society to prepare institutions for present and future educational success. Leaders and their leadership qualities are critical to the growth of any organisation. Leadership is a process of influencing people's conduct so that they work voluntarily and enthusiastically to attain group objectives (Frantz et al., 2022). A productive and upbeat work atmosphere contributes to an organisation's steady expansion.

The core responsibilities of leadership in an organisation can be described as follows:

- i. A clear vision of the organisation's potential is created by effective leadership. Leaders give their organisations a road map that outlines the actions and resources required to reach the desired goal.
- ii. Leaders assist in informing staff members about the company's vision and objectives. This gives everyone direction and aids in determining which roles best suit their backgrounds and abilities. Effective communication is an essential strategy leaders use to motivate their staff to act towards goals.
- iii. Decision-making is one of the top leadership skills. Successful leadership makes the best decision for the organisation in all situations. Leaders are experts at making the right decisions based on the prevailing circumstances. They weigh their organisation's strengths and weaknesses to ensure their choices give them an advantage now and in the future.
- iv. Successful leaders are dedicated to the prosperity of their organisation and its personnel. They prevent minor obstacles from getting in the way of their long-term concentration on their organisation's objectives. When faced with setbacks, effective leaders inspire their subordinates and assist them in seeing past the obstacles standing in the way of their shared objective.
- v. Ethical values are instilled in the organisation by successful leadership. Successful leaders take the appropriate actions to accomplish their objectives, irrespective of their difficulties. They consider honesty, fairness, and integrity to be fundamental qualities in an organisation and its interactions in dealing with customers.

### 2.2.2. Management

This research study focuses on the management of TVET College, particularly the operational management structures revolving around the term ‘management.’ Various scholars define ‘management’ differently, but its foundation upholds the institutional operations focused on achieving its strategic goals and objectives. Herrity (2024) describes management as supervising and arranging tasks to accomplish organisational goals. Setting the organisation’s strategy and directing personnel’s efforts to achieve goals using resources are examples of such managerial responsibilities (Herrity, 2024). Within an organisation, the seniority hierarchy of employees may also be called management. The capabilities of people in managerial roles affect industries. Managers must oversee staff members, collaborate with stakeholders, and engage with higher-ranking officials in the TVET. Including the Minister of DHET, oversight officials, and government representative officials to ensure the team fulfils objectives and advances the college mission. It involves individuals who hold managerial roles, particularly those in strategic positions wherein they are responsible for significant decision-making on behalf of the organisation (Civelek, 2019:4). Depending on the organisation’s management structure, these may include executive directors, department heads, senior managers, or portfolio managers. The managers’ responsibilities vary depending on the business and company; most carry out the same fundamental tasks.

Helen (2022:41) asserts that management prevails whenever individuals strive to accomplish a specific objective; they are effectively involved in the management process. It plays a critical and indispensable role in every organisation as it involves effectively coordinating and utilising resources to achieve specific objectives. Kaehler and Grundei (2019:22) contend that management is a structured and methodical process of devising strategies, organising resources, providing direction, and supervising individuals working towards achieving organisational objectives. The core responsibilities of managers are to guarantee the realisation of an organisation’s goals, which are referred to as management’s functions (Civelek, 2019:4). These functions ensure its efficacy irrespective of an organisation’s scale, configuration, or sector. Scholars such as Okafor (2014), Duggal (2024), Gandrita (2023), Nadrifar et al. (2016), Tokarski et al. (2016) all agree that in a large corporation or institution, the management is in a hierarchical structure with three levels (senior, middle, and low) tiers of management. An organisation’s overarching objectives and course must be determined by senior management.

The highest level of management comprises senior management with the most authority and power to make decisions and formulate policies and plans for strategy and choices about overall corporate direction (Marhisotti et al., 2018). The managers at this level are usually called Chief executives, presidents, or accounting officers. In the TVET sector, the college's principal is called an accounting officer, and more powers of authority rest or are invested within this level (RSA, 2006). The middle management level comprises departmental and branch managers. These individuals spend more time on organisational and directional tasks and are accountable to the top management level (Tokarski et al., 2016:82). This entails outlining and debating crucial policies for lower management, advising lower management to attain improved performance, and carrying out organisational plans under senior management's supervision (Pawar, 2014:2). In the TVET sector, the middle management level consists of deputy principals ranging between two to four, irrespective of their portfolio and are accountable to the college principal (Sithole et al., 2022:95)

Gandrita (2023) has suggested that the lowest management tier oversees managing the daily tasks performed by individual team members and giving them instructions. The managers at this level are often called section heads, departmental managers, coordinators, and supervisors. They oversee the calibre of work produced by staff members, assist them with daily tasks, and direct employee concerns via the proper channels (Tamzid, 2022a:3382). They ensure that the personnel performance under their supervision meets the required standards that enable the organisation to meet its goals and objectives. These management officials are accountable to the middle management level (Nadrifar et al., 2016:84). The managers at all levels foster a thriving culture where workers are driven, efficient, and devoted to the goals and principles of the company by carrying out these tasks well.

According to Kapur (2018) and Conkright (2015), management functions that are widely acknowledged are "planning, organising, staffing, leading, and controlling." Scholars, such as Schraeder et al. (2014), Helen (2022) and Mahfudin et al. (2022) all agree that Henri Fayol, the father of administrative theory, developed the five managerial functions, all of which are still important for modern organisations. The functions emphasise the interaction between staff members and their managers and offer frames of reference for innovative problem-solving (Mahfudin et al., 2022:462). It constitutes an integral component of a set of methodologies and principles to achieve effective managerial outcomes. Figure 2.1. provides five managerial functions that managers perform within their organisation or institution to achieve the goals

and objectives. These functions all rely upon one another and are connected. The basis for organising, leading, and controlling is laid by planning. Each of these roles ensures that the others are performed to a high standard (Self et al., 2014:53). For instance, organising offers the tools and structure needed to facilitate controlling and leading and leading provides the necessary inspiration and direction to support managing and organising.



**Figure 2.1. Five Functions of Management**

Source: Geeks for Geeks (2024)

In addition:

- i. Planning encompasses creating goals, designing strategies to accomplish those goals, and developing plans that synchronise and organise actions. This procedure allows managers to predict possible obstacles and prospects, distribute resources accurately, and synchronise organisational initiatives with the organisation's mission, vision, and values.
- ii. Organising involves assigning responsibilities, bundling different tasks, setting the hierarchy of authority, and distributing the required resources to achieve a specific plan. After the plans are developed, the organising process assesses the activities and resources that should be allocated to execute the plan. It addresses the necessary tasks and resources. Determining the organisation of functions entails determining who will carry out a specific task and specifying the location and timing for its execution. It impacts the organisation of essential tasks into departments or work units to effectively manage them. Consequently, an organisational structure exists to ensure seamless communication, reporting, and effectiveness and efficiency of operations.

- iii. Leading involves the skill of ascertaining inspiration and motivation in individuals, compelling them to engage in collaborative efforts to achieve an organisation's goals. This procedure empowers managers to predict forthcoming hurdles and possibilities, allocate resources accurately, and synchronise the organisation's endeavours according to the organisation's mission, vision, and values.
- iv. Controlling involves the scrutiny and evaluation of organisational performance, along with carrying out necessary measures to rectify any shortcomings. This procedure empowers managers to predict forthcoming hurdles and possibilities, allocate resources accurately, and synchronise organisational endeavours according to the organisation's mission, vision, and values.
- v. Directing is part of the management process that guarantees that an organisation's people work efficiently and effectively to achieve the intended goal. It entails motivating, training, directing, and encouraging personnel to perform and reach predetermined goals. The two most fundamental aspects of directing are motivation and leadership. Directing includes communicating efficiently and clearly with supervising staff at work. It includes giving commands and instructions to subordinates, supervising individuals at work, and establishing a work atmosphere where employees can perform to the best of their ability. To bring out the best in personnel, a manager must steer them with praise and sincerely criticise them.

### **2.2.3. Governance**

Lukman (2022:3) maintains that establishing and upholding rules inside a community or organisation is known as governance. It includes making decisions, establishing rules, and enforcing them to direct how a society or organisation operates. Breeze (2021:45) asserts that governance refers to the system that controls and manages an organisation and the processes that hold it and its employees accountable. Governance includes ethics, risk management, compliance, and administration. Governance is an interaction between an organisational management, board, shareholders, and other stakeholders to ensure that leadership and management work together to achieve common goals and objectives (Abdelaziz, 2022:25). Corporate governance also offers the structure for setting the company's objectives, determining how to achieve those objectives, and assessing success. It is focused on an entity's top-level behaviour, accountability, control, and decision-making procedures. Lukman (2022) indicates that governance impacts how organisational goals and objectives are established and

met, risks are tracked and managed, and performance is maximised inside an organisation. Abdelaziz (2022) mentioned that since effective governance is a system and process rather than a single action, its implementation must follow a methodical procedure. That includes performance management, risk management, and strategic planning.

As with culture, it is a fundamental element of what makes a successful organisation unique. Mansoor (2021:2) maintains that public sector institutions are encouraged to adopt the principles of good governance to strengthen stakeholders' confidence and participation and increase high organisational performance. Achieving goals and maintaining success requires input and support from leadership and management at all levels of an organisation (Breeze, 2021:46). To guarantee that the organisation is adequately prepared to adapt to the constantly changing external circumstances, it is imperative to acknowledge that contemporary business ventures operate within an environment of perpetual change. Technology has ushered in an era of abundant information, revolutionising our society. To enable businesses to endure and prosper and, in turn, successfully pursue their goals and objectives. They must establish a framework that aids in recognising shifts within the external landscape and emerging patterns.

Comprehension and adaptation to the evolving world are not regular occurrences. It necessitates practical guidance, unwavering dedication, and ample resources the governing authority provides to establish and sustain such a framework within the institution. Change does not transpire abruptly; instead, it becomes evident to those with a mechanism for observation. In higher education, governance refers to the multifaceted procedures through which organisations are managed, supervised, and rendered accountable (Mokoena, 2020:30). This encompasses the power, responsibility, guidance, command, and regulation put into practice. The realisation of excellence is attainable through implementing sound governance principles and practices across the entire organisation, underscoring the significance of governance. Mange (2021:08) provides eight principles of good governance: "strategic vision, participation, accountability, transparency, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, the rule of law, and ethics." Government bureaucracies enforce the governance principles in the TVET sector to promote effective management and proper utilisation of resources that align with ethical standards (Bello et al., 2022). Figure 2.2. illustrates the principles of good governance, which are discussed in the following sections.

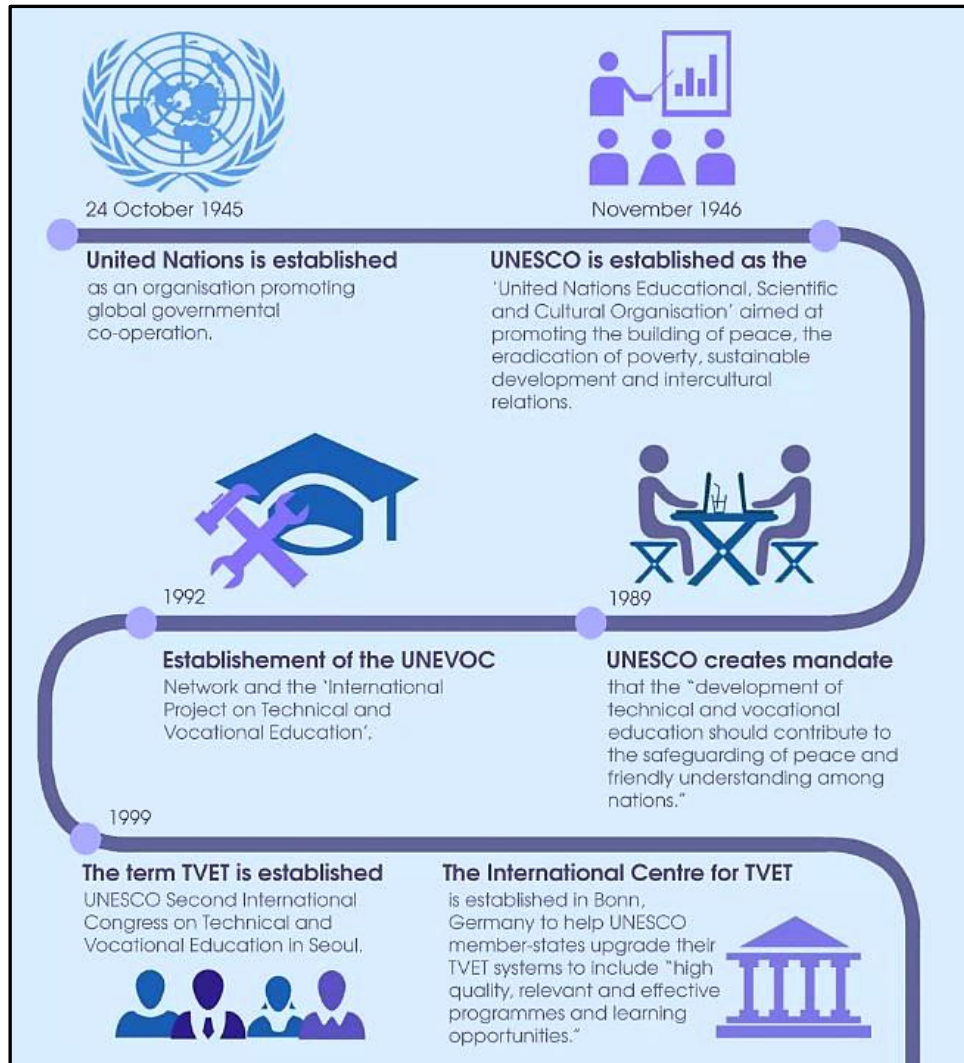


**Figure 2.2. Principles of Good Governance**

Source: Jatin Verma's IAS Academy (2019)

#### **2.2.4. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

TVET is an initialism of “Technical and Vocational Education and Training.” It is an international educational term applied to certain post-school educational institutes (Hasanah, 2023:1). It was developed in 1999 in Seoul, South Korea, during the UNESCO International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Denhere et al., 2021a:196). To assist Member States in promoting and modernising their post-school vocational education systems, UNESCO-UNEVOC established the International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Germany after the congress (Odendaal, 2015:4). TVET has become an international educational initiative to improve vocational training programmes worldwide. Below Figure 2.3. provides insight regarding the global establishment of the TVET term. TVET includes all levels and forms of education and training that provide information and skills relevant to jobs in various economic and social domains through formal, non-formal, and informal learning modalities in the classroom and workplace (Kuehn, 2019:227).



**Figure 2.3. The History of TVET**

Source: Oxbridge Academy (2014)

Tuenpusa et al. (2021:600) analyse each term in the initialism of TVET as follows:

- i. Technical topics include hardware and software-related issues, such as engineering procedures and troubleshooting techniques.
- ii. A field that often requires practical skills in skilled trades is called vocational.
- iii. Education, which begins in high school and includes postsecondary institutions like universities, colleges, and polytechnics, is referred to as education.
- iv. Training is described as non-formal education, usually used in programmes to upskill or reskill workers in firms or a broader workforce. It is also sometimes referred to as lifetime learning or continuous education.

TVET is crucial since a nation's economic ability depends on how well-educated and technically skilled its citizens are. Dual TVET systems are well-known in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland; Canada's community college system has a stellar reputation for TVET; and Finland boasts a top-tier education system where TVET plays a significant role (UNESCO, 2023a). Furthermore, despite lacking natural resources, Singapore has become a major Southeast Asian player thanks to wise policy choices about private cooperation in TVET. Finally, but just as significantly, a strong emphasis on TVET has contributed to China's remarkable rise (Jing et al., 2022). TVET is a vital instrument for the government to minimise unemployment, produce a labour force for the private sector, and encourage foreign direct investment (Pavlova, 2014). As a result, UNESCO has undertaken research in several TVET fields, including funding, frameworks, policy, gender, system reform, and TVET for sustainable development.

Technical and vocational education and training include instruction, training, and skill development related to a variety of occupational domains, production, services, and lives, according to Classen et al. (2021:4). TVET, which is a component of lifelong learning, is offered at the secondary, post-secondary, and tertiary levels. It consists of professional development, work-based learning, and ongoing training that can result in certifications (Shahroni et al., 2022:158). TVET also includes various skills development opportunities attuned to national and local contexts. Learning to learn, developing literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills, and citizenship skills are integral components of TVET.

### **2.3. DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

Management and leadership are essential in any organisation that seeks to achieve its goals and objectives. The terms leadership and management are often used interchangeably. While there is some overlap between the work that leaders and managers do, there are also significant differences. Leadership is the production of a positive influence, non-incremental change, which includes the development of a vision to drive change and a strategy that encourages those involved to make the vision a reality without impediments (Wajdi, 2017:75). It is the development of a coalition of passion and momentum to propel that change forward. The leadership roles in higher education are primarily based on the needs of society to prepare institutions for present and future educational success.

The management discipline aims to carry out tasks as effectively as feasible. It is the capacity to finish projects both alone and with others. 'management' refers to a man's style of leading and connecting with men of different ages to work together to achieve a common objective (Jibreal, 2021:281). The execution of prearranged duties and obligations using available resources is called management. Effectively achieving organisational goals is management's primary objective. Helen (2022:41) suggests that management entails collaborating with several organisational departments and managers to allocate resources to finish urgent work and meet short-term goals for the organisation. Usually, they oversee contracts, finances, procedures, and resources. Productivity is a bigger priority for managers than creating corporate strategies.

According to Robertson and Frick (2018:73), TVET leaders are essential in setting the strategic direction of the programme, managing its resources, and guaranteeing its relevance and quality. As reported by Balkrishen and Mestry (2016:29), TVET leaders are said to have a strong and distinct vision for the institution that aligns with the evolving needs of society and industry. They encourage and inspire teachers, staff, and students to accomplish common goals. By creating a clear direction, leaders in educational institutions foster innovation, develop a sense of purpose, and promote ongoing progress in programme development, teaching, and learning (Connolly et al., 2017:6). TVET leaders are responsible for developing and implementing strategic plans that guide the institution's progress and development (Alsiewi & Agil, 2014:27). This involves doing thorough needs analyses, identifying new skill requirements, and assessing labour market trends. Leaders use strategic planning to match industry and financial demands with the institution's alliances, activities, and resources.

**Table 2.1. Distinguishing between Management and Leadership Styles**

PROCESS	MANAGEMENT	LEADERSHIP
<b>Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans &amp; budgets</li> <li>Design the process steps and decides upon a timeline</li> <li>Has an impersonal attitude towards vision and goals</li> <li>Keeps an eye on the bottom-line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets the direction and creates the strategic plan</li> <li>Is passionate about achieving the goals and realizing the vision</li> <li>Keeps an eye on the horizon</li> </ul>
<b>NETWORKING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffs and Organizes</li> <li>Maintains structure</li> <li>Delegates responsibility and authority</li> <li>Displays low emotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligns organization</li> <li>Communicates the vision, mission and direction</li> <li>Influences creation of teams, coalitions and partnerships</li> <li>Displays drive and high emotion</li> </ul>
<b>EXECUTION OF VISION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controls processes, identifies problems, solve problems and analyze results</li> <li>Takes low risk approach to problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivates, energizes and inspires employees to overcome barriers to change.</li> <li>Takes high risk approach to problem solving</li> </ul>
<b>VISION OUTCOME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides expected results consistently to stakeholders and leaders and manages vision order and predictability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes useful and dramatic changes such as introduction of new products or new approaches to improving labor relations</li> </ul>

Source: Duggal (2024:4)

Successful governance and leadership are essential to the success of TVET institutions. The TVET leaders have many responsibilities, including setting strategic direction, allocating resources, encouraging stakeholder participation, guaranteeing quality control, and representing the industry (Mahlangu & Mtshali, 2024). Leaders within the TVET sector contribute to the socioeconomic growth of individuals and enterprises by upholding their obligations and promoting innovation, relevance, and excellence in education and training (Smit & Bester, 2022:137). The TVET leaders are responsible for managing the organisation's financial, human, and material resources efficiently and effectively. They must ensure that financial management is transparent and accountable, acquire sufficient money, and allocate resources as efficiently as possible. A modern infrastructure, well-trained teachers, and

sophisticated equipment are all made possible by the institution's ability to manage its resources effectively, improving students' educational experience. The TVET leaders are pivotal in forging strong alliances and cultivating cooperation with various stakeholders, including governmental bodies, business representatives, and associations (Gachunga et al., 2020:371).

The TVET leadership engages stakeholders actively to comprehend their requirements, capitalise on their knowledge, and create opportunities for industry exposure, internships, and job placements (Yeboah, 2021:94). Leaders ensure that TVET programmes are relevant and responsive by involving all role players in decision-making. The integrity of education and training is a primary obligation of TVET leaders. They must implement quality assurance mechanisms, such as programme evaluation, accreditation procedures, and feedback channels from the industry. By benchmarking against national and international quality standards, leaders can drive continuous improvement, encourage innovation, and boost TVET graduates' employability. TVET management should prioritise the professional development of faculty and staff. They provide educators with training, research, and networking opportunities to keep them abreast of recent industry trends, teaching methodologies, and technological advancements (Motaung, 2020:32). Investing in faculty and staff professional development increases their capacity, enhancing instructional practices and student outcomes.

### **2.3.1. Strategic and Operational Management in the TVET**

Strategic management is the comprehensive process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating decisions and actions that enable an organisation to achieve its long-term objectives and competitive advantage. It involves setting goals, analysing the competitive environment, assessing internal capabilities, and aligning resources and strategies to achieve these goals (Muda, Halim, Sern, Isa, Saleem, & Othman. 2024:220). It also serves as a continuous assessment that requires leaders to adapt to changing conditions, innovations, and internal organisational shifts while focusing on the mission and vision. Therefore, it guides an organisation toward its long-term success by providing direction, ensuring alignment of activities, and optimising resource allocation. In the context of TVET, strategic management involves setting the institution's or training program's long-term direction and goals. Enables leadership examines how TVET can contribute to developing skilled workers, address industry needs, and support economic growth. Given the dynamic nature of industries and the rapid

changes in TVET policies, it helps leaders navigate challenges, enhance efficiency, and align their operations with national development goals. Ensures that TVET is well-governed, financially sustainable, and responsive to industry and societal needs. Implementing a structured and proactive management approach enables TVET colleges to enhance their effectiveness in producing skilled professionals, reducing unemployment, and contributing to economic growth. The key aspects of strategic management in TVET:

- i. **Alignment with National and Industry Needs:** TVET colleges must develop strategic plans that align with national policies, such as South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) and White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (2013). Emphasising expanding access to TVET education and improving its quality to address the country's skills shortage. This ensures that TVET leadership develop programs that support these national goals. By aligning TVET colleges with national and industry needs, strategic education management. It improves institutional credibility and attractiveness, making TVET colleges the first choice for students, and strengthens South Africa's economic growth by providing skilled labour for key sectors.
- ii. **Leadership and governance:** Leadership play a critical role in the strategic education management of TVET colleges. Effective leadership ensures that TVET colleges operate efficiently, maintain accountability, and align with NDP national education policies and industry demands. The leadership in TVET encompasses principals, deputy principals, and senior management, who are responsible for setting a direction and overseeing daily operations. Analyse enrolment trends, labour market needs, and institutional performance to make informed decisions that benefit students and stakeholders. The governance structure consists of the college council, academic board, and Student Representative Council, essential for decision-making, financial oversight, and institutional development. The highest decision-making body is responsible for policy formulation, strategic planning, and financial oversight.
- iii. **Resource optimisation:** Effective management of financial, human, and infrastructure resources is essential for TVET colleges to function effectively. Resource optimisation ensures that TVET colleges maximise their impact despite budget constraints and infrastructure challenges and increase student enrolment. Ensure funds are effectively allocated and used transparently through budget planning and financial accountability. On the aspect of human resources, TVET relies on qualified lecturers, administrative

staff, and industry mentors to deliver high-quality education. Leadership ensures efficient staffing and professional development measures are implemented to improve teaching and standards.

- iv. **Industry Collaboration and Work-Integrated Learning:** Essential components of strategic education management in TVET colleges. These strategies ensure that TVET graduates acquire industry-relevant skills, improve employability and contribute effectively to economic growth. Aligning training programs with real-world industry needs provides benefits for TVET colleges in efforts to bridge the gap between education and the labour market. The industry involves partnerships between TVET colleges and businesses, industries and government sectors to enhance skills development, practical training and employment opportunities. In this regard, TVET colleges collaborate with the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) for skills development and funding. Work-integrated learning is used as a strategic approach in the TVET for apprenticeships and internships to enhance the employability of TVET students.
- v. **Technology Integration:** Leveraging digital tools, modern equipment, and online learning ensures that TVET graduates acquire industry-relevant skills while improving institutional efficiency. Digital transformation in TVET can potentially improve access to learning and teaching, communication and decision-making among the stakeholders. It enhances leadership efficiency, decision-making and institutional governance and by leveraging technology-driven solutions, TVET leaders can optimise administration and improve accountability. Through online platforms, TVET leaders facilitate instant collaboration, coordination and engagement between the TVET structures and stakeholders. However, many South African TVET colleges still face challenges with digital infrastructure, connectivity, and lecturer training.
- vi. **Student Support and retention strategies:** Effective student support enhances academic success, retention, employability, and overall well-being, ensuring students are adequately prepared for the workforce. Involves a holistic approach that includes educational assistance, career guidance, financial aid, mental health support, and digital learning tools to improve student outcomes. Strategic management in TVET emphasises career guidance, mentorship programs and financial aid. The institutions such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) provide TVET students

with financial aid, which covers tuition, accommodation, transport, and learning materials to help students boost academic attendance and reduce drop-out.

- vii. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** TVET colleges require intense Monitoring and evaluation to track academic performance, financial management and graduate employment rates. It is critical in assessing institutional performance, improving governance, and ensuring quality education. DHET adopted the TVET College Efficiency Indicators Report to help TVET leaders track progress, identify challenges, and implement evidence-based improvement to enhance student outcomes and college efficiency (DHET, 2021). The assessment of institutional performance serves as a feedback mechanism to provide data-driven insight for leadership to make informed strategic choices. It helps TVET colleges identify weaknesses and implement improvements.

Operational management in the TVET colleges focuses on the implementation of the strategies set by the leadership. They are concerned with the daily administration of the college's resources, staff, and programs, and. Ensures that the strategic vision is translated into reality through efficient and effective execution of policies and procedures (Paterson, Vally, Mthembu-Salter, Matlin, & Molokwane, 2024). This usually includes the department heads, program coordinators, and office staff who oversee the daily functioning of the college. They ensure that courses are delivered as per the curriculum, student enrolments are processed, examinations are managed, and staff schedules are coordinated (DHET, 2023). Effective operational leadership is essential for smooth administrative processes and optimises teaching methodologies, resource allocation, infrastructure management, and industry collaboration (Mbatha, Buthelezi, & Ajani 2024). Also, the colleges must comply with government regulations, such as those related to health and safety, academic integrity, and labour law. This includes maintaining proper records, submitting reports to authorities like DHET, and ensuring the institution meets quality assurance standards.

Both management levels are interconnected and must work to enhance the leadership practices and administration of TVET colleges in South Africa, ensuring that both strategic goals are met and that the day-to-day operations are smooth and effective. Strategic management in TVET colleges is about setting the long-term direction, policies, and partnerships necessary to meet national education and skills development goals. It focuses on visionary leadership, aligning the institution with market demands, and ensuring that the college remains relevant in

changing workforce needs. While operational management focuses on the daily execution of the strategies set by the leadership. It is concerned with the practical aspects of running a TVET college, ensuring that administrative processes, teaching, and student support services are carried out efficiently.

**Table 2.2. Differentiate Between Strategic and Operational Management**

Aspect	Strategic Management	Operational Management
Focus	Long-term vision, policies, partnerships, and resource allocation	Day-to-day administration, staff management, and curriculum delivery
Leadership Role	Visionary, transformative leadership with a focus on national priorities and growth	Practical, hands-on leadership that ensures daily operations run smoothly
Time Horizon	Long-term (3–5+ years)	Short-term (daily, monthly, yearly)
Key Responsibilities	Policy development, resource management, partnerships, governance	Implementing policies, managing staff, ensuring compliance, and student support
Impact on Administration	Influences overall governance, funding, and strategic objectives	Focuses on efficiency in administrative processes (e.g., enrollment, grading, scheduling)
Leadership Practices	High-level decision-making, leadership development programs, partnerships with industry	Direct management of departments, team leadership, and student services
Examples	Introducing new programs, developing industry partnerships, setting up a new funding model	Scheduling classes, managing resources, overseeing student assessments, addressing daily administrative issues

Source: (Researcher, 2025)

## **2.4. LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

According to Adero and Odiyo (2020), Abaya et al. (2023), Lee et al. (2020), Metwally and Zarka (2017), and Khan et al. (2016), models have been improved and changed over time and every assessment is essential. The literature mentions that the applicability of theories is based on the circumstances in which they are used. The style of leadership used in tasks requiring a high degree of confidence, sensitivity, and caring technical skills could vary from that found in straightforward management-oriented portfolios. This means that various factors, including circumstances, setting culture, the workplace, new rules and regulations, overload of information, organisational challenges, and social changes, significantly affect leadership ideas. Make it appropriate for shifting organisational dynamics. A range of leadership theories that are connected to and applicable to the educational domain is covered in the following section. This section discusses four leadership theories: transformational, great man, trait, behavioural, contingency, and transactional theory. The researcher selected relevant leadership theories to grasp the issue under investigation comprehensively.

### **2.4.1. Transformational Leadership Theory**

As early as 1973, James V. Downton developed the notion of transformational leadership. James Burns went on to develop this notion in 1978 (Ugochukwu, 2024). Burns, a leadership expert and biographer, suggested that team members may be inspired to follow someone with a strong vision and character (Ugochukwu, 2024). According to Ferris (2021), the philosophy of transformational leadership places a significant emphasis on pushing and motivating followers to higher moral and motivational standards. According to Reza (2019:120), the goals of transformational leadership are to compel followers to take positive action, offer a clear vision, and inspire them to do so. Leaders enable transformation by building an emotional bond with their audience and inspiring people to reach beyond their limitations (Reza, 2019). By expressing optimism for the future, they encourage and inspire others who follow them to keep going. Teamwork produces innovation, noteworthy advancements, and societal enhancement (Maisyura et al., 2022:480). Charm, communication, adaptability, and empathetic support are qualities that transformational leaders rely on while working with their employees to implement significant organisational change (Page, 2021). This leadership theory consists of four main components:

- i. Individualised consideration: Transformational leaders pay attention to each follower's needs, fostering a supportive environment that values individual development. They act as mentors or coaches, recognising unique strengths, providing constructive feedback, and encouraging each follower to reach their full potential.
- ii. Inspirational motivation: Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers by articulating a compelling future vision. They set high expectations, communicate optimism, and foster a sense of purpose and commitment. This creates enthusiasm and encourages followers to take on challenges and push past obstacles.
- iii. Individualised influence: Leaders act as role models and are admired, respected, and trusted by their followers. They display high ethical standards, share risks, and prioritise the needs of their followers and organisation over personal gain. Through this influence, followers identify with their leader and aspire to emulate them.
- iv. Intellectual stimulation: Leaders encourage innovation and creativity, challenging followers to think critically, question assumptions, and explore new ways of solving problems. By fostering a culture that values continuous learning and development, they help their followers grow and bring fresh ideas to the organisation.

Kedir and Geleta (2017) affirm that transformational leadership provides an ideal role model for their pupils, educators, professors, deans, and school administrators use transformational leadership. It strongly focuses on building community relationships and challenges teachers and students to achieve greater levels. Leaders give stakeholders the power and direction to fulfil their duties and make decisions. It is an approach to leadership that encourages people to be creative, organise, and provide fresh answers to persistent issues (Metwally & Zarka, 2017:165). Transformational leadership is a leadership paradigm that relies on team encouragement to reach complete achievement. Increasing a group's confidence and spirit enables them to relate to the mission and vision of the business more effectively (Sparks, 2021:12). They are regarded as key drivers of change within the organisation and promote a positive culture whereby employees are inspired and motivated to work towards meeting the goals and objectives of the organisation.

Transformational leadership is identified as an effective type of leader who is essential in transforming the organisation. However, there are gaps or weaknesses and criticisms. Jati (2020) argues that impression management is a component of transformational leadership, and it can result in leaders promoting themselves immorally. In most cases, these leaders put their

reputation before morality. Other critics, such as Thompson (2019), claim that transformative leaders influence their followers, possibly causing them more harm than good by increasing employee frustration, as every activity must be approved. This issue underlines how important it is for leaders to act morally. Transformational leadership employs impression management methods conducive to leaders promoting themselves immorally. The idea is a synthesis of other leadership philosophies; it is particularly challenging to train or teach. Leaders can influence followers, and they can suffer more losses than gains.

In the dynamic field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), strong leadership is critical to driving good change, encouraging creativity, and guaranteeing the general prosperity of organisations. Transformational leadership has gained popularity as a powerful approach to leadership that may significantly alter TVET institutions. Effective leadership and governance are impacted considerably by transformational leadership in TVET institutions. TVET leaders foster strong connections, inspire a shared vision, and empower stakeholders by exhibiting transformational leadership concepts. This leads to improved organisational performance, cooperation, and innovation. By embracing a transformational leadership style, leaders may promote positive change, raise the standard of instruction and training, and foster a continuous improvement culture at TVET institutions.

#### **2.4.2. The Great Man Theory**

The Great Man Theory of leadership was developed in the mid-nineteenth century by Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish philosopher and historian (Hunt et al., 2018:22). Carlyle introduced this concept in his lectures and writings, particularly in his work entitled *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, published in 1841 (Benmira & Agboola, 2021:3). Carlyle developed the Great Man Theory of leadership as a response to the rapidly changing social and political landscape of his time. Significant social and technological upheavals, including the Industrial Revolution and various political revolutions, marked the early nineteenth century. Carlyle sought to understand how extraordinary individuals could emerge and impact history, highlighting the belief that great leaders are crucial in shaping societal progress. The Great Man Theory of leadership posits that leaders are born, not made and that specific individuals possess inherent qualities that make them exceptional leaders. These qualities often include charisma, intelligence, bravery, and decisiveness.

According to the Great Man Theory of leadership, exceptional leaders are not created; they are born. These people are born with specific qualities and attributes that allow them to be natural leaders. Furthermore, they have leadership skills that will enable them to lead while changing the course of history. Khan et al. (2016:1) assert that this theory focuses on finding intrinsic talents and characteristics that great social, political, and military leaders exhibit. The two central tenets of the Great Man Theory of leadership are the innate qualities of leaders and the historical significance of individual leaders (Hunt et al., 2018:22). Applying the idea in an organisational context is likewise challenging. According to this belief, organizations should only recruit people who exhibit great male attributes since they are innate. However, it implies that not everyone has the qualities necessary to be a leader because not all of us are born with them.

The main advantage of this theory is that it helps to focus on leadership and the elements of it. This theory drew harsh criticism, which fuelled the nineteenth-century leadership controversy. It oversimplifies leadership by ignoring the significance of context, experience, and learning and attributing it only to innate qualities (Sivaruban, 2021:58). It encourages an elite and hierarchical conception of leadership, ignoring the capacity for leadership in ordinary people. The Great Man Theory of leadership has faced several criticisms over the years, mainly due to its focus on individual leaders and the implications of its assumptions. Cherry (2023:03) argues that not everyone with innate leadership traits goes on to become a great leader, which is one of the main issues with the Great Man idea of leadership. Everyone with the required attributes will ultimately find themselves or get an opportunity to be appointed as a leader to contribute towards organisational success (Uslu, 2019:162).

The theory places undue emphasis on the qualities of individual leaders while neglecting the role of followers, teams, and organisational dynamics. Critics argue that effective leadership is often a collaborative effort rather than the result of a single individual's characteristics. Suggests that leaders are born with certain traits that cannot be developed or cultivated, which limits the understanding of leadership as a dynamic and evolving skill set (Khan et al., 2016:1). This perspective overlooks the importance of experience, training, and personal development in shaping effectual leaders. Critics point out that the Great Man Theory of leadership needs more empirical support and scientific rigour. It is based on historical anecdotes and observations rather than systematic research. As a result, it may need to accurately represent the complexities of leadership in contemporary contexts (Gustiawan, 2019:67). The criticism

of this theory has resulted in the development of the trait theory, which is discussed in the following section.

### **2.4.3. The Trait Theory**

Gordon Allport originated the Trait Theory, believing that psychologists must first learn to define and quantify the fundamental components of personality, rather than attempting to analyse behaviour to find an analytical explanation (Lindberg, 2023). The Trait Theory of leadership disagrees with the Great Man idea in that effectual leaders possess qualities from birth. Instead, the approach concentrates on traits that qualify people as effectual leaders (Kanodia & Sacher, 2016:122). Therefore, if they work on them, anybody may become a leader with a large following. Allport was the first researcher to suggest that anyone may acquire the skills necessary to become a successful leader. Shoemaker (2022) asserts that trait theory possesses essential characteristics that serve as the fundamental components of personality. These include:

- i. Consistency: Characteristics hold in a range of circumstances. Talkative people, for instance, tend to engage in more talks in all settings, including companies, parties, and schools.
- ii. Stability: Characteristics are long-lasting conditions rather than merely fleeting moods. Therefore, it is likely that a perfectionist in school will continue to be such throughout their working life.
- iii. Individual variations: Each person possesses unique characteristics. They could or might not have a certain quality (like a drive for fame). There may be a continuum for specific attributes (such as extraversion vs. introversion), with different people falling in various places.

### **2.4.4. Behavioural Theory**

The mid-twentieth-century saw a revolutionary change in leadership studies take place, leading to the Behavioural Theory of leadership. Scholars such as Kurt Lewin, Douglas McGregor, and Robert Blake began to challenge the prevalent view that personal qualities are the main factors influencing good leadership. Behaviourism is a learning theory that holds that all behaviours are acquired by conditioning, which occurs through contact with the environment. Behaviourists think environmental cues influence human actions (Cherry, 2024:2). This school

of thought, also known as behavioural psychology, believes behaviour can be examined methodically and visibly, regardless of underlying mental processes (Purohit, 2019:170). Behavioural theory emphasises that only observable behaviour should be investigated since cognition, emotions, and mood are too subjective (Mehan, 2021:626).

Strict behaviourists believe that anybody, regardless of genetic origin, personality qualities, or interior thoughts, can be educated to accomplish any activity within their physical ability. It demands proper preparation; anyone may learn to lead by observing good and bad leaders. Northouse (2016) argue that the behavioural theory serves as a helpful reminder for leaders of the task and relationship levels at which their behaviours towards others take place. It is a requirement that leaders must be more task-oriented in some circumstances and more relationship-oriented in others. Similarly, specific followers require much guidance from their leaders, while others require a lot of nurturing and support (Northouse, 2016:71). The leader can examine their behaviour using a psychological approach. It offers a road map for leaders to hone their leadership skills via education and experience. This is in line with the current commitment to lifelong learning and growth.

There are limitations to behavioural theory. One of the main criticisms is that training an individual to become an effective leader can be time-consuming, costly, and laborious. In this regard, only some organizations have enough time and resources to develop the qualities that make a great leader (Sivaruban, 2021:58). Scholars also contend that adopting the most effective attributes of a great leader requires more than just learning. An aspirant leader, for instance, might be instructed on the value of having empathy for their staff. However, more is needed to embody that degree of empathy genuinely. Therefore, an organisation can lose valuable resources and time that cannot be recovered.

#### **2.4.5. Contingency Theory**

In the 1960s, the Austrian psychologist, Fred Fiedler, was the first to formulate the Contingency Theory. After researching the personalities and traits of leaders, he concluded that it is challenging, if not impossible, to modify a leader's style since their life experiences shape it. Because of this, Fiedler thought that each task should have a different leader depending on the situation's needs and the leader's skill set. Contingency theory is a leadership and organisational management theory suggesting that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to

leadership; instead, the most effective leadership style or organisational strategy depends on specific situational factors. Aalateeg (2017) states that this theory counters the idea that a singular management style or structure works universally, arguing that a leader's effectiveness hinges on both their traits and how well these align with the demands of the situation.

Organisations that apply contingency theory encourage flexibility, empowering leaders to adapt their style based on team needs and situational demands. This increases the effectiveness of leadership across various organisational levels. This is corroborated by Fiedler and Chemers (1974) and Sahal (1979), who state that the continuity theory of leadership attempts to match individuals with appropriate situations according to their authority styles. This suggests that good leadership can adjust or adapt to the current situation under specific or unusual conditions (either above or below). According to Zeerak (2023), the fundamental tenet of contingency theory is that there is no one correct method to manage a team or make choices. Instead, it promotes a plan that can be adjusted and modified based on the current circumstances. Adherents of contingency theory modify their leadership style in response to various input from staff members and interpersonal interactions in the workplace (Dia et al., 2023:10). The main advantage of contingency theory for managers is that it offers a strategy that helps to introduce the degree of flexibility required for various circumstances.

Some of the benefits are as follows.

- i. Self-reflection: Contingency theory encourages leadership styles to reflect on themselves.
- ii. Situation focus: This favours emphasising the circumstances above the specific leader.
- iii. Leadership determination offers a straightforward way to determine the best leader for a given situation.
- iv. Team awareness: This encourages an understanding of the problem and team members.
- v. Guidance: This offers precise advice on the elements to consider when selecting a leadership style.

According to Fiedler's contingency theory, changing a leader is the only course of action when there is a misalignment between the leader's perspective (task- or relationship-oriented) and the unfavourable circumstance. Opponents contend that this method ignores other adaptation techniques and exaggerates. Another critic points out that the contingency theory needs to

explain why leadership philosophies work better in particular contexts. It needs to satisfactorily explain, for example, why task-motivated leaders could do better than people-motivated leaders under challenging circumstances. However, the theory emphasises the significance of situational fit. To navigate effectively, leaders must consider both the context and their tendencies.

#### **2.4.6. Charismatic Theory**

The Charismatic Theory was first introduced by the German sociologist, Max Weber in 1922 as part of his work on the types of authority and leadership (Latif, 2016:209). Weber categorised authority into three types of authority. These were as follows:

- i. Traditional authority;
- ii. Traditional-legal authority;
- iii. Charismatic authority.

Charismatic leadership was one of these types, which he described as a form of leadership where followers see their leader as extraordinarily gifted, with personal qualities that inspire devotion and allegiance (Elias & Akintayo, 2019:1). Weber developed the charismatic leadership theory to explain why certain leaders, such as religious prophets, revolutionary leaders, or war heroes, could influence people to follow them with fervour. This was unlike traditional or legal-rational forms of authority. The theory became particularly relevant as organisations grew more complex and change-oriented, and leaders needed new ways to inspire, motivate, and adapt to shifting environments (Cheng & Pan, 2019:48). Researchers saw charismatic leadership as essential for driving innovation, cultural transformation, and high levels of employee engagement.

Charismatic leadership theory provides several benefits to management and leadership practices by emphasising the importance of personal influence, motivation, and vision (Shastri et al., 2012). Charismatic leaders motivate employees by inspiring a strong sense of purpose and belonging. This often leads to higher levels of engagement, where employees are willing to go the extra mile to achieve organisational goals. Such motivation also fosters resilience, helping teams to stay focused and dedicated even in challenging times. Charismatic leaders are typically visionaries who encourage followers to think creatively and embrace new ideas (Nikoloski, 2015:19). They have the ability to paint a compelling picture of the future, which

can help teams adapt to change and pursue innovative solutions. Charismatic leadership theory has advantages and disadvantages, mainly stemming from relying on the leader's personal qualities to inspire and influence followers.

The advantages of the Charismatic Leadership Theory include the following:

- i. Charismatic leaders can energise and inspire followers, often creating a sense of purpose and belonging. This high level of engagement can lead to increased productivity, loyalty, and morale.
- ii. Charismatic leaders are often visionaries who inspire followers to embrace change and innovation. Their enthusiasm and passion can drive teams to challenge the status quo and explore creative solutions.
- iii. Build deep emotional connections with their followers through their appeal and empathy. This fosters trust, unity, and commitment to organisational goals.
- iv. Charismatic leadership can be particularly effective during times of crisis or uncertainty, as the leader's confidence and clear vision can provide direction and reassurance, helping followers remain resilient.
- v. Foster a strong sense of loyalty and cohesion among followers, creating motivated and willing teams to go above and beyond for the shared mission.

While charismatic leadership can drive high levels of motivation, unity, and adaptability, it also carries risks, particularly related to over-reliance, sustainability, and accountability.

The disadvantages of the Charismatic Leadership Theory include the following:

- i. One of the main risks is that followers may become overly reliant on the leader, leading to reduced independence and decision-making ability among team members. The organisation may need help maintaining momentum and direction if the leader leaves.
- ii. Charismatic leaders may sometimes act with excessive confidence, believing firmly in their vision, even if it is untested. This can lead to risks or poor decisions if the leader does not seek feedback or consider alternative perspectives.
- iii. The lack of integrity might manipulate their followers for personal gain, as their influence allows them to control others' actions and beliefs, sometimes even against followers' best interests.

- iv. The power and admiration charismatic leaders hold can lead to less accountability, as followers might hesitate to question their actions or decisions. This can hinder transparency and ethical standards within the organisation.
- v. Charismatic leadership is highly dependent on the personality of a single individual, so it may not be sustainable in the long term. With a clear structure and succession plan, the organisation could continue if the leader is present and leaves.

#### **2.4.7. Transactional Leadership Theory**

Max Weber initially presented the theory of transactional leadership in 1947. Weber describes leaders as inherently charismatic, authoritative, conventional, and transactional. A transactional leader wants his people to follow suit as they work diligently along the organisational line to complete tasks perfectly. The foundation of transactional leadership is a give-and-take dynamic (Jaqua & Jaqua, 2021:399). Transformational leaders engage their people by inspiring, elevating their spirits, and providing motivation. Using incentives and sanctions to hold staff members accountable for their work is known as transactional leadership (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:358). This strategy emphasises reaching objectives and quantifiable results and intends to motivate staff to complete tasks by the deadline (Nikezić et al., 2012:286). Workers who regularly meet deadlines and achieve goals get a bonus at the end of the quarter; those who fall short could lose their jobs, are demoted, or are not paid.

Transactional leadership is thus:

- i. Performance-oriented: Results and performance are given top priority by transactional leaders. Employees are either disciplined or rewarded based on their performance evaluations as a team.
- ii. Uses extrinsic incentive: Rather than using internal motivation to improve job outcomes, transactional leaders frequently rely on rewards like money, recognition, and praise.
- iii. Change-resistant: Transactional leaders tend to adhere to their tried-and-true strategies and may be reluctant to embrace new initiatives or other approaches.
- iv. Realistic in nature: Transactional leaders handle their duties with realism and practicality. They carefully consider any barriers or challenges they face to finish their assignments.

- v. Authoritative: Transactional leaders frequently behave with authority and represent their team while making choices. They provide instructions that their team members must follow.
- vi. Includes short-term objectives: Transactional leaders deal with issues as they come up rather than waiting to solve them.

In educational institutions, the notion of transactional leadership is commonly applied. Transactional leadership is “largely based on the exchange of rewards contingent on performance” (Avolio et al., 2009:427). The leader-follower dynamic is the main emphasis of transactional leadership. It is frequently used in the classroom dynamic between teachers and students. Students must finish assignments, projects, and tests; if they do well, they will receive excellent grades or be able to pass. This procedure might be a simple way to incorporate performance standards outside of the classroom into educational institutions (Islam et al., 2012:239). Following the definitions of these two leadership theories, the discussion of each leadership theory is centred on environmental preparation.

Transactional leadership analyses performance based on the organisation’s system of incentives and punishments prioritises results and adheres to the structure already in place (Jaqua et al., 2021:399). Within an organisation, transactional leaders hold official roles of power and accountability. This kind of leader keeps things predictable by encouraging collective performance and controlling individual performance. According to Klein (2023), this kind of leader establishes employee standards based on predetermined specifications. The most popular method for evaluating employee performance is through performance reviews. Managerial or transactional leaders function best with staff members who understand their roles and are driven by rewards and penalties (Benmira & Agboola, 2021:4). An organisation’s *status quo* is upheld by transactional leadership.

#### **2.4.8. Justification of Adopted Leadership Theories**

The study adopts transformational leadership because of its ability to drive institutional change, leadership development, and organisational effectiveness. It is aligned with the core objective of enhancing leadership and management structures in the TVE. Transformational leadership theory offers the best theoretical lens to examine leadership effectiveness, enabling TVET colleges to create a culture promoting continuous improvement. These are essential for

enhancing management and leadership structures in TVET colleges. It provides a robust framework for analysing and improving governance, leadership capacity, and institutional framework because it emphasises innovation and motivation. The key principle of transformational leadership is developing and empowering other leaders within the TVET. This requires strong middle and senior management structures to improve decision-making processes at various levels and foster collaboration where departments work towards institutional goals. Transformational leadership focuses on mentorship and capacity building, ensuring that leadership structures are hierarchical but also distributed and dynamic. This is crucial in TVET colleges, where leadership must adapt to technical advancements and the educational shift industry. Applying transformational leadership principles, this study ensures that TVET structures become more innovative, inclusive, and adaptable to modern educational and industry challenges.

Behavioural theory emphasises that effective leadership is based on learned behaviours rather than inherited traits. Unlike trait theories, which suggest leaders are born with specific characteristics, behavioural theory argues that leadership skills can be developed through training, experiences, and practices. This makes it particularly relevant in the TVET, where leadership and management structures must be enhanced through professional development and capacity-building initiatives. Since TVET requires leaders who can adapt to changing educational policies, industry demands, and institutional challenges, the behavioural approach suggests that effective leadership is not innate but learned through experience and training. The theory is highly relevant to enhancing leadership and management structures in TVET because it focuses on developing TVET leaders through training and experience. The success of TVET colleges depends on effective leadership that fosters innovation, accountability, and sustainable development.

Adopting Transformational and Behavioural Theory in this study is justified by their practical applicability in improving leadership effectiveness, promoting ethical governance, and driving institutional change in TVET colleges. Transformational leadership provides a visionary, change-driven approach that fosters innovation, while behavioural theory allows for analysing and developing leadership styles that positively impact institutional performance. The two theories provide complementary frameworks that address key challenges in leadership development, institutional governance, and adaptability to industry demands.

## **2.5. MANAGEMENT THEORIES**

The purpose of management theories, conceptual models and frameworks is to clarify, comprehend, and direct the management of institutions and public organisations. These theories shed light on the intricacies of governance, policymaking, and public administration. Theories support policymakers, aid in understanding public management practices, and direct public administration improvements. Public managers frequently combine these philosophies to negotiate the intricacies of the public sector and deal with current issues. The way that public administration, government, and society expectations have evolved is reflected in the development of public management theories. Theories of management are a collection of concepts developed by writers and academics to clarify and offer insight into the management procedures used in higher education. The theoretical foundation is a crucial component of this study since it connects the investigator to the body of information. The management theories of Scott (2023) are broad guidelines or recommendations that support managers' duties. The discussion below covers the evolution of dominant management theories in the TVET sector.

### **2.5.1. Bureaucratic Management Theory**

Abun et al. (2021) maintain that the German sociologist, Max Weber (1864-1920), originated the bureaucratic management theory. According to Islam (2021:375), the term 'bureaucracy' comes from the French word bureau, which means desk. A bureaucratic government is managed out of an office, encouraging stability and efficiency (Islam, 2021:375). Weber's bureaucratic management theory is centred on the effectiveness and structure of organisations. Its foundation is that the most effective approach to managing an organisation is through a well-functioning bureaucracy (Monteiro & Adler, 2021:14). A person who works in a bureaucracy is called a bureaucrat. A government official or someone in a position of authority, like the chief executive officer or an elected official of an entity or other organisation, may be mentioned in this context. The foundation of Max Weber's bureaucracy theory is twofold. The initial approach is maintaining power through a rigid leadership structure; the other is through rules, procedures, and regulations (Grimsley, 2023). Organisations can function more efficiently and effectively with bureaucracies. Large institutions can organise systems and procedures and streamline processes (Serpa & Ferreira, 2019:13).

The procedures become less disorganized, and management becomes more straightforward. Monteiro and Adler (2021) mentioned that there is typically a division of labour with distinct functions in bureaucracies. Additionally, they guarantee that no one is biased against any entity and that everyone is treated fairly and equitably. For example, the government requires everyone to fill out the same, frequently tedious paperwork to receive benefits like student loans (Gamay & Ancho, 2019:36). People tend to despise bureaucracies because they believe they prioritise procedures over effectiveness. Many believe that bureaucracies can accumulate regulations and paperwork. This is commonly known as the red tape individuals and businesses must overcome to accomplish objectives, like starting a corporation (Drew, 2023). In addition to being frequently confusing, rules and laws may even favour some groups of people over others, such as the affluent. Weber's theory of bureaucratic administration identifies six guiding concepts or traits. These are as follows:

- i. Promotes a division of labour;
- ii. Maintains hierarchical layers of authority;
- iii. Has a formal selection process;
- iv. Is based on rules and requirements;
- v. Is impersonal;
- vi. Is career orientated.

For Bello et al. (2022:1173) the bureaucratic model adopted in managing TVET institutions can also be identified by some essential characteristics of Weber's ideal bureaucracy. In vocational and technical colleges, there is a hierarchy of positions of power and authority. Within the hierarchical structure, there is a clear indication of roles and responsibilities, which include following orders from the higher authorities known as superiors (Bello et al., 2022). In the TVET, a well-defined hierarchy is used to create and foster a distinct chain of command at both the central office and campus level. Sec. 4.5.2 illustrates a hierarchical organisational management structure adopted in the TVET sector underpinned by Weber's Bureaucratic principles. This facilitates constructing a system that guarantees precise control and discipline in TVET operations. The hierarchical management structure in the TVET is based on the patterns specified by the government through a national department responsible for the administration and management of the TVET colleges in SA.

The following discussion provides an overview of Webster's bureaucratic principles from the perspective of the TVET sector:

- i. Division of labour: This entails organising duties logically and allocating staff to different departments based on specialisation. TVET colleges distribute tasks among different ranks. TVET principals, at the top level, are responsible for decision-making, strategic planning, and delegating tasks to ensure that the college administration functions effectively and efficiently. This implies the separation of tasks as seen in the TVET organisational management structure; middle management comprises deputy principals responsible for implementing strategic plans for the departmental portfolio, including academic services and student support, finance, and corporate services. The lower management in the TVET are portfolio managers in human resources, student support, and infrastructure and facilities. Their responsibility is to ensure that employees perform their tasks and responsibilities to meet college objectives and goals.
- ii. Authority hierarchy: Explicit guidelines are established for those in an organisation who have the authority to issue commands. This establishes power dynamics where individuals at higher levels issue commands to those at lower levels through formalised channels. In the TVET sector, the power to issue directives and final decisions rests with the college principal. The TVET principal gives authority to subordinates in a regular college hierarchy. Delegating authority establishes a formal chain of command, defining power channels from top to bottom within an organisation.
- iii. Formal rules and regulations: The national government is responsible for rules and regulations enforced in the TVET sector by DHET to ensure that it is responsive and delivers services effectively. The DHET also provides policy documents, manuals and handbooks containing guidelines for management, college council, academics, administrators, students, and all those involved in the sector on what is required and exceptional behaviour. They indicate what must be done for the college to function accordingly.
- iv. Impersonality: The TVET management and leadership are supposed to maintain an impersonal approach in their interactions with students and colleagues while carrying out their official responsibilities. It demands that TVET administrators treat their subordinates fairly, equally, and fairly. The rules and regulations enforced in the TVET sector apply to prevent favouritism and political interference.

- v. Career Orientation: This implies that every employee in an ideal bureaucracy has distinct abilities. The employer must place workers in positions that best fit their qualifications. Put another way, career paths that allow people to try new things and eventually progress into different jobs should be provided, which benefits both the employer and the employee.
- vi. Formal selection: Technical competencies and abilities obtained by education, training, and experience are the basis for selecting all workers. One of the fundamental tenets is that workers receive compensation for their work, with the amount varying according to their position. The employee has no ownership interest in the organisation; instead, the conditions of their contract are set by organisational rules and requirements.

Educational institutions, like many other organizations, can benefit from adopting a bureaucratic theory. As it emphasizes a structured, formalized approach to organization, which bring about clarity, consistency, and order in the way institutions operate. However, critics of the bureaucratic theory argue that it fails to consider the ingenuity and inventiveness required to succeed in the modern era (Daneshfard & Aboalmai, 2016:217). In addition, adherence to rules and regulations is crucial to bureaucracy. This hampers employee creativity; they feel more like numbers than unique people. Subsequent studies (the human relations theory) have shown that workers value recognition and desire decision-making authority (Ahmad, 2023). Weber's theory does not take this into account. Bureaucracies strongly emphasise information flow from top management to lower management, including duties, instructions, rules, and regulations. However, employee input on operational problems and other recommendations is not solicited. Managers abuse higher power to further their agendas or control their workers (Daneshfard & Aboalmai, 2016). The highest level of management retains the ability to make decisions for itself. Therefore, even in an emergency or other scenario requiring a fast reaction, the lower-level managers can only depend on the upper-level managers.

### **2.5.2. Modern Management Theory**

The Modern Management Theory recognises that workers are complex and have many reasons for wanting to succeed in their jobs. Modern Management theorists also believe that rapidly changing technology can cause and solve many problems in the workplace. This theory combines mathematical analysis with an understanding of human emotions and motivation to create a working environment that is maximally productive. A manager using the Modern

Management Theory will use statistics to measure employee performance and productivity and try to understand what satisfies their employees at their jobs (Hussain, 2021:1). Applying this theory boosts organisational productivity, allowing managers to use scientific data to assess employee output and determine where an area requires training development. It also promotes employee engagement and promotes objectivity.

The statistical data also provides management with valuable information that assists them in decision-making. The Modern Management Theory comprises three other management theories:

- i. Quantitative Theory;
- ii. Systems Theory, and
- iii. Contingency Theory (Negash, 2024:1),

This theory understands that technology changes the workplace, and leaders must be able to incorporate these changes efficiently. For example, a manager who uses the Modern Management Theory will look at a development such as working from home on two fronts:

- i. They analyse the costs and benefits of having employees work from home, and
- ii. They will also ask individuals how working from home benefits their lifestyle.

Modern theory in TVET place a strong emphasis on adaptability, quality improvement, and strategic alignment with industry demands. This approach supports the goal of TVET institutions to provide high-quality education that not only meets the immediate needs of the labour market. But also anticipates future trends, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills to succeed in a rapidly evolving world. it focuses on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of educational institutions that provide vocational and technical skills training.

### **2.5.3. Systems Management Theory**

The biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy proposed the Systems Management Theory in the 1940s and was developed further by W. Ross Ashby and George Bateson. These academics have made substantial contributions to the growth and implementation of systems theory in administration, offering insightful advice on better comprehending and enhancing organisations (Adams, 2012:210). In contrast to the more closed systems connected to classical science, Bertalanffy first argued for open systems. Systems that interact with one another or

their external environment are called open systems; closed systems do not. While closed systems are primarily mechanical, open systems typically contain biological and social components. Open systems have greater versatility than closed systems, which have mostly fixed boundaries. Systems theory is an analytical structure founded on the idea that rather than being recognised in a solitary existence.

A system's constituent elements are best understood in the context of their connections with other systems and with each other. An idea of systems management, widely acknowledged as the cornerstone of organisational development, regards the organisation as an open system with interconnected and interdependent components that function as sub-systems through interaction. As a result, these subsystems together form a single, cohesive system that is the organisation. An institution can comprise several subsystems, including those for marketing, finance, accounting, and production. Therefore, rather than being researched in isolation, the various sub-systems should be examined in relation to one another. According to the Systems Theory approach, choices and actions in one part of the organisation will impact other areas. For instance, the production department can only function well if the purchasing department obtains the proper number and quality of inputs.

This method acknowledges that an organisation needs inputs from the environment to function. Additionally, the environment provides a channel for its outputs. TVET institutions can reap several benefits from the system approach. It offers a broad company perspective, viewing it as a network of interconnected subsystems. Managers can make well-informed decisions considering the organisation's overall effects by thoroughly understanding how various sections interact and how the jigsaw pieces fit together to produce the whole picture. Employees understand the importance of their position within the larger picture when they perceive the organisation as a linked system. This promotes a group mentality, which improves cooperation and teamwork to accomplish shared objectives.

TVET colleges operate within a broader educational ecosystem shaped by various external and internal influences, including government policies, DHET regulatory frameworks, accreditation bodies, and stakeholder engagement from students and the wider community (DHET, 2021). Systems conceptualises TVET institutions as open systems that continuously interact with their environment to maintain operational effectiveness and institutional sustainability. A well-managed TVET system ensures that no single component functions in

isolation; instead, all subsystems, such as governance, curriculum development, student support services, and industry partnerships, operate in an interconnected and balanced manner. This integrated approach facilitates adaptability, enhances institutional efficiency, and strengthens the alignment between vocational education and labour market demands.

The main components of the System Theory of Management include the following:

- i. **Environment:** The environment or framework in which a business functions, encompassing outside variables like the state of the market, rivals, suppliers, and clients.
- ii. **Inputs:** The knowledge, materials, and resources an organisation needs to conduct its business from its surroundings. This covers financial, technological, human, and physical resources.
- iii. **Transformation Process:** The internal organisational procedures and actions that change inputs into outputs. It entails organising, deciding, coordinating, and carrying out tasks.
- iv. **Outputs:** The finished goods, services, or results supplied to the external environment after changing.
- v. **Feedback:** Data from internal and external sources is used to assess the organisation's efficacy, efficiency, and performance. The system is improved and adjusted as needed based on user feedback.

The nature and dearth of explicit guidelines of the system theory of management have drawn criticism. Other scholars believe the theory is too essential to address intricate organisational systems adequately. Some who disagree with the systems approach claim its broad reach makes it unlikely to offer workable answers for specific problems. The theory's emphasis on a group objective might not mesh well with personal incentives, making it difficult to motivate staff members. Moreover, managers are uncertain about implementing the system theory because it lacks prescriptive techniques. Although it provides insightful information, its shortcomings are its ambiguous applicability and possible detachment from everyday managerial reality.

#### **2.5.4. New Public Management Theory**

Kalimullah et al. (2012) maintain that the term 'New Public Management' (NPM) theory was coined by scholars from the UK and Australia (Hood, 1991; Hood & Jackson, 1991) working

in public administration. The origin of this new term was to propose a new point of view towards organisational design in the public sector; however, after a decade, the meaning of this term in discussions and debates became popular (Islam, 2015:143). Fredriksson and Pallas (2018) assert that NPM management emerged in the 1980s, representing an attempt to make the public sector more businesslike and improve the government's efficiency, borrowing ideas and management models from the private sector. It emphasised the centrality of citizens who were the recipients of the services or customers of the public sector (Indahsari & Raharja, 2020:74). The NPM Theory proposed a more decentralised control of resources. It explored other service delivery models to achieve better results, including a quasi-market structure, where public and private service providers competed with one-another to provide better and faster services (Ferdous, 2016:28).

The core themes of the NPM Theory are as follows:

- i. A strong focus on financial control, value for money, and increasing efficiency.
- ii. A command-and-control mode of functioning, identifying, and setting targets and continuance monitoring of performance, handing over the power to the senior management.
- iii. Introducing audits at both financial and professional levels, using transparent means to review performances, setting benchmarks, and using protocols to ameliorate professional behaviour.
- iv. more excellent customer orientation and responsiveness, and an increased scope of roles played by non-public sector providers.
- v. Deregulating the labour market, replacing collective agreements with individual reward packages at senior levels and short-term contracts.
- vi. Discouraging the self-regulatory power of the professionals and handing over the power from individuals to management.
- vii. Encouraging more entrepreneurial management than a bureaucracy with high retrospective accountability requirements upwards.

NPM emphasizes efficiency, accountability, performance measurement, and a customer-oriented approach, all of which are essential for improving TVET systems. When using NPM as an analytic framework for TVET, the focus is on managing educational institutions in a way that mirrors private sector practices while maintaining the public sector's responsibility for

delivering quality education. Therefore, NPM encourages TVET to operate efficiently, reducing costs while maintaining the quality of training programs. This involves resource optimisation, process improvements, and effective use of technology in administration and teaching. NPM emphasises serving the “customer,” which in the case of TVET, includes students, employers, and the community. TVET institutions are encouraged to focus on the needs of the labour market and offer programs that are aligned with industry requirements. It advocates for decentralisation, giving more autonomy to individual TVET institutions. This allows them to make decisions based on local needs, customize curricula, and innovate in how they deliver training.

By applying NPM to TVET as an analytic framework, institutions can better understand how to improve their efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness to market needs. The framework helps in assessing how well TVET institutions perform in terms of cost-effectiveness, performance outcomes, customer satisfaction, and their ability to innovate and adapt to changing industry demands. Using NPM as an analytic framework encourages TVET institutions to think more strategically, improve management practices, and adopt more market-oriented approaches while ensuring that they fulfil their public sector mandate of providing high-quality, accessible education and training.

### **2.5.5. Organizational Development Theory**

Organisations operate in a dynamic environment that is constantly evolving. An external shift might be the introduction of a new rival, advancements in technology, or new laws. Changes in staffing, cultural shifts, and leadership agendas are examples of internal changes. Consequently, organisations sometimes discover that once-productive business techniques are less successful. To optimise their influence on corporate objectives, such practices must be modified. The Organizational Development (OD) Theory originated from human relations research conducted in the 1930s when psychologists discovered that organisational structures and procedures influence worker behaviour and motivation. Kurt Lewin (1898–1947) is the originator or inventor of OD, but he died before the notion gained popularity in the mid-1950s. Lewin developed the concepts of group dynamics and action research, which serve as the foundation for the primary OD method while adding its collaborative consultant/client ethos (Smith & MacKinnon, 2019:117). Organisational Development is a managerial approach that embraces change and requires continuous organisational improvement. In addition, the

OD Theory is a constant process that strongly influences “employee behaviour or values to foster overall expansion” in an organisation (Smith & MacKinnon, 2019:119).

As ian (2023) asserts, OD aims to increase people’s practical knowledge to improve and facilitate more effective organisational performance and transformation. It is crucial to comprehend this theory’s fundamental components comprehensively. It differs from routine business operations and workflow enhancements in that it adheres to precise procedure management explained to all employees (Parameswaran, 2023:5). In public sector institutions, OD Theory is used to attend to a range of strategic objectives and is shared by most OD initiatives. It encourages better delivery of communication services, product enhancement, individual employee development, and continuous improvement.

Smith and Mackinnon (2019:118) state that a fundamental and scientifically based process called OD helps organisations to create, improve, and reinforce their strategies, structures, and practices. To increase their capacity to change and achieve greater effectiveness. Banutu-Gomez and Banutu-Gomez (2016:1860) point out that OD Theory is essential to promoting effectiveness in the organisation as it enables the management and leadership to respond better and adapt to changes. Organisational Development is linked to six fundamental ideals characterised as humanistic principles. This indicates that rather than emphasising mechanical processes and procedures, the basic ideas of this philosophy concentrate on people or individuals.

It is crucial to comprehend these fundamental principles. They are making a place for new developments by allowing people to choose and take charge of their personal growth. Giving every employee a sense of purpose is essential, regardless of their position within the company, even though it may go against the grain of a well-functioning enterprise (Pandey, 2024:1). It enables them to work for the good of the company as a whole and to take pride and ownership in their work. It fosters an atmosphere where individuals feel distinct, as if everyone can perform their duties (Rohan, 2020:1). This motivates people to seek opportunities, push over their comfort zones, and be excellent workers. Ultimately, this fulfils a fundamental principle of improving the organisation’s overall effectiveness, as there is no longer a swarm of thoughtless people merely passing the time without challenging the status quo. They feel like they belong in the organisation and desire to increase the effectiveness of their work. Even in little doses, that emotion can affect real change.

The fundamental values of Organizational Development (OD) Theory:

- i. Provide individuals with the chance to live their own lives as unique beings.
- ii. Offer each person the opportunity to reach their most significant potential.
- iii. Strive to raise an organisation's general effectiveness.
- iv. Provide people the chance to shape the way they interact with an organisation.
- v. Establish a setting where people can do complex tasks.
- vi. Every person in an organisation has unique needs that should be considered.

Throughout the OD process, organisations frequently run across several obstacles and issues. The advancement and success of OD are impeded by ingrained problems inside the organisation, such as mistrust or aversion to teamwork. One could argue that OD creates a set of self-fulfilling prophecies since its methods and aims are formed through ongoing cycles of action, contemplation, and feedback. Employee resistance to change is another prevalent issue in organisational development. Individuals frequently feel at ease in their daily routines and may be reluctant to adopt new procedures, technological advancements, or cultural changes. Practical leadership commitment is necessary for OD to be successful.

Adopting new techniques may be improved if leaders are passionate about and committed to the process. Organisational Development (OD) may be disrupted if personnel are not trained to understand and adjust to new procedures or technology introduced during the process. In TVET colleges, OD is crucial for enhancing leadership and management to meet the demands of policy reforms, industry alignment, and student success. TVET institutions face ongoing challenges, such as weak governance, resource limitations, inconsistent policy implementation, and leadership inefficiencies. TVET colleges can build more decisive leadership, effective management structures, and a high-performance institutional culture through OD strategies.

#### **2.5.6. Ethical Conduct Theory**

The philosophers Plato (c. 427–348 BCE) and Aristotle (384–322 BCE) of Ancient Greece are credited with inventing virtue ethics in Western society. Likewise, the fourth-century BCE Chinese Confucian philosophers, Mencius and Confucius, are regarded as the founders of virtue ethics in Eastern civilisation (Parry, 2021:2). Ethical theories aim to give a coherent, unambiguous explanation of moral responsibilities. They attempt to present a single 'story'

about our obligations without specifically citing any instances (Songklin, 2016:390). It is customary in discussions of business ethics to refer to one or more ethical theories to shed light on appropriate or inappropriate behaviour in specific circumstances (Kapura, 2019:3). Philosophical, moral theories that are frequently cited include utilitarianism, deontology, contractarianism, and virtue (Benlahcene et al., 2018:35).

Utilitarianism is an element of the consequentialist ethical theory family that holds that the propensity of an action to result in good or negative consequences or occurrences determines whether it is right or wrong (Amer, 2019:189). Specifically, utilitarianism states that the action that will result in the best accomplishments, as determined by the effects on all parties concerned, is always right. Utilitarian philosophers were influential in several conflicts, now acknowledged as having severe ethical implications. For example, utilitarians promoted the rights of women and persons of other races. Utilitarians believe that all persons are equal, regardless of their level of enjoyment or pain. In a time when only white male property owners were genuinely believed to be entitled to the whole spectrum of rights, this was a radical viewpoint (Tseng & Wang, 2021:3). TVET institutions, following Utilitarianism, ensure that their resources provide the most significant possible benefit, aligning with their mission to serve students and the larger community. TVET colleges often face budget constraints, requiring them to make tough choices about where to allocate funding, staff, and facilities. The utilitarianism approach in TVET emphasises prioritising resource allocation and investment in areas that benefit the most students or yield the most significant positive impact. This means investing in the regions that serve the most students by directing funds into high-demand programs and upgrading essential facilities.

Tseng and Wang (2021) maintain that deontology holds that some moral standards are either absolutely or almost binding. The deontological theory advanced by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is intricate. However, the fundamental tenet is that people are not just objects but unique individuals who should be treated with dignity (Khemka, 2020:4). Specifically, using other people as props to further one's objectives is unacceptable. A few examples of these principles are the obligations to respect individuals' privacy and the rights of others to make personal choices for themselves (Skelton, 2017:2). This suggests that some things are forbidden, like stealing and harming others. Deontology is reflected in the contemporary emphasis on human rights, which is the belief that some things should never be done to people (Roby, 2018:12). TVET institutions foster a culture of integrity, reliability, and

professionalism by adhering strictly to policies and standards. This approach reinforces the institution's credibility and prepares students to enter their professions with a solid understanding of ethical and professional duties. TVET leadership and management must communicate policies, decisions, and significant changes openly and honestly, fulfilling their duty to provide transparent information. If there are new changes in the college, the administration must communicate these changes promptly and transparently to ensure student consultation and engagement. In this manner, it holds that TVET officials must behave in a manner that exemplifies professionalism, fostering respect and trust.

Ethical paradigm known as virtue, instead of concentrating on what laws to obey, we should consider what sort of individuals or organisations we aspire to be and what kind of moral role models we should follow (Baumane-Vītoliņa et al., 2016:111). A virtue theorist, often known as a 'virtue ethicist,' would inquire whether a person exhibiting a given action demonstrates the proper virtues or character qualities while discussing the ethics of that behaviour (Dion, 2011:742). There are two ways, at least, to decide the types of persons we should be. One way to look at this is to see what qualities someone needs to flourish to live well and be a part of a community in excellent health (Misselbrook, 2015:55). Virtues are admirable character qualities like tolerance and integrity. A vice is the exact opposite of a virtue. Vices are bad character qualities such as selfishness and dishonesty.

The work of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE), who maintained that every virtue is a mean or "middle-point" between two vices, one of excess and one of deficiency, is where virtue theory first emerged (Halbig, 2020:306). Virtue emphasises the importance of moral character and virtuous behaviour among TVET leaders, managers, academic staff, and stakeholders (Bhattarai, 2019). Educators act as role models in this framework, influencing students through instruction and demonstrating fairness, patience, and respect. By embodying these virtues, educators and administrators create a positive learning environment and help instil ethical values that students can carry into their future careers. It encourages TVET officials to be empathetic and supportive, assisting students with personal challenges that affect their learning. By witnessing these Virtues, students learn the importance of ethical behaviour and develop positive qualities that they can carry into their future workplaces. This approach supports a constructive educational environment and helps build a workforce grounded in moral principles.

The notion of ‘Contractualism’ can be used broadly to refer to the idea that good behaviour is founded on agreements or contracts, or it can be used more specifically to refer to a particular perspective that Harvard philosopher Scanlon has been developing recently, particularly in his book, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Suikkanen, 2022:2). The concept of a social contract is appealing to contractualism. It tries to infer the essence of morality and, in some cases, the rationale behind the belief that we must uphold morality from the idea of a consensus among all individuals inside the moral sphere (Weisshaar, 2018:41). Oshitani (2024) argues that contractualism is based on the idea that everyone has the same moral standing. This moral standing is understood to be predicated on their ability to exercise rational, independent agency. It holds that morality would happen if we made legally enforceable decisions while maintaining our equal status as morally significant, independent, and thinking beings (Russell, 2016:36). It encourages leadership and management to establish a culture where staff and students are expected to respect each other’s rights and responsibilities based on mutually agreed-upon rules. Accountability is a central element, as leadership commits to upholding stakeholder agreements. This mutual understanding creates an environment where everyone feels responsible for maintaining standards and strengthening institutional integrity and respect.

Mackay (2019) states that feminist ethics was developed by Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) in her historically significant book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, published in 1792. With the new ideas from the Enlightenment, individual feminists could travel more than ever before, generating more opportunities for exchanging ideas and advancing women’s rights (True, 2008:2). Feminist ethics is a theory predicated on the notion that men create the universe, govern it, and place a premium on rigid rule systems (Norlock, 2019). Developing a strategy that aims to put an end to gender, social, and political oppression is the aim of feminist ethics. Traditional ethical thinkers have long believed that women’s moral growth develops more slowly and subordinately to men’s (Ben-Jacob & Glazerman, 2023:165). Opponents of feminist theory believe that the latter encourages the devaluation of women’s moral capacities and debases the idea of morality in general (Miller, 2017:190).

The phrase “ethics of justice” is frequently used to refer to moral obligation founded on the indifference and reason of men. Emphasise creating an environment where everyone can succeed and contribute (Nkambule & Ngubane, 2023:306). The framework not only supports gender equity but also enhances the overall learning and work environment, preparing students

and staff for a diverse and inclusive society. TVET management and leadership are expected to ensure that all staff members, regardless of gender, have equal access to training and career development (RSA, 1996). Integrating feminist ethics into policies, culture, and practices, TVET can create a more inclusive, empathetic, and fair environment that supports diverse needs, promotes equity, and respects each student's unique experience.

**Table 2.3. A Summary of Ethical Theories**

Ethical Theories	Explanation
<b>Utilitarianism</b>	The right thing to do in any situation will do the best taking into consideration the interest of all concerned parties.
<b>Deontology</b>	As a matter of respect there are certain absolute rules that must be followed e.g., the rules that must be respected confidentiality people's privacy, respect of other people's right to make decisions about their own lives.
<b>Contractarianism</b>	To figure out what ethical rules to follow we out to figure out what ethical rules to follow, we ought to imagine what rules rational beings would agree to in an ideal decision-making context.
<b>Virtue Theory</b>	Focus not on what rules to follow, but on what kinds of people or organisation we want to be and what kind of ethical example we ought to follow.
<b>Feminist Ethics</b>	A complex set of interrelated perspectives that emphasize interpersonal concerns such as caring, interdependence, and the ethical requirements of relationships such as traditionally identified with women.

Source: MacDonald and Marcoux (2023)

TVET colleges have a critical role in shaping the workforce by providing education and training that equips students with the skills necessary to meet the economy's demands (Sebelo, 2018:59). TVET management and leadership in SA must uphold ethical standards by promoting "fairness, integrity, accountability, and transparency" in the college (RSA, 1996). Ethical standards provide a framework for making decisions, resolving conflicts, and navigating moral dilemmas, ensuring that the actions of TVET management and college

council align with the organisation's and society's core values (Mathabo & Mathabo, 2024). TVET colleges that promote ethical behaviour encourage a culture of instilling trust within the communities, which enables greater enrolment and support for the college (Shava & Mazenda, 2022). Maintaining high standards of ethical behaviour helps TVET colleges fulfil their mission, achieve desired educational outcomes, and serve the public interest by ensuring that allocated funds are used responsibly and promote accountability (Bhattarai, 2019:26).

Adopting ethical theories is essential for ensuring accountability and transparency and preventing unethical practices. Integrating deontological, utilitarianism, and virtue ethics is essential as it provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing leadership and management to ensure fair decision-making and professional integrity, as well as the long-term success of TVET in preparing a skilled workforce.

### **2.5.7. Consequence Management Theory**

A Consequence Management (CM) approach anticipates, recognises, handles, and reduces an occurrence's adverse social, economic, and environmental effects (Thorne, 2023:3). It involves planning for the outcomes of unexpected and unusual events, such as many concurrent events and cascade events that may have dramatic or catastrophic repercussions. The foundation of consequence management is consequence thinking, which entails a change in perspective and attitude (Fourie & Malan, 2022). It changes the emphasis of emergency management thinking away from the present and towards more forward-looking thinking and preparation that anticipates an occurrence's long-term effects and outcomes (du Plessis, 2020). Consequence Management is an approach that requires management to make more consistent and transparent decisions. Furthermore, it encourages employees to feel valued and work to meet the organisation's standards in a professional manner. Rodriguez (2014) maintains that CM provides a framework that promotes accountability and encourages "a risk-based approach guiding leaders through the process required when they have witnessed inappropriate behaviour" within the workplace, such as fraudulent activities and corruption (Blignaut, 2020:8). The Importance of Consequence Management are as follows:

- Ensuring institutional integrity- Prevents unethical practices such as corruption, mismanagement and favouritism.

- Enhancing accountability- Ensure that leadership and management structure operate within the required ethical and legal framework and hold leaders, administrators, and educators responsible for their decisions and performance.
- Maintaining discipline and professionalism- encourages staff and students to comply with institutional codes of conduct.
- Improves service delivery- Strengthens teaching quality, resources management, and Student Support Services

Effective leadership and management in TVET colleges require strong governance structures that promote integrity, accountability, and quality service delivery. A Consequence Management Framework ensures that colleges operate ethical, professional, and legal standards to create an environment that fosters educational excellence and credibility (Shava & Mazenda, 2022). It directs what action must follow the organisational policies and procedures depending on the behaviour displayed. TVET institutions face challenges such as poor financial management, ineffective leadership and lack of strategic planning. Enforcing accountability mechanisms ensures managers make informed, ethical, and data-driven decisions aligning with institutional and national policies. A strict discipline and professionalism policy ensures that staff and students contribute positively to the institution's success. Poor service delivery, such as unqualified educators, outdated resources, or inefficient student support, limits students' chances of success.

By implementing clear ethical guidelines, enforcing compliance, and promoting professional conduct, TVET enhances their reputation and strengthens its role in higher education. Improving leadership and management within TVET colleges requires a CM that ensures accountability, efficiency, and ethical governance. The absence of such a framework has created significant gaps, leading to poor leadership, mismanagement, and adverse student outcomes. To address these challenges, TVET colleges must implement strong policies, enforce disciplinary measures, and invest in leadership development. By doing so, they can improve institutional performance, student success, and overall college functionality.

#### **2.5.8. Justification of Adopted Management Theory**

The leadership and management of TVET colleges require structured governance systems to ensure efficiency, accountability, and regulatory compliance. Many TVET institutions face

challenges such as inefficiency, financial mismanagement, lack of accountability, and inconsistent decision-making. This study adopts Bureaucratic Management Theory, Ethics, and Consequence Management as its analytical framework. These concepts provide a structured approach to understanding leadership effectiveness, accountability, and ethical governance in educational institutions. Integrating Bureaucratic Management Theory, Ethics, and Consequence Management offers a comprehensive approach for analysing leadership and management in TVET colleges. Together, these frameworks create a balanced approach that addresses leadership structure, ethical governance, and enforcement mechanisms, making them ideal for analysing the challenges and solutions in TVET college management

TVET colleges function within a hierarchical system where decision-making flows from senior management to lower-level staff (DHET, 2022). Bureaucratic theory explains how this structure influences leadership effectiveness. The effectiveness of management depends on well-established policies, procedures, and regulations. This aligns with the need for clear Student Support Services (SSS) policies and a Consequence Management Framework to ensure accountability. Bureaucratic management promotes the specialisation of roles, ensuring that leadership responsibilities are clearly defined and executed. This is critical in TVET colleges, where various departments (academic, student support, and finance) need to function efficiently. TVET colleges must apply rules fairly and consistently without bias. This ensures that performance assessments and disciplinary actions are objective.

Ethics is a core principle in leadership and management, ensuring that decisions are made fairly, transparently, and responsibly (Franke, Rantala, Holmberg, & Bremer, 2022). Ethical leadership fosters trust, integrity, and accountability, which are crucial for TVET institutions' to be successful. Ethics are relevant in this study because ethical leadership helps combat financial mismanagement, nepotism, and maladministration in TVET colleges. ensures that Ethics ensure that policies are applied uniformly without favouritism or discrimination. Also, ethical leadership ensures that student needs remain the priority, leading to improved academic support and career opportunities. Consequence Management is essential in ensuring clear, enforceable consequences for compliance and non-compliance with institutional policies. It addresses poor performance, misconduct, and failure to implement policies effectively. This study provides a holistic framework for understanding leadership effectiveness in TVET colleges. These theories justify the need for structured leadership, ethical decision-making, and

accountability, all of which are essential for improving college functionality, student outcomes, and institutional credibility.

## **2.6. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS IN TVET**

### **2.6.1. TVET Leadership Tools**

TVET Leadership tools refer to the strategies, frameworks, processes, and instruments used by leaders within TVET colleges to ensure effective management, improve educational quality, and align training programs with industry needs. These tools help TVET leaders carry out their responsibilities in a structured manner, ensuring that the institution operates efficiently and meets both educational and employment goals. TVET operate within dynamic environments requiring leaders to plan, manage operations, and ensure strategic accountability. Leadership tools provide a structured approach to decision-making, performance, management, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement. Leadership in TVET institutions extends beyond administrative functions; it involves setting long-term goals, optimising resources, and aligning training programmes with industry requirements. Therefore, leadership tools provide a systematic approach to managing TVET colleges, ensuring academic excellence and financial stability, and adopting leadership tools that enable leaders to navigate complex challenges and improve education outcomes. The key management tools used in TVET are Whole School Evaluation (WSE), 360-degree Feedback, and communication tools.

#### **2.6.1.1. Whole School Evaluation**

Whole School Evaluation (WSE) is a comprehensive assessment approach that evaluates a TVET institution's overall performance, including teaching quality, infrastructure, governance, and student outcomes. It is designed to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in educational institutions. The purpose of WSE is to provide a holistic review of an institution's effectiveness, ensuring it meets academic standards and industry. The objective is to assess the effectiveness of the entire system and the extent to which the vision and goals of vocational education systems are achieved (Gregory, Haung, & Ward-Seidel, 2022). WSE is critical in ensuring TVET institutions operate efficiently and effectively. Below are the key aspects of WSE in TVET. The WSE process is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning, student outcomes, governance structures, and

infrastructure utilisation in TVET institutions (Govender & Mestry, 2016). Through systematic data collection and analysis, the annual reports offer an objective overview of how institutions perform in key areas.

Allows college leadership, policymakers, and stakeholders to identify strengths, address weaknesses, and implement necessary improvements. The quality assurance measure assesses whether TVET colleges are achieving their educational objectives, utilising resources effectively, and maintaining compliance with national education policies. By enforcing accountability, WSE enhances institutional performance and ensures students receive a quality education aligned with industry needs. WSE provides a structured framework for continuously assessing the overall performance of TVET colleges. Evaluate whether educators use effective teaching methods and whether students gain the necessary skills.

- i. Ensuring compliance with DHET policies: TVET institutions must align their operations with national education policies, including curriculum frameworks, accreditation requirements, and financial regulations. The annual WSE reports help ensure that colleges adhere to policy mandates and maintain standards in academic program delivery, student support services, and staff qualifications. Failure to meet compliance standards may result in interventions from DHET or adjustments in funding allocations.
- ii. Enhancing Quality Assurance: Quality assurance is a central component of WSE, as it promotes continuous improvement within TVET institutions. By analysing key performance indicators, these reports provide insights into student retention rates, graduation outcomes, and the employability of graduates. The evaluation process also assesses professional development initiatives for educators, ensuring that TVET staff remain updated with industry trends and pedagogical advancements.
- iii. Informing Strategic Decision-Making: The findings presented in the annual reports support evidence-based decision-making at institutional, regional, and national levels. DHET utilises the data to develop policies that address sector-specific challenges, allocate resources effectively, and promote strategic initiatives to improve TVET education. Similarly, college leadership can leverage these insights to enhance institutional planning, optimise resources, and establish partnerships with industry stakeholders.

The WSE reports are indispensable for accountability, quality assurance, and strategic planning in South African TVET colleges. By providing a comprehensive assessment of institutional performance, these reports enable DHET, college leadership, and stakeholders to address systemic challenges. Enhance educational delivery and promote sustainable improvements in vocational education. The continued commitment of WSE is to ensure that TVET remains responsive to economic demands, industry needs, and student aspirations, ultimately contributing to the broader goal of skills development and national economic growth. Despite the importance of WSE reports, several challenges exist in their implementation.

TVET institutions face difficulties collecting accurate and reliable data due to inconsistent record-keeping, outdated information systems, and limited staff training in data management (Mbatha, Buthelezi, & Ajani, 2024:208). Inaccurate data leads to misleading evaluations, hindering the ability of DHET and institutional leaders to make informed decisions. To improve data reliability, institutions should invest in modernised data collection systems, staff training, and independent data verification processes to improve data reliability. TVET colleges operate with limited financial and human resources, impacting the WSE process's quality (Scheepers & Gebhardt, 2021). Insufficient funding prevents colleges from implementing recommended improvements, while inadequate staffing results in incomplete assessments and delays in report submissions (Mbatha, Buthelezi, & Ajani, 2024). TVET leadership and administrators are reluctant to adopt changes proposed in WSE reports due to bureaucratic hurdles, resistance to external oversight, and fear of accountability measures. The stakeholders view WSE as a compliance exercise rather than an opportunity for improvement, leading to minimal action on recommendations.

#### 2.6.1.2. 360-Degree Feedback in TVET Leadership Assessment

Leadership Assessment Tools in TVET are structured evaluation instruments that measure leaders' effectiveness, skills, and impact within TVET institutions. It involves assessing leadership competencies, decision-making abilities, and management. They help identify strengths, areas for improvement, and strategies for leadership development to enhance the overall performance of TVET institutions. 360-degree feedback is a comprehensive leadership assessment tool that gathers performance feedback from multiple sources, including supervisors, peers, subordinates, students, and external stakeholders (Mbambale &

Mpungose, 2024). In the context of TVET, this method is used to evaluate and improve leadership effectiveness within TVET colleges by providing a well-rounded perspective on a leader's strengths and areas for improvement. 360-degree feedback has emerged as a widely used tool to assess and enhance leadership effectiveness. This method gathers performance feedback from multiple sources, including supervisors, peers, subordinates, students, and external stakeholders, offering a well-rounded perspective on a leader's strengths and areas for improvement (Eden, Ezebuio, Okute, Nwadi & Ugwunwoti, 2024). The TVET sector requires dynamic, future-ready leaders who align institutional goals with national skills development strategies.

Paterson, Mthembu-Salter, Matlin and Molokwane (2024) reported that 360-degree feedback evaluates leadership effectiveness in several key areas, such as strategic vision, decision-making, change management, motivation, collaboration, and accountability to achieve this. This tool serves as an assessment tool that helps assess whether leaders make informed decisions and create long-term strategies that support government policies, economic priorities, and industry trends. It also ensures that leaders take responsibility for their choices, uphold ethical standards, and drive institutional excellence. Being a leader in TVET requires officials appointed, such as principals, to adapt to new technologies, curriculum updates, and digital learning trends. Therefore, 360-degree Feedback also provides performance measures to assess whether leaders are open to change and actively drive innovation to keep TVET colleges competitive and industry-relevant.

The implementation of 360-degree feedback in TVET institutions offers several advantages:

- **Holistic Leadership Assessment:** Unlike traditional performance reviews, which may be biased or one-dimensional, 360-degree feedback provides a comprehensive and fair evaluation of a leader's performance.
- **Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses:** By receiving feedback from diverse sources, leaders gain insights into their competencies and areas requiring improvement.
- **Encouraging Continuous Professional Development:** Constructive feedback enables leaders to enhance their skills, leading to better decision-making and institutional growth.

- **Strengthening Institutional Culture:** A feedback-driven approach promotes transparency, accountability, and teamwork, fostering a positive work environment.
- **Enhancing Industry and Stakeholder Engagement:** Feedback from external stakeholders ensures that TVET leadership remains aligned with labour market needs, strengthening industry partnerships and employment outcomes for graduates.

While 360-degree feedback is an effective leadership assessment tool in TVET colleges, its implementation faces several challenges. These challenges stem from organisational culture, resistance to feedback, confidentiality concerns, and operational difficulties (Mbambela & Mpungose, 2024). TVET leaders struggle to accept feedback from their peers, subordinates, students, and external stakeholders; constructive feedback is usually perceived as an attack rather than an opportunity for growth. This resistance leads to defensiveness, denial, and refusal to act on the feedback. Staff and students in some colleges feel discouraged from participating in future assessments if they see that feedback is not taken seriously. TVET staff, students, and stakeholders hesitate to provide honest feedback due to concerns about confidentiality and potential retaliation (Letshaba, 2024). Employees may fear negative consequences if they criticise their leaders, and students may worry that their academic progress could be affected.

Edeh, Ezebuio, Nwadi, and Ugwunwoti (2024:115) argue that 360-degree feedback requires significant time, effort, and resources to collect, analyse, and act on the data. TVETs with limited budgets and staff capacity usually struggle to implement this method effectively. Some institutions abandon the process if it is too demanding. Lack of resources negatively impacts the assessment, which results in the assessment being implemented inconsistently, and leadership development efforts may become fragmented and ineffective (Edeh et al., 2024). Personal relationships, workplace politics, and subjective opinions influence feedback from different sources. Some respondents give excessively positive feedback to please leaders, while others use the opportunity to express personal grievances rather than provide objective input.

360-degree feedback is essential for improving leadership in TVET institutions; its successful implementation requires careful planning and management. Overcoming resistance to feedback, confidentiality concerns, bias, lack of follow-through, and resource constraints will ensure the process is effective, meaningful, and sustainable. By addressing these challenges,

TVET institutions can cultivate transformational leaders who drive innovation, institutional excellence, and workforce development.

### 2.6.1.3. Communication Tools

Effective leadership in TVET institutions requires strong communication skills to foster collaboration, drive institutional growth, and align with industry needs. Communication is critical for TVET leaders to engage with stakeholders, guide staff, inspire students, and implement policies (Siddiqui, Shaikh, Shah, & Qureshi, 2025). Without effective communication, leadership efforts can become fragmented, leading to misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and poor institutional performance (Mesuweni, 2024). Communication in TVET leadership refers to the ability of leaders to convey ideas, policies, and decisions clearly and effectively to various stakeholders, including staff, students, government bodies, and industry partners (Paterson, Keevy, & Vally, 2024). It involves multiple forms, such as verbal, non-verbal, written, and digital communication, ensuring that all aspects of TVET operations run smoothly and align institutional goals with workforce demands.

Mahlangu and Mtshali (2024) maintain that TVET colleges operate in a dynamic environment where leaders must interact with multiple stakeholders, including faculty members, students, and government agency faculty. Without effective communication, leadership can become fragmented, creating inefficiencies in policy execution. Communication tools are essential for TVET leadership, enabling effective governance, engagement, and institutional growth. Effective leaders must clearly articulate vision, policies, and institutional objectives to ensure all stakeholders work towards the common goals (Dianawati, Ningrum, Hadi, Wadiyanti & Sutoto, 2025). It enables TVET leaders to disseminate important information quickly and efficiently. Engage with staff and students to address inclusivity concerns and align institutional goals with TVET demands and policy expectations. It promotes transparency and accountability between the TVET and stakeholders. This is achieved through sharing institutional policies, financial management, and other relevant documents.

TVET leaders often face significant challenges, including miscommunication, lack of effective two-way communication, diversity communication and poor engagement in effectively communicating with staff, students, industry stakeholders, and policymakers (Hlatjwako, & Yalezo, 2024). These challenges hinder decision-making, slow institutional progress, and

create misunderstandings that negatively impact the quality of education and training. TVET institutions frequently undergo policy shifts, curriculum updates, and technological changes. However, many staff members and students resist change, especially when communication about these changes is unclear or inadequate.

### **2.6.2. Management Tools**

Enhancing instruction and learning needs a revolutionary strategy supported by effectiveness and quality at the district and college levels. TVET should use performance management as a critical procedure to help staff and management concentrate on essential problems and goals to maintain and enhance high-quality education. Numerous tools have been implemented to raise the standard of education while also fortifying management and accountability frameworks.

The discussion below provides an overview of the TVET management tools used to ensure effective managerial practices.

#### **2.6.2.1. Management Information System (MIS)**

A well-designed and integrated system for gathering pertinent data, turning it into information, and delivering it to decision-makers for consideration is known as a Management Information System (MIS). A computer that companies may use to give information for various tasks that take place in different departments and are done by other individuals, such as supporting operational functions, managing information, and decision-making, is what Mishra et al. (2015:2) identify as the MIS. It was developed in the early 1960s and gained widespread recognition as a tool for connecting IT systems and computer technology to processing organisational data. When the computer proved helpful in solving internal organisational difficulties, it emerged as a significant instrument. The automated clerical record-keeping activities were the computer's primary focus. The MIS was established in response to the inefficient rise in computer use and utilisation (Mishra et al., 2015:1). Effective MIS is essential for organisations due to complicated decision-making and constant change in the business environment.

Educational organisations are expected to adapt to rapidly changing technology and innovation. The curriculum manager needs information on student achievement to assess the TVET College's academic year and identify patterns (Harris & Botha, 2011:18). Using a MIS, TVET

colleges can quickly generate performance reports, manage staff and student information, and securely preserve academic records. It is simple to anticipate and plan for the upcoming year. According to Lauderdale (2017, as cited in Mboweni, 2017), the MIS enables managers to communicate and receive information on daily activities. The MIS allows the organisation to receive both internal and external information. It employs a two-system approach in which electronics are utilised to generate management reports. The MIS helps management analyse and report on decision-making processes.

Organisations appreciate MIS ideas for two reasons: effective and efficient computer utilisation. First, MIS is an integrated computer-based information system that is a foundation for managing an organisation's computer applications. The primary purpose of this system was to handle data from other systems; hence, it focuses on managing all accessible MIS. Kumar (2015) states that TVET institutions, like any other institutions, must employ a management information system. The MIS captures data, receives data from the DHET of student-student outcomes, and analyses and distributes it to stakeholders in the desired manner.

#### 2.6.2.2. Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

Adatsi (2024) describes an Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as a collection of documents and processes that assist an organisation in bringing safe and practical items to market while meeting regulatory standards and consistently meeting consumer expectations. The goal of establishing a QMS is to ensure consistent quality of products or services, mainly as the organisation grows, and to verify that everyone is continually fulfilling standards when making products or providing services (Mchunu, 2016:40). In education, QMS is a performance management system for school-based educators that is meant to analyse individual performance levels to attain high levels of academic achievement. Examining how educators' function by job descriptions is vital to increasing classroom accountability (Sekgale, 2016:53). QMS was adopted in Collective Agreement No. 2 of 2020 by Education the Labour Relations Councils (ELRC) in South Africa. The QMS replaced IQMS, which was in place since 2003, as a piloting framework that encompasses three programmes, namely, Development Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement (PM), and Whole School Evaluation (DBE, 2021)

According to Mamabolo et al. (2022a:2), Development Appraisal (DA) is a process that evaluates educators transparently to identify their areas of strength and weakness and to create personal growth plans. The mission of Performance Measurement (PM) is to assess each teacher individually regarding pay advancement, grade advancement, appointment confirmation, and awards and incentives (Tshelani, 2022:4). Whole School Evaluation (WSE) evaluates a school's total efficacy and the calibre of instruction and learning. The purpose of QMS is to identify the needs of educators based on their roles and responsibilities, as well as those of schools and district offices, for assistance and growth (Zondo, 2021:6794). They support growth, promote accountability, monitor institutional effectiveness, and evaluate educator performance. Table 2.4. sets out the difference between QMS and IQMS.

**Table 2.4. Differentiating between QMS and IQMS**

	QMS	IQMS
1	The QMS introduces a mid-year educator appraisal followed by an annual appraisal.	Educator appraisals in the IQMS are conducted annually.
2	The QMS requires a member of the School Management Team (SMT) to conduct performance appraisals of educators under his/her supervision, including lesson observations.	The Development Support Group (DSG) is responsible for educator appraisal, lesson observations and -development in the IQMS.
3	A resource Person may be requested by the appraisee to serve as an observer	Peers selected by the educator to serve on the DSG.
4	The process is driven by the principal and managed by the School Management Team (SMT).	Staff Development Team (SDT) is responsible for managing IQMS.
5	Self-evaluation at least twice per annum.	Self-evaluation is conducted only once a year.
6	Separate appraisal instruments for different post levels.	One appraisal instrument for all post levels.
7	Annual work plan with clear targets and deliverables for PL 2 – PL 4.	None
8	Weighting scale for principal who teaches is greater or less than 30% of the scheduled teaching time	Differentiation in a principal's teaching schedule was not considered during appraisal.
9	No PGP to avoid duplication with CPTD system.	PGP's completed annually.

Source: SAOU (2024:1)

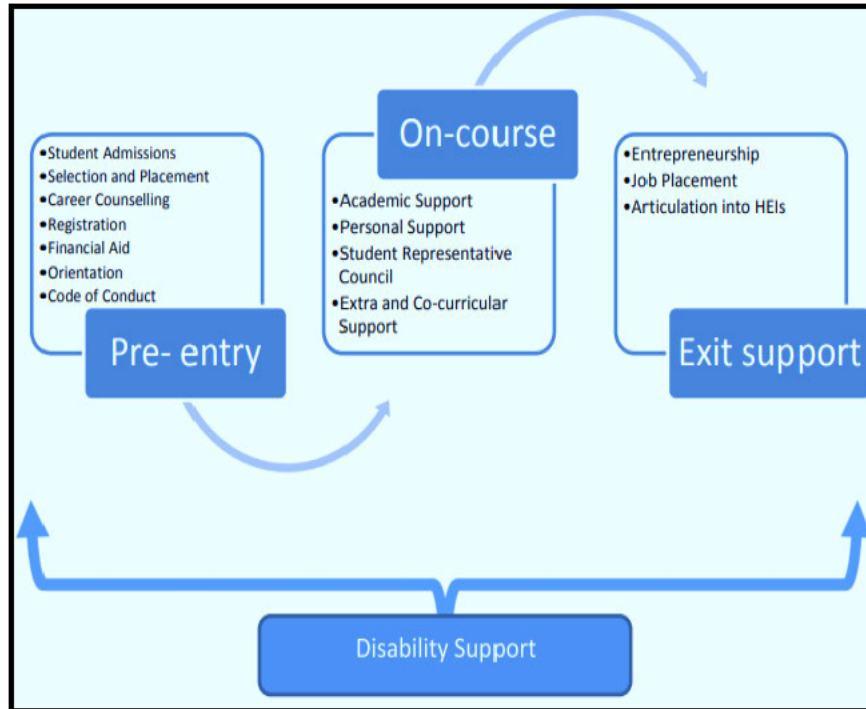
### **2.6.3. Student Support Services (SSS)**

Student Support Services (SSS) serve as a link between educational institutions and their students. It aims to improve students' academic performance, foster the self-assurance required for academic success, ease students' involvement and assimilation into the educational system, and prepare them for contributing members of society (DHET, 2020:8). A college offering comprehensive student support increases the likelihood of a student excelling academically. SSS supports an extensive and student-centred approach (Makibinyane & Khumalo, 2021:400). This involves helping the student select the appropriate programme, gaining access to financial aid, accommodating students with disabilities, providing an efficient college orientation, and providing a vision for academic support (Maimane, 2016:1680). Efficient provision of SSS is critical in the TVET colleges, and its activities seek to create a conducive environment for the students (Ngubane, 2018:8).

The Department of Higher Education (DHE) requires all public TVET colleges to implement effective SSS plans. To deal with activities of students that affect students' lives in a TVET College and receive equal attention at pre-entry, on-course, and exit support levels (DHET, 2020:8). Providing SSS is not a fully funded responsibility; colleges vary in their degrees of funding and resource availability. According to McPherson and Plunkett (2021), college councils should consider enhancing the provision of SSS and the necessary infrastructure, such as fully functional student resource centres, throughout all campuses, either utilising funds from the college or obtaining funding from outside sources like sponsorships and contributions. Figure 2.4. depicts the SSS models that should be adopted in all public TVET colleges in SA to ensure a conducive environment for students enrolled there.

Student success in the TVET relies heavily on the practical implementation of SSS, as outlined in the framework provided by the DHET. Unfortunately, in many TVET colleges, SSS are poorly implemented, leading to significant challenges that hinder college functionality (Papeir & Mawayo, 2024). It has far-reaching consequences for students and the colleges in SA. High dropout rates, poor academic performance, low employability, mental health challenges, and student disengagement are all direct results of inadequate support structures (Badroodine & Garisch, 2024). To enhance the functionality of TVET colleges and ensure that they produce skilled and competent graduates, it is essential to strengthen the implementation of SSS in line with the DHET framework. This can be achieved through increased funding, proper staff

training, continuous monitoring, and stakeholder collaboration. Without these improvements, TVET colleges will continue to face challenges that hinder their ability to fulfil their role in national development.



**Figure 2.4. Student Support Services TVET Model**

Source: DHET (2020b:7)

To identify gaps and provide early warning indications that would help in offering an academic support programme that would address a student’s developmental needs, selection and placement are essential (CHE, 2020:2). Using assessment and placement tools helps determine whether potential students possess the fundamental knowledge of maths and English and the mathematical literacy abilities needed to handle academic course material (Buthelezi et al., 2024:141). Choosing a vocation that fits their interests, skills, and aptitude is the first step for any prospective college student. Students must sign up for appropriate courses and programmes. Proper selection and placement aim to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and drive they need to advance in their chosen disciplines. They achieve this through finding and maintaining employment or selecting the appropriate course of study. Informed career planning and decision-making can prevent financial waste, frustration, unhappiness, and adversity.

#### **2.6.4. Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)**

The system for managing and improving public sector employees' performance is called the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) (DPSA, 2024). By offering ongoing evaluation, it seeks to attain excellence on both an individual and an institutional level. As Harris (2023) contends, this method ensures that expectations are clear by establishing performance criteria that are precise, quantifiable, realistic, and acceptable. A rising focus in the framework of TVET colleges is the performance of its administrators. These include management and leadership, essential to developing and expanding the country's economy. Performance management within the TVET sector aligns with the nation's objectives for skills development and employment creation, according to the PMDS (Sibiya, 2017:16). In the TVET sector, PDMS is a management tool that ensures employee evaluations are carried out and documented correctly. This system assesses the performance of the management officials, administrators, support staff, and other non-educator members working within the college (Sefora, 2013:57). It commences 01 April and ends 31 March and serves as a binding agreement between the supervisor/manager and the employee.

The key characteristics of the PMDS include:

- i. Performance agreements: Employees, especially senior management, must enter into performance agreements that outline their key result areas and performance expectations.
- ii. Performance monitoring and review: Regular monitoring and performance review to ensure that employees meet their targets and objectives.
- iii. Development plans: Personal development plans are created to address gaps in skills and competencies, ensuring continuous improvement.
- iv. Performance incentives: The system includes provisions for performance bonuses and other incentives to reward high-performing employees.

A PMDS creates an environment where senior managers, supervisors, staff members, and individuals can foster mutual respect and openness, share expectations, and thrive by consistently enhancing their competencies. The primary goals of a PMDS are to enable an organisation to function at an extraordinarily high level, improve service delivery, and promote an effective and efficient use of its resources. These primary goals are to ensure that an

organisation and its workers function as integrated living systems that support decision-making and accountability. It encourages a two-way communication system between managers and staff members to clarify responsibilities, roles, and expectations, to communicate functional and organisational goals, and to provide frequent, honest feedback to enhance staff members' performance through continual mentoring. To assist staff members in determining the knowledge and abilities needed to complete the work effectively, this will focus their attention on adequately completing the appropriate tasks to improve worker performance through motivating, empowering, and implementing an efficient reward procedure. A PMDS is used in the TVET as a management tool to assess individual employee performance and ensure that those who can perform and meet the required standards are recognised and rewarded at the end of the financial year.

## **2.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter described the concepts used in this study and outlines leadership and management theories from the perspective of TVET practices. The theories discussed served as the guidelines for this research study. It also covered the TVET management tools implemented to raise the standard of education while also fortifying management and accountability frameworks adopted in the TVET sector to enhance management and leadership practices.

The next chapter provides an international perspective on the TVET sector.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE TVET SECTOR**

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#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

To clarify the context and origins of this study and provide additional insight into the problem, emphasis was given to the literature related to management and leadership practices in South Africa in ensuring an effective TVET system. The literature review in chapter two included scholars who wrote authoritatively and provided opinions, perspectives, and insight on the TVET sector. This chapter primarily focuses on the international perspective on the TVET System, followed by an overview of TVET reform and foundation. To obtain some global views on TVET management and leadership for this project. The researcher provides insight into Vocational Education and Training (VET) models from Germany, the UK, and France. These nations' VET systems share many characteristics with South Africa's TVET's historical background and present advancements. The international agencies and contributions to promoting the TVET industry globally are discussed, and the challenges presented in the TVET sector.

#### **3.2. IMPORTANCE OF THE TVET SECTOR**

The TVET sector aims to provide students with the knowledge and expertise they need to work in a particular profession or occupation. It is sometimes viewed as an alternative to traditional academic courses, like university or college, and is designed to prepare students for a specific career or occupation (Pavlova, 2014:2). Depending on the programme and the demands of the regional labour market, TVET has different purposes and objectives. However, TVET aims to close any skills shortages in the labour market by giving students the information and abilities they need to thrive in their chosen fields (Okoth, 2023:13). This kind of instruction and preparation is an excellent option for individuals who acquire a more practical approach to learning. The opportunity of TVET to address the skills gap in the labour market today is one of its main advantages. A skills gap is a mismatch between the skills that businesses require and job seekers' abilities. This might result in a shortage of qualified candidates for open jobs and create problems for companies that need help finding the personnel they need to grow and prosper. By providing students with the pertinent, practical skills and training they need to

succeed as professionals, TVET may help close the skills gap. Many TVET programmes are developed in collaboration with local businesses, which enables them to be tailored to the requirements of the job market. Additionally, some students may find TVET's more pragmatic, hands-on approach to learning particularly appealing.

The TVET sector learners can grasp learning by doing more practical than theory, working on real-world projects, and acquiring practical experience in their chosen industry instead of spending years in a classroom memorising theory (Golwala, 2017:2). In addition to being a beneficial supplement to traditional academic learning, this kind of practical learning may provide students with the abilities and self-assurance they need to thrive in the workplace. The variety of employment options that TVET may lead to is one of its main advantages. TVETs are necessary for many in-demand positions across several sectors. This includes, for instance, skilled trades like engineering technicians, plumbers, technology and computer specialists, administrators, and professionals in agriculture and natural resources. Along with the many professional options made possible by TVET, career growth and increased earning potential are other benefits of this kind of education and training (Makole et al., 2023:46). Many TVET graduates achieve professional success and assume leadership positions.

The TVET courses may be a great tool to support professional advancement and lifetime learning. Several programmes provide graduates with options for continued education and career advancement, enabling them to keep current with emerging trends and technology in their industry (Sebola, 2022:52). TVET graduates can grow in their jobs and maintain their competitiveness in the labour market with the support of this kind of ongoing education. According to the Human Resource Development Council of South Africa (HRDC) (2014), TVET programmes provide professional development opportunities and avenues to additional education and continuing education. Opportunities to get further degrees or certificates and the ability to transfer credits to a college or university programme may fall under this category. For TVET graduates, this may be a fantastic opportunity to expand on their original training and education while also helping them grow and improve their talents over time (Frommberger, 2022:13).

The TVET sector institutions may be an excellent option for people dedicated to professional growth and lifetime learning. Apart from giving people the education and training they require to excel in their vocations, it may be essential in promoting economic development (Tikly,

2013:15). One way in which TVET fosters economic growth is through its assistance in addressing skills gaps in the job market. With TVET, businesses can find the workforce they need to grow and thrive since students are equipped with employable, marketable skills. Companies that can find the required talent are more likely to grow and add jobs, which might positively impact the economy (Pavlova, 2014:2).

Additionally, TVET may boost local economies by directly generating jobs. Numerous TVET programmes are created in partnership with nearby companies, allowing them to be customised to meet the specific needs of the job market. Education is one of the most essential components in combating global poverty. It is the cornerstone of a nation's technological progress, economy, society, and politics. All nations recognise the importance of integrating practical and functional elements into education since developing competencies and gaining skills boosts productivity, promotes societal advancement, and raises the average individual's income. However, various educational programmes are available, and vocational education is crucial to reduce poverty. According to UNESCO, a solid TVET programme is a workable educational path promoting long-term empowerment.

It is acknowledged as a vital force propelling an economy's productive sectors. It is pivotal in empowering and eliminating poverty and increasing social and economic productivity and competitiveness. TVET has been an effective technique in industrialised countries to reduce poverty because it gives individuals the information and skills needed to obtain employment. It promotes regional development, ensures inclusivity, and fosters entrepreneurship. By supporting and expanding TVET projects, Africa can effectively combat poverty and promote social stability, sustainable economic growth, and social development.

### **3.3. TYPES OF TVET MODELS**

Scholars such as, Fawcet et al. (2014), Kanwar et al. (2019), Yamauchi et al. (2023), Vogelsang et al. (2022), Mgabhi and Mohammed (2019), and Ha et al. (2023) have each discussed three TVET models that have ensured that the college sector is effective and responds to employment opportunities. Developed countries have successfully implemented the TVET models to address unemployment and skills shortages within their countries. According to Fawcet et al. (2014) TVET systems are based on three different models that are essentially derived from the European experience: the "dual system model from Germany, the state-regulated bureaucratic

model from France, and the liberal market model from the United Kingdom” (2014:03). The models, their composition, and the most recent reform initiatives will be discussed in the subsection which follows.

### **3.3.1. German Dual TVET Model**

According to Yamauchi et al. (2023:2472), a wide variety of public and commercial stakeholders, including trade unions and governmental agencies and organisations, are involved in the planning, development, and implementation of TVET in the dual system model (used in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, and Norway). As a result, the dual system is based on an effective public-private partnership, with state departments funding TVET colleges and companies’ apprenticeship financing training (Pleshakova, 2019:133). This model’s primary flaws are the small number of business apprenticeship spots and the expensive cost of vocational training compared to ordinary secondary schools. The other two versions are combined in the German dual TVET system. Vogelsang et al. (2022:648) agree that it offers substantial apprenticeship and on-the-job training programmes as well as secondary and vocational education. Public-private partnerships create ‘intermediate’ organisations that control vocational education requirements while remaining independent of the government and private sector (Oviawe, 2018:74). These entities guarantee TVET’s stability during periods of economic fluctuations and restrict the extent to which the government and private industry may influence the vocational education system (Pleshakova, 2019:133).

The Dual TVET System is predicated on the idea that learners acquire knowledge best when their theoretical knowledge from the TVET College is periodically supplemented by hands-on experience and training in an organised work setting (Hamdard, 2019:31). Students take theory seminars at the college and participate in practical experience with their host employer in blocks of eight to fourteen weeks for three years (Haasler, 2020:58). A project manager is expressly designated to offer organised training on the focal point areas listed in the training schedule and mentor students in the workplace (Li & Pilz, 2021:02). The student’s training session comprises 70% of time spent with their host companies that serve as mentors. After finishing the course, they take the updated A21 Trade Test for qualifications, including electricians and plumbers, which are credited. Kuehn (2019:227) maintains that the dual TVET system facilitates programmes that give students the skills and abilities employers demand. By bridging the knowledge gap between theory and practice, industry partnerships with TVET are

prepared for the workforce after training. This TVET system is a benefit to both businesses and students. It gives the former excellent job possibilities and a route to follow interests and passions while the latter gains productive and qualified workers at a reasonable cost (Ha et al., 2023:659).

### **3.3.2. State-Regulated Bureaucratic-Model**

The core of the French model is the state's provision and management of education, especially TVET. The federal government is the primary supplier of vocational education and a significant participant in the educational system. The government's national education budget finances TVET, a component of the national education system (Mgabhi & Mohammed, 2019:2). The state must guarantee that employees are "qualified" and fulfil state-mandated occupational requirements. TVET priorities are, therefore, set by state bureaucracy and national education policy, with the Ministry of Education having primary authority over TVET policy (Mgabhi & Mohammed, 2019:04). Under the national education systems of France, Italy, Sweden, and Finland, vocational education and training are defined, offered, and funded under the state-regulated bureaucratic paradigm. Public-private partnerships mainly operate at the consultative level with businesses, industries, and labour unions. Fawcett et al. (2014:06) argue that TVET continues the public education system. It has traditionally done poorly due to theoretical courses and a lack of hands-on training or on-the-job experience for students.

The uniformity and governmental regulation of the French model comprise its advantages. Bello et al., (2022:1173) state that continuous training provides uniform and consistent instruction through a systematic and well-defined approach within occupational skill categories. Every learner with a particular talent receives an identical certificate that may be used in other businesses and sectors. However, analysts fault the French model for being overly inflexible and politicised. For instance, modifying the TVET credentials framework requires several time-consuming bureaucratic clearances because it is state-run. Affected political parties frequently oppose or obstruct changes. In general, TVET responds more to political developments and less to changes in the market (Greinert, 2004). Coordinated policies on various policy concerns, including governance, delivery, finance, and access, are necessary for a TVET system to be effective. Policies are positioned within the nation's larger TVET policy framework for initiatives to be successful.

### 3.3.3. Liberal Market TVET Model

This model was first created in the United Kingdom (UK). The liberal market economy model centres on how vocational education and training adapt to the needs of the free market economy. Kanwar et al. (2019) state that the economic policy reaction to the widespread industrial privatisation of the 1980s was the TVET model. In the UK, a network of twenty-four sector skills councils analyses the growth of the service sector. It determines the primary occupational requirements of industries, closely collaborating with them to provide workforce predictions for occupations (Makole et al., 2023:48). Ensuring complete information about industry demands and disseminating it to job searchers, education and training institutions, and other relevant parties is the primary duty of public policy. The TVET sector and its supply in the Liberal Market TVET model “as observed in Australia and Great Britain” mirror the needs of the private sector driven by industries and businesses (Kanwar et al., 2019). Under this system, industry sector skills councils determine the kinds of professional credentials that industry and support companies must teach their employees.

This is sometimes called the ‘volunteer model,’ as businesses and the private sector donate funds to support employee training and apprenticeships. State subsidies often help ‘at-risk’ kids by expanding their access and chances for workforce education and training (Yeboah, 2021:89). The demand-driven system established under the liberal economic model of Great Britain holds the private sector accountable for labour investment and training. All significant initiatives concentrate on maximising the role of the private sector in the training process by having private sector providers offer training, having businesses and employees pay for training, and having industries directly participate in defining their job and skill requirements (Makole et al., 2023). With the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and extra government subsidies to promote increased access and mobility within the system, state policy is kept to a minimum. The government is responsible for providing the skills framework for accreditation. The individuals requiring the training are expected to fund themselves unless the company needs them to obtain skills or who has sent the person for training (Yeboah, 2021:90). Then, the company become responsible for covering tuition fees for the on-the-job training. At the same time, the public sector provides operational finances for vocational colleges.

### 3.3.4. Critics of the TVET Models

As mentioned above, the three TVET models have benefits and drawbacks. Nevertheless, Germany's dual system model is beneficial since it heavily emphasises public-private collaborations (Pleshakova, 2019). Both public and private institutions have distinct roles in collaborating to give students meaningful training. While businesses fund apprenticeships and general skills training, the government funds TVET colleges. Rather than the other two mentioned in the above discussion, this model is more suitable for the South African setting. Solid partnerships and corporations are permitted under the liberal system. The approach delegates all the work to private parties who may need to be more knowledgeable about setting national training objectives. Industry demands may need to be addressed in favour of state control, a common feature of the state-regulated bureaucratic paradigm. This method produces highly qualified and well-trained graduates who need more industry-specific abilities. The German TVET dual system has been hailed by former US President Barack Obama, the head of the largest economy, indicating that the system has served as a model for other nations eager to reform their TVET system.

There are issues with the dual system in Germany. It is difficult for students with inferior academic standing to get into the desired occupational programmes. Haasler (2020) argues that learners with the lowest results in secondary qualification cannot take advantage of the system due to Germany's three-tier secondary school paradigm. The university entry qualifications have made VET an appealing choice for youths, and low-achieving youth now face intense competition to secure training spots (Haasler, 2020:66). Scholars such as Boytchev (2020), Gessler (2017), and Wiemann & Pilz (2020) describe Germany's Dual System as a "bureaucratic horror" and assert that it could be impossible to graft into the educational system of other nations merely. Because intricate legal frameworks and organisational structures regulate this system, changing the curriculum can be a bureaucratic hindrance.

According to Kraak (2013), South Africa is an example of a Liberal market-led skills development paradigm comparable to the UK, which supports Allais's (2012) argument. He claims that both nations emphasise supply-side initiatives, failing to produce the expected rise in skilled workers who may boost national output, even while more students earn vocational degrees yearly. Kraak (2013) defines a "radical departure from the centralised and statist

approaches of the UK and South Africa” as an employer-led demand intervention for skills through sectoral skills councils. This intervention must support regional organisations that aim to affect businesses’ “competitive strategies directly” (Kraak, 2013:5). He draws attention to the poor employment rates of graduates with vocational credentials in South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK) and the absence of employer support for vocational training. Additionally, it emphasises the necessity of further policy changes related to employment and the labour market, mainly commercial and entrepreneurial policies (Fawcett et al., 2014).

Scholars have emphasised that the UK’s TVET could perform better in the OECD league tables, which serve as a reference for prospective customers. Other nations hoping to grow and broaden their TVET sectors to meet the demands of industry and society are also impacted by the need for equal opportunities between TVET and more advanced degrees. The ongoing legislation amendments in the UK have created a complex landscape for implementing TVET curricula, presenting challenges and opportunities for the sector. As the UK adapts to changing social, economic, and political circumstances, the evolution of TVET policies and regulations has become increasingly dynamic. While aiming to improve the vocational education system, these changes have made curriculum implementation in TVET institutions more difficult. The ongoing legislation amendments in the UK, such as introducing T-levels, the Apprenticeship Levy, and stricter regulatory frameworks, have made implementing TVET curricula increasingly challenging.

In emerging nations such as South Africa, the government has adopted a state-regulated bureaucratic model wherein the national education system defines and finances technical and vocational education. The national government is alone in charge of providing and developing TVET; it also sets and regulates all TVET policies and guarantees that workers have the necessary training and qualifications. According to Yeboah (2021), the State-Regulated Bureaucratic model implies that the state covers the cost of vocational education. Under a state-regulated framework, TVET institutions often have restricted autonomy in designing and delivering programs tailored to local or regional needs (Fawcett et al., 2014). This centralisation prevents institutions from engaging effectively with local industries and communities, thereby limiting their ability to offer relevant and responsive training programs. The hierarchical nature of the bureaucratic model led to inefficiencies in decision-making processes. Excessive layers of administration may cause delays in implementing necessary

reforms and innovations within TVET institutions. Such delays stifle institutional responsiveness and impede the timely enhancement of educational quality.

In SA, Needham (2019) is of the opinion that TVET is caught in between a neo-liberal and market-led education and training system. Indeed, neo-liberalism and privatisation have presented problems for South Africa's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policy. Policy after policy has emphasised the TVET sector's role in economic growth and unemployment reduction, yet the industry still needs to meet these objectives. The provision of TVET has been impacted by different privatisation strategies introduced into public education and training systems due to economic neo-liberal changes.

As Terblanche and Bitzer (2018:105) note, while the UK government often steps in to change the institutional framework and manage, fund, and design VET; they, like South Africa, are hesitant to take authority away from or compel companies to participate. Although it is not as involved in business and commerce as in Germany, the South African government is heavily involved in TVET. It plays a fundamental, nearly all-encompassing role in the vocational system.

**Table 3.1. A Comparison of Three TVET Models**

Elements	German Dual TVET system	Liberal Market TVET System	State-Bureaucratic Model
<b>Training Market</b>	Public-private institutions are run independently of the general education system. Organisational structure combines public and private entities, and the training criteria are regulated by both the state and private companies.	Private companies choose the skills needed and offer training based on market demand for specific occupational skills determines the type and standards of qualification.	State agencies decide on the training demand and specify vocational trainings provided in state-run schools. Decision on the content of the curriculum is largely political and does not reflect economic demands.
<b>Training Qualification</b>	Professional qualifications are established through apprenticeship and vocational education system. Student Sign a contract with companies which they become an employee	Professional qualification depends on the firm or industry demand in labour marker. Companies needing certain skills are not always applicable across companies. State provides national skills framework to support this process.	Professional qualifications are established by the state education system, they are more theoretical and depend more on the occupational demands of industries.
<b>Training Practices</b>	Employer, trade unions, and legislatures coordinate to determine training practices and curricula. Career profiles are approved through acts of parliament.	Training practices are not standardized, and each company or school can apply it won organizational structure, management, and curriculum. Schooling or in-company training varies based on the skills needed.	Colleges are organised around specific occupations. Student either present general education records or take entrance exams to enter in vocational.
<b>Training Cost</b>	Individual companies pay for the training and costs are categorised as operating expenses. Public sector finances vocational schools.	Paid individually, usually by the person that needs training. Companies also pay fees for training they provide. Specific government programs may include vouchers subsidize training for at-risk youth.	The state budget pays for vocational training. Schools limit the number of new entrants every year creating an elitist system and practical
<b>Education vs Training</b>	Dual system combines concepts of education and training, incorporating knowledge and skills acquisition in both formal schools and learning while working setting	State schools conduct vocational education and private providers, or companies provide training. The state supports the national skills frameworks for accreditation. Various certifications within private industry led to confusion and inefficiency	Vocational education and training are combines in the school environment. Students learn a combination of theoretical and practical concepts related to their profession with increasing qualification over time.

Source: Fawcett et al. (2014:11)

### **3.4. AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE TVET SYSTEM**

It is essential to look at the sectors of other nations to understand the TVET system in South Africa. As a result, this section examines the literature on TVET in different nations. A brief review will therefore be provided of the TVET sector in the developed world, such as China, Germany, and Switzerland, as well as in the developing world, such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Kenya. These international examples are chosen because they highlight critical TVET-related concerns and may provide some insight into the South African scenario. It is essential to mention that in some countries, such as Switzerland and Germany, the TVET system is recognised as Vocational Education and Training (VET).

#### **3.4.1. People's Republic of China (PRC)**

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a developed country with the second-largest economy in the world, a population of about 1 454 billion, and an unemployment rate of 5.6%. The government in China has implemented active policy reforms to establish a comprehensive TVET system. This provides pathways and choices among academics, professions, technical and skills education, and training and improves public exposure and recognition of the sector. China has the world's most extensive vocational education system (UNESCO, 2018:7). Mthembu (2022) mentioned that China had allotted more TVET institutions to remote regions. About 80% of the colleges are in rural areas. They offer agricultural studies to relieve poverty and address unemployment. Some 11 300 vocational colleges enrol 30.88 million students and produce 10 million graduates annually (Mthembu, 2022). The World Bank (2018) reported that more than 90% of Chinese TVET graduates find gainful employment within six months of graduation. Some takeaways from the PRC model of TVET are as follows.

#### **3.4.2. Federal Republic of Germany**

The Federal Republic of Germany is in central Europe, with the second-highest population, with over 84 million people. Germany's national economy is the biggest in Europe and ranks fourth in nominal GDP globally. According to the World Bank (2023) and World Bank and DBSA (2023), the country has the lowest unemployment rate, 5.7% in Europe, and the poverty rate is below 0.20%. The government is also known for its best education system, ranked third globally. Mthembu (2022:21) maintains that Germany's economic prosperity can be attributed to the dual-TVET system. It has long been admired internationally and recognised for

contributing to a lower unemployment rate. The German Dual-TVET system is well-resourced, combining public and private funding, and the TVET institutions in the country are well-respected by society (OECD, 2023:2). About 95.3% of all vocational training graduates are employed.

### **3.4.3. Switzerland**

Switzerland is in central Europe and has one of the world's most developed and innovative mixed economies. Switzerland is governed by a federal and multilingual education system with a decentralised education system. The country has an estimated population of 8.82 million and a 4.15% unemployment rate (Swiss Federal Statistics, 2024). Switzerland has continuously been ranked as the world's most innovative country. The capacity for innovation, a highly educated workforce, and world-class institutions for scientific research are the three critical assets for a successful Vocational Education and Training system (VET) (Hügli, 2022). Switzerland's internationally renowned VET system is frequently cited as crucial to the country's economic success. Switzerland is currently a global leader in vocational education, on-the-job training, and employability, and its VET model is regarded as the "gold standard" in contrast to other vocational education and training systems. The Swiss dual-track learning arrangements are threatened by the entry of foreign corporations without a training history. The VET system now deals with several equity issues (Bonoli & Gonon, 2022).

### **3.4.4. Nigeria**

Nigeria is an African country on the western coast of Africa and is officially the Federal Republic of Nigeria. According to Worldometer (2024a), Nigeria has the largest population, estimated to be in excess of 234.65 million, which continues to increase rapidly due to the high birth rate. Despite the challenges of high unemployment, poverty and crime, Nigeria is recognised as the wealthiest country in Africa, with an overall GDP of US\$ 440 834 million, followed by South Africa. According to Ferdinand-James (2023:20), Nigeria's educational system is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in Africa and globally is ranked 124<sup>th</sup>. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is a parastatal responsible for regulating and promoting TVET institutions in Nigeria. According to a media article by Bank-Olemoh (2022), there are over 2000 formal and informal TVET colleges in Nigeria. According to the NBTE, some factors affect the implementation of TVET in the country. Some of these factors include low enrolment,

inadequate funding, and lack of qualified academic staff. Nigeria's TVET system is underpinned by a State-Regulated Bureaucratic Model, which is more like the South African TVET system.

### **3.4.5. Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is a Federal Democratic Republic country located in the Horn of Africa and is the oldest independent country in Africa, with a population in excess of 133.44 million (Worldometer, 2024b). Ethiopia is affected by high unemployment and poverty rates because of inadequate skills and a poor economy (Shuker & Sadik, 2024). The Federal TVET Agency oversees the implementation of the Ethiopian TVET System, which has been carried out since the National Outcome-Based TVET Strategy (Agmasu, 2021:1). Ethiopia's TVET system strives to fill skills gaps in the economy by training youth and young adults. The system is pre-employment to prepare new graduates for the labour market. However, Ethiopia's TVET system is experiencing challenges, just as South Africa's TVET system is experiencing. One significant issue has been Ethiopia's dearth of public and private businesses, making it challenging to provide the volume and calibre of training required by policy papers (Abebe & Tekleselassie, 2022:57).

## **3.5. EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON TVET LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

This main section provides a detailed discussion of the existing literature on TVET leadership and management practices. It gives existing information that was collected in the past by other scholars concerning the research problem to identify the gaps. Alex (2024) suggests that empirical literature involves the evaluation of existing studies to bring to rest a specific research issue to uncover relevant gaps and conflicts to describe the research phenomenon adequately. In the context of TVET, several studies have been conducted on leadership and management. However, only some scholars have explicitly explored the entire TVET management and leadership structure. Existing studies have focused on either leadership or management separately. The empirical literature covers international and national scholars, including South Africa. The studies are relevant to this current study because they provide a foundation and understanding of the research phenomenon.

A study conducted by Florah (2017) assessed the clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the TVET board in performance management in the Yanza Region, Kenya. The researcher used a

correlation research design census survey, and a questionnaire was tailored to collect the respondents' views to test the hypothesis. The theory that influenced this study is the agency theory. Florah (2017:189) maintained that individuals who are part of the TVET management structure "should have the ability to influence the direction, decision-making, and culture of the organisation to be equipped" with the necessary skills to implement strategic priorities. The findings revealed that lack of leadership capacity is a challenge affecting the TVET system in Kenya, and the sector cannot increase performance. There is also a lack of corporate governance in the industry, which results in unethical behaviour. This research investigation is related to this current study on the aspect of the TVET board, which forms part of the sector's management structure. However, the researchers' objectives did not cover all the existing management structures in the TVET sector.

A study conducted by Ahmad (2015) in Southeast Asia explored the challenges, roles, and characteristics of a higher-ranking leader in the TVET sector in the twenty-first-century. The study employed a qualitative research design, and the phenomenological research strategy seems reliable in discovering the experiences of TVET leaders. The participants were selected purposefully based on their positions and experiences. The in-depth interview was used as a data collection tool, and the curriculum vitae of the participants were collected to confirm their experience in the TVET sector. The findings of this study revealed that leaders are equipped with an "anti-panic personality," resulting from the fact that they are not involved in policy development but are required to implement these policies without any formal training or participation (Ahmad, 2015:1472).

A study conducted by Kedir and Geleta (2017) evaluated how "transformational leadership" was applied in Ethiopia's TVET institutions. Seven TVET institutions were chosen for the research using straightforward random sampling methods. The data was collected through the utilisation of questionnaires and interviews. The transformation leadership theory informed the research investigation. The researcher indicates that transformational leadership in the TVET system can inspire a shared vision and challenge the process of encouraging a well-managed college sector. The conclusion showed that Ethiopia's TVET leaders could not drive innovation and change successfully (Kedir & Galeta, 2017:60). The main issues that prevented the effective implementation of change were a lack of professional support for TVET leaders and their inability to apply multiple techniques to secure and utilise resources.

The study focusing on leadership by Badenhorst and Radile (2018) investigated the performance of the TVET colleges. A qualitative research design underpinned by phenomenological strategy was applied to investigate four TVET colleges in the Free State, whereby the participants were purposefully selected. The data collection tool involved interviews with nine management officials and nine students from four colleges. The theories that implicated the study are instructional leadership and distributed instructional leadership. The findings revealed that “there is little articulation between the layers of structures between management and students’ support services at campus levels, which adds to the challenges of dealing with inadequate” student performance because of limited authority to make decisions (Badenhorst & Radile, 2018:5). The study also pointed out that the lines of accountability of leadership are restricted and contribute to the instability of the colleges. It recommended that campus managers be equipped with more power to deal with their issues independently within their campuses. This study did not cover the role of the management structure at all levels. It was only limited to leadership at campus levels.

A study by Terblanche (2017) explored potential change management strategies focusing on sustainable curriculum change in five (5) TVET colleges in the province of the Western Cape. The researcher applied a mixed-method approach, and for data collection, a questionnaire survey and focus group interviews were used. The researcher revealed that the TVET needs to adopt leadership programmes (Terblanche, 2017:238). To support the leaders in their effort to bring transformation and enhance the performance of the TVET sector (Terblanche & Bitzer, 2018:119). The lack of effectual leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to adapt to curriculum changes impacted the overall performance of the TVET colleges. This study is related to the current research on the context of leadership and management strategies. However, the study differs in the participants selected and the data collection and analysis methods. The researcher should have covered the understanding and experiences of other managers in the TVET sector, but instead focused on the curriculum managers, a specific segment of management.

The interpretive study conducted by Robertson and Frick (2018) investigated the roles of leadership and management at TVET colleges in SA. The study employed multiple focus group interviews consisting of 61 participants. A semi-structured interview was used to interview 15 purposively selected respondents ranging from middle-level and executive leaders. A study by Robertson and Frick (2018:70) revealed that leaders of the TVET colleges

in SA come from various academic and professional backgrounds, spanning from artisanal trades to instructing in schools. Are compelled to work in a tangled and demanding educational sector marked by frequent “policy changes and political meddling, student protest” and the lack of clear leadership career pathways or succession planning strategies (Robertson & Frick, 2018:79). This research also discovered that South African TVET college leaders had forgotten about reforming and transforming their institutions in support of conformity.

The study by Beharry-Ramraj (2016) focused on the challenges influencing TVET management practices. The research applied a mixed-methods approach to investigate the study, with a sample size of 380 respondents for the quantitative research, where the total population was 3 700, and nine (9) respondents for the qualitative analysis (Beharry-Ramraj, 2016:22). These respondents were chosen among the nine TVET schools in the KwaZulu-Natal province. The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package of Social Science regression analysis. The findings of this study revealed that challenges affecting the TVET are “financial constraints, low throughput rates, inadequate lecturer qualifications, poor teaching environment, poor facilities,” and limited oversight procedures concerning the governance of colleges (Beharry-Ramraj, 2016:217). The researcher developed a management model for TVET colleges to ensure efficient and effective management.

The qualitative research project of Sithole (2019) investigated the TVET management structure at uMgungundlovu TVET College, where the researcher adopted a phenomenological research strategy. Interviews and focus groups were used as data collection instruments. The New Public Management theory guided the study. The researcher reported that to ensure greater control, accountability, economic efficiency, student access, and quality results, TVET colleges need to hire more professional management personnel (Sithole, 2019:51). To guarantee that management practices are implemented, and the organisation’s goals and objectives are met, Performance Management (PM) approaches are encouraged to bring about change within the organisation (Sithole, 2019:92). The findings demonstrate that functional decision-making within TVET institutions is heavily influenced by TVET culture. This study supports the notion that TVET colleges experience significant difficulties because of a poor organisational culture, low employee engagement, and a lack of empathy and flexibility. The researcher recommended that the college enhance its monitoring and evaluation systems and provide training programmes to improve management skills and knowledge.

The research studies conducted by Beharry-Ramraj (2016) and Sithole (2019) are closely related to this research investigation, as both scholars focused on management practices in the TVET sector. However, Beharry-Ramraj's (2016) study focused on management practices and implementation in the industry, while Sithole's (2019) study focused on the management structure in the TVET colleges. This current study focuses on leadership and management in the TVET sector and their impact on ensuring a well-managed institution. It is also vital to mention that effective management practices involve both leadership and management. Existing scholars and media articles exposed that one of the critical factors contributing to the dysfunctional TVET sector in SA is the result of poor leadership and a lack of effective management practices.

A study by Gachunga et al. (2020) in Kenya sought to assess the influence of TVET leadership commitment. The scholars applied descriptive research, and a census was adopted, and 68 colleges in Kenya were included in the study. The target population included principals, the Head of Department (HOD), and finance, who were selected purposively to participate, making a sample size of 272. The study's findings revealed that leadership commitment enhances the competitiveness of TVET colleges in Kenya. A leader who can offer strategic direction to employees ensures that organisational goals and objectives are well communicated. It encourages a culture of employee engagement and involvement, which is critical in ensuring a well-functional TVET college. The TVET sector in Kenya cannot attract students and increase enrolment because they are perceived as the last option for those individuals who have yet to obtain good results in secondary education and have failed to enter universities.

### **3.6. ROLE PLAYERS PROMOTING THE TVET AGENDA**

Internationally, the TVET sector has returned to the agenda of governments and donor agencies, particularly in developing countries in Africa (King & Palmer, 2010). Political and political communities in many low- and middle-income countries remain attracted by the supposed connection between TVET and a reduction in unemployment by equipping people with relevant knowledge and skills to respond to job opportunities (e.g., AU, 2007). Worldwide and in most national contexts, TVET has been gaining traction. South Africa is present in creating ways to address its various development concerns. It is very active in participating in the international agencies' activities. The TVET system's evolution has gained national spotlight and backing in a global framework for its regeneration (Akojee, 2016:1).

### **3.6.1. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency established in 1945 in the UK; the organisation has about 193 Members and 11 associates. It seeks to promote and build peace through international cooperation in education, eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development through education (Akther, 2020:104). The role of UNESCO concerning TVET is to act as a supportive agency to Member States who seek to improve their TVET policies and align them with international practices (Preckler, 2018:68). UNESCO recognises the TVET system in developing countries as a mechanism tool to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). TVET helps increase social mobility and decrease poverty by giving underprivileged people the knowledge and skills to secure more lucrative jobs and enhance their employment opportunities (Okoth, 2023:3).

In April 2022, during its 214<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting, UNESCO approved a new TVET policy. The goal of this method, “Transforming TVET for Successful and Just Transitions,” is to assist learners in overcoming the obstacles brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Its main objectives are developing skills necessary for entrepreneurship, employment, and long-term economic growth. It also facilitates the shift to digital and green economies. UNESCO strongly emphasises skill development for all people to support jobs and lifelong learning. The strategy’s primary goal is enhancing skills that support fair and sustainable economic growth. UNESCO helps Member States examine, assess, and harmonise their TVET policies with international objectives. Additionally, it aids in the creation of long-term funding sources for TVET implementation. To prepare educators for the future, the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNESCO-UNEVOC) in Bonn, Germany, works on incorporating digital capabilities into TVET instruction.

In SA, the TVET system is heavily influenced by UNESCO and addresses the demands for human resources; UNESCO promotes the integration of education and training, improving learner mobility and advancement. The TVET centre of UNESCO, UNEVOC, encourages the use of TVET instructors and trainers in secondary school to prepare students for the workforce. It stresses quality, teacher preparation, and technology breakthroughs in its efforts to expand and enhance SA’s TVET system.

### **3.6.2. Interagency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (IAG-TVET)**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) called a meeting of the Interagency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (IAG-TVET) in 2008 to make sure that the significant international bodies providing policy advice, programming, and research on TVET were well-coordinated (IAG-TVET, 2023:02). It improves the exchange of knowledge and a shared comprehension of critical concerns. In the end, the organisation wants to make greater use of the efforts made by each member organisation to assist nations in creating and implementing TVET policies that would increase employment possibilities, productivity, economic prosperity, and sustainable development. It has been demonstrated that the IAG-TVET is a valuable tool for enhancing regional and global cooperation:

- i. It fosters discussions about the TVET strategy of UNESCO.
- ii. Contributing to the G20 Multi-Year Action Plan on Development's Human Resource Development pillar.
- iii. Reviewing TVET trends and concerns on a worldwide scale.
- iv. Planning the Third International Television and Film Congress; and
- v. TVET and skills fit into the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030.

### **3.6.3. International Labour Organization (ILO)**

To ensure that TVET is accessible to all, the International Labour Organization (ILO) plays a crucial role; it assists governments across the globe, companies, and workers' organizations in enhancing their skill development programmes (ILO, 2023:25). The ILO has created a thorough guide for the TVET sector to support countries to improve TVET performance. The goal is to eliminate obstacles and make TVET "inclusive for all," including people who have been forcibly displaced. The ILO strongly emphasises providing people with disabilities access to TVET and skill development programmes. ILO has adopted several TVET initiatives geared towards helping developing countries achieve quality education and promoting skills and training to address unemployment and poverty.

The recent ILO strategy on skills and lifelong learning 2022–2030 in collaboration with other international agencies. To bolster its position as a global leader in systems for lifelong learning

and skill development. It is constructing long-term, sustainable growth routes to strengthen links between Africa's productive sector and TVET. The plan outlines a theory of change that includes five primary short to medium-term targeted outcomes to improve skill systems and encourage lifelong learning. It also identifies the five channels the ILO uses to focus its efforts to drive this change. The intended results enable society to address broader socioeconomic effects by addressing the required transitions to the digital and green spheres, heightened resilience, social fairness, decent employment, and contributing to important SDGs.

#### **3.6.4. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) significantly influences adult learning and Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems (Ramsarup et al., 2020:1). Vocational Education and Training systems support the development of skills in a wide range of vocational domains using classroom and workplace instruction methods. Field et al. (2014) assert that it simplifies the transition from schooling to the workforce and lowers the rate of school dropouts. To create inclusive, adaptable, and resilient VET systems that satisfy the demands of a shifting labour market, it recognises both possibilities and problems. The OECD carries out country-specific evaluations of VET systems and offers customised guidance on various VET policy topics (Field et al., 2014:8). These evaluations were carried out in more than 30 nations, and the advantages and disadvantages of each nation's VET system were evaluated.

#### **3.6.5. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The United Nations in September 2015 officially introduced Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an international standard for member states to strive towards an integrated sustainable development model by 2030 (Lambini et al., 2021:2). Sustainable Development Goals aimed to formulate global objectives tackling pressing environmental, political, and economic issues worldwide. Legusov et al. (2021:02) indicate that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which emphasised eradicating poverty, enhancing health, and advancing education, were superseded by 17 SDGs. The SDGs seek to address urgent challenges, including gender equality, climate change, and sustainable development, building on the work of the MDGs (Lambini et al., 2021:2). They stress the connection of different global concerns and offer a standard plan for peace and development (Kumar & Roy, 2018).

Considering the SDGs, the TVET supports various goals in realising sustainable development. For instance, TVET is closely linked to Goals #4, #6, and #8 of the SDGs, with most of the objectives able to be promoted through focused skills-development initiatives and a well-constructed TVET system (Mutebi & Kiplagat, 2022:448). Goal #4 promotes quality education, and Target 4.3 aims to provide everyone, including men and women, equitable access to high-quality, reasonably priced TVET (Okoth, 2023:13). Access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions can give students the information and abilities they need to support sustainable growth, make sustainable choices, and improve the world. Goal #4 encourages the member states to promote decent work and economic development (Ostermeier, 2024:1). The goal of Target 8.6 is to lower the percentage of young people not enrolled in school, work, or training. TVET bridges the skills imbalance and fosters economic growth by preparing people for suitable jobs.

### **3.6.6. African Union (AU)**

TVET has been extensively promoted throughout Africa by the African Union (AU). The AU acknowledges TVET's role in advancing economic growth and community involvement throughout Africa (Kerre, 2017:8). The AU has established a strategy framework to revitalise, modernise, and harmonise TVET throughout the continent. This framework enhances TVET systems and improves human capability and youth growth. Guidelines for TVET policies, ongoing professional development for TVET practitioners, research projects, stakeholder forums, and labour market information systems are all provided by the AU to its member states (Kerre, 2017:8). These initiatives support the creation of policies and enhancements to TVET. The Pan-African Initiative for the Digital Transformation of TVET and Skills Development Systems in Africa was introduced by the AU, in association with UNESCO.

This project aims to improve TVET's use of digital technology. The AU held the Africa TVET Regulators Conference to enhance TVET systems and bolster digital transformation. The AU is implementing a project called "African Commission's Aspiration for 2063," which was adopted in 2015 (AU, 2015b). Agenda 2063 has reaffirmed TVET's place in national systems. However, with references to more traditional fields, such as the improvement of teacher credentials, focus on curriculum that takes gender into account, and encouragement of entrepreneurship programmes (AU, 2015a). The demand for national TVET systems aligned with the labour market on the African continent was emphasised.

### **3.7. THE CHALLENGES FACING TVET INTERNATIONALLY**

Apart from distorted public beliefs, the TVET industry globally, especially in developing nations, faces obstacles, such as insufficient financing, poor teaching and learning materials, outdated training equipment, outdated curriculum, improper delivery methods, and teachers who lack the necessary qualifications: inadequate administrative personnel and inadequately equipped libraries. The challenges presented in the TVET sector negatively impact teaching and learning. The sub-section which follows provides an overview of critical issues that TVET colleges face.

#### **3.7.1. Perception of the Society**

A concern is voiced by Billet (2018:03) about young people enrolling in post-secondary education programmes that offer no direct job results or a limited chance of employment. Outcomes are also prevalent and developing in many nations, not just those with developed industrial economies. At most, TVET is seen as a backup or less desirable option. Hence, parents, instructors, and other family members advise these young people's paths into higher education, or the working world based on their impressions of TVET, influencing how young people choose their careers (Shi & Bangpan, 2022). Consequently, the poor status of TVET and its consequent unattractiveness for young people is ramifying for nations in attaining their social and economic goals, in addition to decreasing the choice of educational, professional, and work-life possibilities for young people (Azeem & Omar, 2019:16)

Despite TVET's widespread acceptance and recognition nationally and worldwide, this sector still needs to overcome several long-standing difficulties (UNESCO, 2001). The parents, educators, students, and policy officials all tend to see the industry as primarily serving those who are unable to enrol in academic programmes or who lack the mental ability to continue with the conventional educational system (Ayalew, 2011; Oketch, 2007; Afeti, 2009; AU, 2007). Official papers refer to TVET institutions as options for students who failed to obtain a qualification because they could not finish their regular secondary school (RSA, 2012). In certain circumstances, government regulations on TVET are also at fault. According to Afeti (2009), governments claiming their goal is to keep dropouts off the streets exacerbate the sector's issues. They also claim that lowering TVET institutions' admissions requirements merely feeds the myth that the industry is only for students who are not academically capable.

The government's alleged disregard for the TVET sector may be explained by the belief that it is only for dropouts (Oketch, 2007). For many students, enrolling in a TVET programme represents the end of the road because the industry's credentials and certifications prevent people from entering universities, which harms the industry's reputation and standing overall (Bose, 2008). A TVET-qualified person is also subject to the poor standing and reputation of the sector (McGrath, 2005). According to Osuji (2003), parents only permit their kids to join technical and vocational courses if they have not succeeded in getting into a university. TVET is, therefore, perceived as a last choice, or dumping ground, for those who are intellectually impaired (Ayalew, 2011). It is purportedly a sector for less fortunate, academically underprivileged, second-class people, low performers, and uninspired learners.

### **3.7.2. Weak Management and Leadership**

Inadequate management practices, weak management and lack of transformational leadership are other constraints facing the TVET sector, especially in developing countries (Ahmad, 2015:1474). TVET leaders need more skills, abilities, and expertise to govern and lead educational institutions successfully. This shortcoming needs improvement in decision-making, resource allocation, and overall organisational performance (Munyaradzi & Addae, 2019). Sometimes, poor performance results are caused by disjointed and incompetent leadership techniques (Robertson & Frick, 2018). These issues could be resolved by a dispersed instructional leadership strategy that engages several stakeholders. There is a chance that TVET College's organisational structures must match what students need to study. A lack of skilled lecturers, remote management styles, and insufficient resources affect how well students succeed.

According to Omar et al. (2020), the TVET sector has experienced difficulties with quality control of institutions and courses and cannot work with businesses and corporations. These elements impact TVET programmes' applicability and efficacy. The main goals of initiatives to strengthen TVET leadership should be to develop teamwork, enhance leadership skills, and match organisational structures to the requirements of students (Ismail & Yasin, 2020:33). Tackling these issues can encourage and improve educational results in the TVET sector. The difficulties managers encounter in acquiring necessary abilities. The absence of managerial skills, such as technical, interpersonal, and conceptual abilities, prevents TVET institutions and businesses from working together effectively (Mohamad et al., 2023:2778). Furthermore, the

requirement of improving organisational and leadership abilities among TVET managers is highlighted by the need for programmes that foster leadership, such as the Postgraduate Diploma in TVET. To maximise standardisation in higher education, it is also essential to highlight the leadership responsibilities that play in standardising quality systems within TVET institutions (Smit & Bester, 2022:137). This underscores the necessity of ongoing support and collaboration among all pertinent stakeholders. In general, closing these skill gaps and developing strong leadership are essential to raising standards and promoting teamwork at TVET institutions. The study by Gachunga et al., (2020) revealed that a lack of leadership commitment to strategic direction and employee involvement had affected the performance of the TVET institutions.

Waddington and Wood (2019:1039) point out that intimidation, damaging leadership behaviours, ineffective interpersonal interaction, and a lack of cooperation among managers can define TVET work cultures. There is a lack of collaboration between the management and leadership in the TVET because of fear of victimisation to the extent that employees even fear reporting corruption activities. TVET directors need more methods and strategies for performance monitoring tools, are technically incapable of putting their knowledge into practice, need more computer skills, and need help comprehending the vocational training, managerial expertise, and experience employees have received (Mohamad et al., 2023:28).

Conceptually, directors need help establishing long-term and strategic goals, communicating strategies effectively, and comprehending the organisational structure of the sector. The TVET directors are not motivated to start collaborations with the industry and must be more skilled at managing relationships between organisations. Four categories can be used to group collaboration hurdles between TVET institutions and the sector: governance challenges, funding and budgetary concerns, management issues in collaboration, and industry-institution cultural issues.

### **3.7.3. Infrastructure and Facilities**

It has been evident that TVET colleges' most significant issues are insufficient educational facilities and a severe lack of qualified teachers. Hence, the government was advised to allocate sufficient funding to acquire cutting-edge equipment and infrastructure (UNESCO, 2020a). To enable a TVET to be successful, infrastructure and facilities must be both readily available and

of a high quality. A sufficient number of workshops and laboratories are necessary for practical instruction. These areas are required to be well furnished with equipment, supplies, and tools related to the occupation. Well-designed administrative offices and classrooms enhance a well-designed learning environment. Simple facilities guarantee a comfortable educational environment. The study by Ayonmike et al. (2015) maintain that developing countries' TVET infrastructure and facilities must be in better condition, negatively impacting teaching and learning. Students in the TVET colleges, especially in developing countries with limited resources, suffer because the infrastructure is old. According to Selina et al. (2020), most TVET colleges need more suitable training facilities. Because the institutions require the necessary facilities, the skills that the students are learning there could be better.

According to Anindo et al. (2016), the small facilities colleges often need to be updated and utilized by the industry. The skill discrepancy among graduates can be attributed to the low training and skill development quality caused by outdated training equipment. A research study was undertaken by Kayombo and Carter (2017) on the difficulties faced by TVET colleges. They noted that the problems included a dearth of the college's inexperienced staff, a lack of resources, student training resources, and a poor public image of TVET colleges. It was also discovered that most parents forbid their children from attending TVET colleges, viewing them as inferior members of society and having a bad attitude towards these TVET institutions (Zite & Deebom, 2017). They suggested that the government increase the number of TVET colleges it establishes, step up its marketing campaigns, update the TVET curriculum, and raise the pay of TVET graduates. A high standard of education also depends on the availability of excellent teaching resources and materials (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021:196). Sadly, many colleges in Africa lack the supplies they need to give students an exceptional educational experience.

#### **3.7.4. Financial Resource Availability**

The availability of financial resources in the TVET sector globally is an issue that affects other areas such as human capacity, infrastructure and facilities, and teaching and learning materials. The funding scarcity is the main reason TVET institutions cannot hire qualified instructors, assessors, and verifiers, help them update and upgrade their skills, procure the best facilities, tools, and technology for job-related training and, as a result, cannot effectively advertise themselves. With the equipment and materials needed for practical work, TVET college

students constantly need help to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge (Shikalepo, 2019). The TVET sector programmes receive significant funding from the majority of developed and developing nations. They give TVET programmes enough funds so graduates with the necessary skills can find employment.

Most African countries invest little in TVET programmes (Nyerere, 2009). As a result, TVET colleges are now short on equipment and tools and unable to maintain the ones that they do have. In most of these universities, the training apparatus is antiquated. The educational system relies heavily on funding to carry out its plans and achieve its objectives. Despite this, most African nations have given TVET programmes less funding, resulting in subpar infrastructure and low status. Inadequate funding has harmed training, damaged reputation, and resulted in subpar service delivery (Jidda et al., 2018). As a result, students are taught skills outside the sector. Instructors must use the resources, which may only sometimes align with employers' needs. This results in a mismatch between the abilities that students acquire and what employers need to see for them to succeed.

According to Ongulu and Ibrahim (2021), TVET colleges should take further steps to guarantee the availability of funding to maintain the institution's day-to-day operations, rather than relying exclusively upon their national government and other financing partners. The TVET colleges must engage in revenue-generating ventures to get sufficient finance for high-quality supplies, infrastructure, and other equipment (Madwe et al., 2020). Engaging in revenue-generating activities will encourage instructors to perform at their highest level while providing cash for sufficient supplies and facilities.

### **3.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter presented an overview of the international perspective on the TVET sector, covering the types of TVET Models implemented in developed and developing nations across the globe. International agencies play a significant role in encouraging and facilitating international initiatives on TVET practices. To assist developing countries in enhancing their management and leadership practices to promote skills and training to address unemployment and poverty through education. The chapter also presented challenges that exist in the international TVET sector.

The following chapter will overview South Africa's TVET historical background and foundation.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATION AND THE STATUS OF TVET COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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#### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides an overview of the historical foundation of the TVET sector in South Africa from the perspective of legislation governing the TVET sector in South Africa is given in this chapter. It also represents an overview of the TVET system in South Africa, including the structure of TVET colleges across the nine provinces' formal educational system and TVET enrolment. The management structure, leadership structure, and Student Representative Council are also discussed, as they are the structures responsible for ensuring effective management and leadership practices in the TVET sector. The role players in the TVET sector and challenges presented in the TVET sector in South Africa are also discussed.

#### **4.2. AN EXPOSITION OF TVET COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Technical and vocational education and training are acknowledged as an inclusive notion that includes all components of education and training that effectively prepare individuals for the workforce by providing them with skills, competencies, and knowledge required skills and mindset for employment, job development and poverty reduction. TVET sector in SA was first established during the apartheid era when these institutions were formally known as technical colleges. The second landscape took place after 1994, when a democratically-elected government came into power and new policies were adopted to address the injustice of the past. This results in a new structure for the ineffective college sector.

In 2003, about 152 technical colleges were combined to create 50 Further Education and Training (FET) sectors across the nine provinces in SA. A study by Odendaal (2015) reported that in 2012, the South African government introduced the concept of TVET into the higher education system. At the unveiling of the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, the Minister who oversaw the Department of Higher Education (DHET) proclaimed the transition from FET to the TVET sector in 2014 (DHET, 2013b). About 50 public TVET colleges were given until 2015 to change their name from FET to TVET colleges. The TVET

landscape was expected to transform the sector and promote an effective TVET system (DHET, 2013c).

### **4.3. THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE TVET COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

This section provides an overview of the relevant legislation governing the TVET sector in South Africa. Since the ushering of democracy, the South African Government has been well-positioned to implement relevant rules and regulations that promote an effective TVET system. According to Sithole (2022), legislative framework refers to laws, regulations and policy guidelines that stipulate the status, functions and measures that need to be taken into consideration by the TVET leadership and management structures. This main section will provide an overview of important legislation that shaped the foundation and background of the TVET sector in South Africa. The discussion begins with an overview of the Technical College Act as it is a prerequisite for making sense of the recent reform in the TVET sector.

#### **4.3.1. The Technical Colleges Act (No. 104 of 1981)**

The Technical College Act was adopted in 1981 to regulate technical colleges' matters, including "establishment, maintenance, management, and control" (RSA, 1981). The National Party adopted the Act under the leadership of State President Marais Viljoen. During this era, the challenges that affected the colleges included but were not limited to status, autonomy, powers, equity, and unfair practices (McGrath, 2004). Since the colleges were operating under the segregation laws in education that were encouraged by the apartheid system, it created a weak and dysfunctional college sector, especially in majority-black communities (Lumby, 2014:103). Resources were poorly distributed; white minority technical colleges had better statuses and positions (Bisschoff & Nkoe, 2005:204). The failure of technical colleges was pressing more on demands for institutional transformation as it was also contributing more to low staff morale. When the new government took over following South Africa's first democratically-held elections in April 1994, it was stated in 1996 that the technical college system lacked a meaningful linkage with industry and was primarily disconnected from the local economy (Magadana, 2022). To address the challenges created by the apartheid government, the African National Congress (ANC) engaged in several policy initiatives which

shaped the current legislation in the TVET sector in South Africa. The Act was phased out following the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1996.

#### **4.3.2. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (No. 108 of 1996)**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (RSA, 1996) is the rule of law in South Africa, and all legislation, rules and regulations adopted must conform to the Constitution to ensure fairness and equality. Concerning the TVET colleges in SA, the Constitution makes provisions for human rights. Sec. 29(1)(b) of the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996) guarantees every South African the right to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (RSA, 1996). In this regard, availability implies that learners attending all educational institutions must have access to proper facilities, infrastructure and learning materials to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning (DHET, 2023d). Reasonable measures must be in place to ensure accessibility, prevent discrimination, and promote inclusive education to promote the principle of fairness and equity. The Constitution also requires that public servants promote ethical conduct in the public sector, ensure that service delivery initiatives are implemented effectively and efficiently, maintain high work ethics standards, and promote accountability (RSA, 1996).

#### **4.3.3. The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998)**

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 aims to establish an institutional structure for developing and implementing national, sectoral, and workplace initiatives designed to enhance the skills of the South African labour force. The Act was implemented amidst severe unemployment, minimal investment in the country's labour sector, and inequality of income due to apartheid (RSA, 1998). It was created to encourage skills development among SA workers. The Act provides measures that motivate employers to use the workplace as a dynamic setting for learning. It enables workers to learn new skills and offers opportunities to recent graduates to obtain work experience in the workforce (RSA, 1998). It also motivates the employees to take part in training initiatives to ensure continuous learning in the workplace to improve productivity and performance. It ensures that employees' competencies are expanded to improve their quality of life. In the TVET sector, this Act is administered by the Human Resource Management Unit, responsible for facilitating skills development initiatives and providing funding for workers seeking to develop and further their studies.

#### **4.3.4. The Further Education and Training Act (No. 98 of 1998)**

The Further Education and Training (FET) Act was adopted after the new democratic government became in power in South Africa under the African National Congress. To address the TVET institutional challenges that were caused by the injustice of the post-apartheid regime. The FET Act provides a transitional arrangement that shaped the FET landscape, which was implemented in 2002 (Mngadi, 2001). The technical colleges were merged into 50 multi-college sectors and renamed. It also provided for the establishment of leadership structures to promote good governance. During this period, the FET colleges were under the administration of the Department of Education and were responsible for national policy and standards norms (RSA, 1998). The provincial government also played a role in budget and education delivery. To ensure efficient and responsible administration in all TVET colleges, the FET Act after the merger was completed. A single governing council was appointed, and new reporting guidelines and MIS were created to support this delegation of authority. It enabled public accountability for the managers' actions and allowed the work of new organisations to be closely examined.

#### **4.3.5. The Continuing Further Education and Training Act (No 16 of 2006)**

The Continuing Further Education and Training (CFET) Act was adopted to amend the FET Act 1998 to regulate governance and funding of public FET colleges and employ staff and registration of private colleges (RSA, 2006). The CET Act aimed to promote learning and skills development to South Africans, giving them the necessary knowledge and competencies to gain employment in occupation, trade, and university (RSA, 2006). The CFET Act was to address the TVET matters concerning removing all references to provincial authority. Moreover, to formally assign the functions to the Minister of Higher Education and Training that the Members of the Executive Council previously performed (RSA, 2006). The act also provides regulations for the conduct of the college council. It stipulates that the college council must implement internal control measures and risk management systems equal to the Public Finance Management Act.

#### **4.3.6. The National Qualification Framework Act (No 67 of 2008)**

The National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 establishes the National Qualifications Framework, the Ministers of Education and Labour duties, the South African Qualifications

Authority, Quality Councils, and transitional measures. For the “classification, registration, publication, and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications,” the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a single, integrated system (RSA, 2008). The Act requires the Quality Councils to be consulted before the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) develops policies and standards. Sec. 8(2)(e) of the NQF Act has determined the three sub-frameworks that comprise the NQF as policy (RSA, 2008). A method adopted in SA’s educational system to integrate training and education. It keeps track of your academic successes and makes sure they are acknowledged. It was a component of a nationwide campaign to promote Lifelong Learning (CHE, 2013). The NQF system is designed to provide a standard against which formal education and training can be compared or evaluated. As provided in Table 4.1. NQF educational levels begin from the lowest level 1 to the highest level 10. The various levels stand for the different academic backgrounds and credentials that the individual has attained.

The NQF levels are divided into three main groups. The first Level, which runs from 1 to 4, corresponds to High School Grades 9 through 12, within the purview of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (Mclean, 2023). The following Level, which runs from 5 to 7, is comparable to the technical certifications and college diploma one may receive from a TVET College (Mclean, 2023). In this regard, most programmes offered in the TVET colleges, such as NCV, require the students to have completed Level 3, which is Secondary Education Grade 9. NATED courses require NQF Level 4, which is Matric. Under the Higher Education and Training Department, the third Level, which spans grades 7 through 10, is comparable to undergraduate and graduate degrees that one might receive from a university. The South African Qualifications Authority, or SAQA, oversees SA’s public qualifications and the NQF. They uphold a database known as the SA Learner Records Database, which contains information on every South African and the qualification certifications they possess. TVET qualifications issued to students are also kept and recorded in this database.

**Table 4.1. National Qualification Framework Levels**

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK		
LEVEL	SUB-FRAMEWORK AND QUALIFICATION TYPES	
10	DOCTORAL DEGREE DOCTORAL DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	*
9	MASTER'S DEGREE MASTER'S DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	*
8	BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA BACHELOR'S DEGREE	*
7	BACHELOR'S DEGREE ADVANCED DIPLOMA	*
6	DIPLOMA ADVANCED CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 6)
5	HIGHER CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 5)
4	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 4)
3	INTERMEDIATE CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 3)
2	ELEMENTARY CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 2)
1	GENERAL CERTIFICATE	OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (LEVEL 1)

Source: CHE (2013a:6)

**4.3.7. White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2013**

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPSET) was adopted in 2013 as a policy document focusing on the higher educational sector in South Africa (DHET, 2013b:911). The White Paper lays out plans for strengthening the post-school education and

training system's ability to satisfy South Africa's needs (DHET, 2013a). To support the creation of a developmental state with a thriving democracy and economy, it provides policy guidelines for the DHET and the institutions within its authority (Sithole, 2019:45). The DHET focuses on expanding the TVET colleges and diversification because it is essential to delivering post-secondary education and training (DHET, 2013b). It strengthens and expands public TVET colleges to make them the preferred choice for many school dropouts, which is the DHET's top priority (DHET, 2013b). Even with their notable expansion, colleges register fewer learners than universities. This is not the best way to meet the demands of an economy with a severe shortage of mid-level talents or build a skilled and educated society.

Despite considerable advancements in TVET over the last few years, college student success and TVET overall performance were expected to improve. The White Paper was adopted ten years ago, and the identified challenges remained unresolved, affecting teaching and learning (RSA, 2013). Student Support Services are essential for students to meet the requirements of college courses and adjust to the demands of college life (Papier, 2021:30). The student housing at TVET colleges needs to be upgraded and expanded because it currently needs to be increased. This is required to improve living circumstances for students and create an environment that is more favourable for studying (DHET, 2013b). One of the most essential things that DHET can do to address the structural inequality in the educational system is to ensure that all 50 TVET colleges are appropriately managed and governed.

Table 4.2. Summary of Legislative Instruments Governing TVET Colleges

Legislation	Summary
<i>Technical Colleges Act (No. 104 of 1981)</i>	Technical College Act was adopted in 1981 to regulate technical colleges now known as TVET on matters, including “establishment, maintenance, management, and control” (RSA, 1981). The Act was replaced by FET Act 1998.
<i>Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act (No 108 of 1996)</i>	Constitution of RSA stipulate that individual within the borders of SA have a right to further education (RSA, 1996). It also obliges all public servants promote ethical conduct in the public sector, ensure that service delivery initiatives are implemented effectively and efficiently.
<i>Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998)</i>	It provides measures that motivate employers to use the workplace as a dynamic setting for learning. It enables workers to learn new skills and offers opportunities to recent graduates to obtain work experience in the workforce
<i>Further Education and Training Act (No. 98 of 1998)</i>	The FET Act provides a transitional arrangement that shaped the FET landscape, which was implemented in 2002. It also provided for the establishment of leadership structures to promote good governance.
<i>Continuing Further Education and Training Act (No 16 of 2006)</i>	CFET Act is a piece of legislation that governs the entire TVET system in SA. The act also provides regulations for the conduct of the college council. Stipulate that the college council must implement internal control measures and risk management systems.
<i>National Qualification Framework Act (No 67 of 2008)</i>	To provide for the responsibilities of the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour; to provide for the South African Qualifications Authority; to provide for Quality Councils; to provide for transitional arrangements; to repeal the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; and to provide for matters connected therewith.
<i>White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2013</i>	The White Paper sets out strategies to improve the capacity of the post-school education and training system to meet South Africa’s needs. It outlines policy directions to guide the DHET and the institutions for which it is responsible to contribute to building a developmental state with a vibrant democracy and a flourishing economy.

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### **4.4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE TVET SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The South African public TVET system underwent a gradual paradigm shift after achieving political democracy in 1994. The new governance framework was based on the principles of cooperative governance that gave the government a decisive steering role, TVET institutions substantial power and partnerships between the government, organized business, labour, and communities (Ndlovu, 2021:36). There are fifty (50) registered and accredited public TVET colleges in South Africa. They operate on approximately 364 campuses spread across the rural and urban areas of the country. Between 1996 and 1998, the Department of Education oversaw a policy process that resulted in the FET Act (No. 98 of 1998).

The department then created a strategy statement for the college sector and a plan to turn the 152 technical colleges operated under the Technical Colleges Act (104 of 1981) into 50 Further Education and Training (FET) colleges (DHET, 2013). Changing from the technical landscape to FET aims to remove negative associations with the previous technical college system (Terblanche & Bitzer, 2018:105). Emphasising the blending of educational principles with industry applicability. In 2002, all public technical colleges were renamed after their amalgamation into multi-FET Colleges from the current TVET colleges, under the FET Act 98 of 1998. The transition was also a signal effort made by the government to improve the status of public TVET colleges (DHET, 2023d).

The TVET landscape was introduced in South Africa in 2012 under the management of the DHET, which is responsible for centralised TVET activities. The public FET colleges began changing their names to TVET colleges as early as 2012. The DHET intended to align the South African educational system with worldwide trends and norms. In January 2014, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, announced that public FET colleges and all colleges, including registered private, would change names from FET to TVET colleges (Moodley, 2015). This resulted in the fall-out of FET, which was not an easy task for the DHET, as Blade Nzimande was to admit:

South Africa perfectly reflects this [TVET] trend with recently developed policies that emphasise strengthening the effectiveness of FET colleges and SETAs, reinvigorating artisan training, and building partnerships between educational institutions and employers.

The shift from FET to TVET colleges was easy in South Africa because FET colleges were already focused on the same skills development and vocational training that TVET is meant to promote (Makola et al., 2023:436). The name change is, however, also meant to form part of a more extensive strategy on behalf of the DHET. The aim was to implement new efforts to improve the South African post-school education system and make studying at a South African college more significant and prestigious (Sishi, 2022).

The government steers TVET in several ways, and all these actions are centralised in the DHET. The government's primary responsibility is to develop policy, norms, and standards. Other duties include the development of a national curriculum, staff development, student and programme targeting, funding, and updating policy implementation. The National Skills Fund has also been established to support priority skills and innovative research in high-level occupationally directed programmes from universities to the workplace. This fund is known as a 'catalytic' fund because it promotes strategic partnerships and innovation in project delivery. The Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) grant functions similarly but focuses on providing access to professional placements, work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, internships, skills programmes, and work-experience placements.

The TVET institutions practice a tripartite governance structure consisting of a council, an academic board, and a student-representative council. Each institution enjoys strong stakeholder representation. For example, the college council consists of the principal, five external persons appointed by the member of the Executive Council, one member of the academic board, one representative donor member, one lecturer at the public college, one support staff representative and two students from the public college. Their primary role is to govern, develop a strategic plan for the college's mission, goals, vision, and funding plans, and exist as a suitable advisory structure. Partnerships are developing between government, organized business, labour, and communities. In addition to these partnerships, the DHET adopts the Occupational Qualifications sub-framework of the NQF and cooperates with the UMALUSI and Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) to maintain credible standards for the workplace.

Funding is instrumental in making TVET institutions effective in achieving national goals, enhancing performance, widening participation, and promoting equity and redress. There are

four kinds of funding: formula funding for TVET training programmes, financing for purposes, student financial aid, and private funding. Each provincial education department uses the budgetary principles of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to fund TVET colleges. Funds originate from the state, any donations/contributions received by the public college, money raised by the public college, money raised using loans, income derived from investments, money received from services rendered, money payable by students for further education and training programmes provided by the public college, money from students/employers for accommodation or other services offered by the public college and funds from different sources.

#### **4.4.1. The TVET Colleges in South Africa**

TVET in South Africa aims to be a responsive, high-quality, and reformed system. The South African government uses this method to support improving learners' skills and merging education and training. Mobility and advancement, finally satisfying the demands on human resources. TVET programmes are designed to meet these demands and advance the nation's economic, social, civic, and personal growth. Their goal is to equip individuals with high-level to intermediate abilities that will serve as a basis for further study, ease the transfer from school to the workplace, and foster the growth of independent lifelong learners (Sebola, 2022). There are fifty (50) registered and accredited public TVET colleges in South Africa, and they operate on approximately 364 campuses spread across the rural and urban areas of the country (DHET, 2023a).

Public TVET colleges are founded and maintained by the Department of Higher Education and Training under the jurisdiction of the CET Act 16 of 2006 (DHET, 2020c). TVET colleges play an essential role in developing South Africa's workforce by offering hands-on, practical education and training that prepares individuals with the skills and information required for diverse sectors (Sebola, 2022:56). Table 4.1. provides a list of TVET colleges by province.

**Table 4.3. List of Registered Public TVET Colleges by Province in South Africa**

NO.	PROVINCE	TVET NAMES
A	GAUTENG	
1		Central Johannesburg TVET College
2		Ekurhuleni East TVET College
3		Ekurhuleni West TVET College
4		Sedibeng TVET College
5		Southwest Gauteng TVET College
6		Tshwane North TVET College
7		Tshwane South TVET College
8		Western TVET College
B	KWAZULU NATAL	
9		Coastal TVET College
10		Elangeni TVET College
11		Esayidi TVET College
12		Majuba TVET College
13		Mnambithi TVET College
14		Mthashana TVET College
15		Thekwini TVET College
16		Umfolozu TVET College
17		Umgungundlovu TVET College

NO.	PROVINCE	TVET NAMES
<b>C</b>	<b>WESTERN CAPE</b>	
18		Boland TVET College
19		College of Cape Town
20		False Bay TVET College
21		Northlink TVET College
22		South Cape TVET College
23		West Coast TVET College
<b>D</b>	<b>EASTERN CAPE</b>	
24		Buffalo City TVET College
25		Eastcape Midlands TVET College
26		Ikhala TVET College
27		Ingwe TVET College
28		King Hintsa TVET College
29		King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College
30		Love Dale TVET College
31		Port Elizabeth TVET College
<b>D</b>	<b>FREE STATE</b>	
32		Flavius TVET College
33		Maluti TVET College
34		Motheo TVET College
35		Goldfields TVET College

<b>NO.</b>	<b>PROVINCE</b>	<b>TVET NAMES</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>LIMPOMPO</b>	
36		Capricorn TVET College
37		Lephalale TVET College
38		Letaba TVET College
39		Mopani Southeast TVET College
40		Sekhukhume TVET College
41		Vhembe TVET College
42		Waterberg TVET College
<b>F</b>	<b>MPUMALANGA</b>	
43		Ehlanzeni TVET College
44		Gert Sibande TVET College
45		Nkangala TVET College
<b>G</b>	<b>NORTHEN CAPE</b>	
46		Northern Cape Urban TVET College
47		Northern Cape Rural TVET College
	<b>NORTHEN CAPE</b>	
48		Orbit TVET College
49		Taletso TVET College
50		Vuselela TVET College

Source: (DHET, 2024c)

#### 4.4.2. The TVET Educational System in South Africa

The TVET educational system in South Africa consists of learners who get an education from TVET colleges: those who want to pursue career-focused education rather than regular matriculation (DHET, 2022). The primary goal of TVET institutions is to prepare students for the workforce by teaching them the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that employers value (Selane & Odeku, 2024). They assist students who wish to finish their education as well as young people who want to join vocational programmes following their completion of Grade 9 or Grade 12 education. Figure 4.1. provides an overview of the educational system in South Africa.

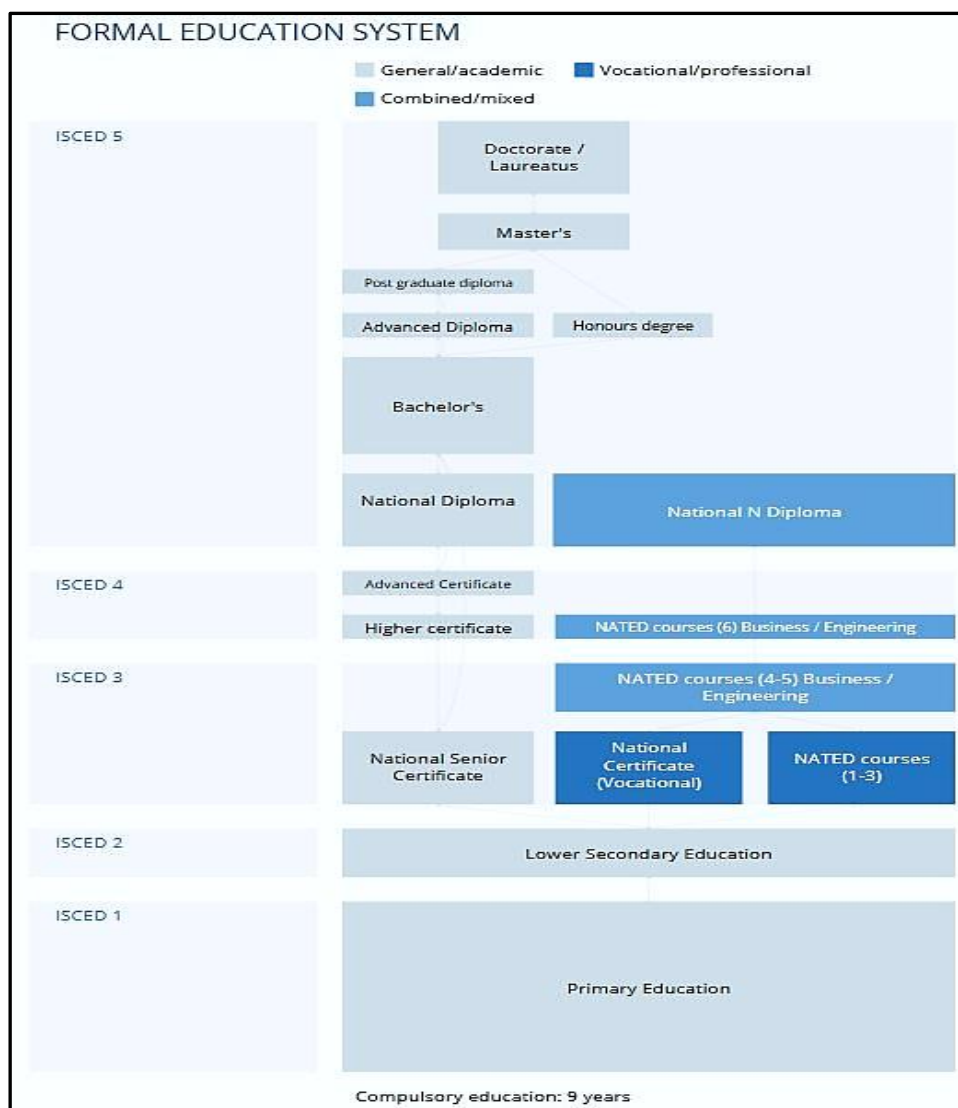
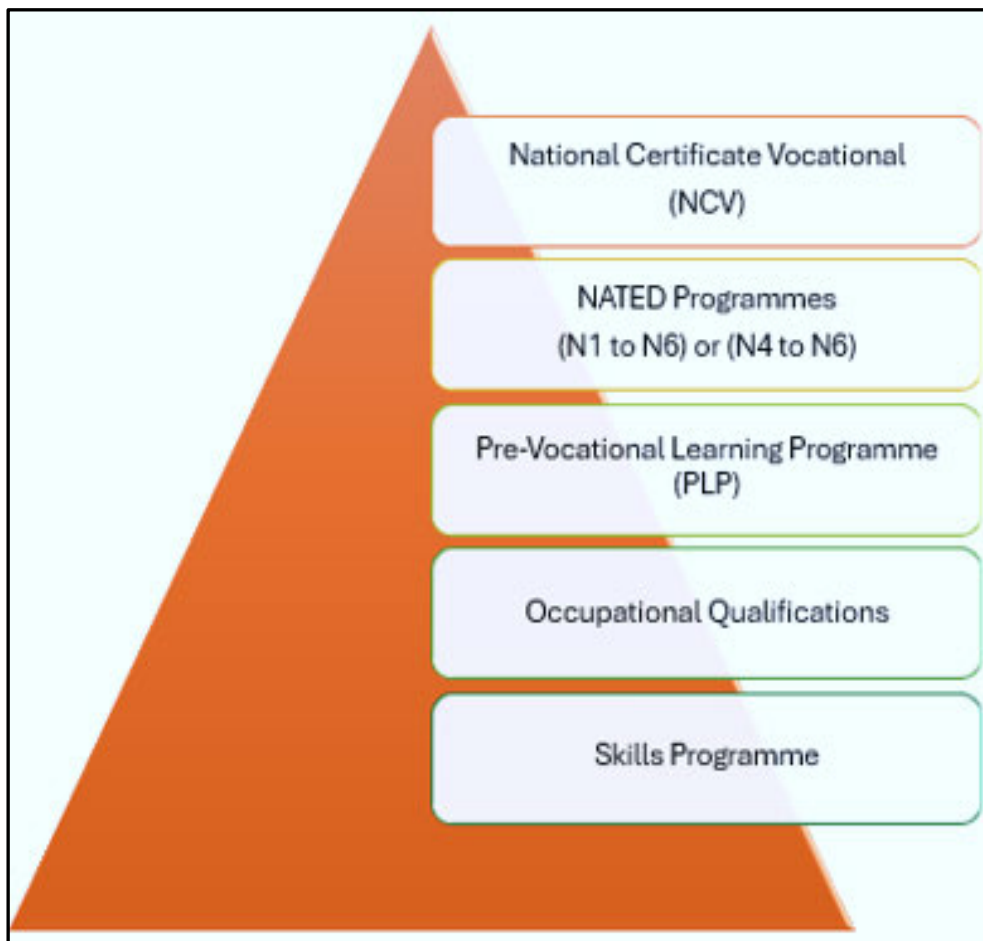


Figure 4.1. Educational System in South Africa

Source: (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2024)

As discussed in Sec. 4.3.6, the NQF Levels in the TVET sector are awarded based on the programmes or courses offered for skills development programmes, as provided in Figure 4.1. The programmes contribute to TVET enrolment in SA. The TVET institutions offer career-focused vocational programmes to prepare young people for the workforce or life as entrepreneurs who launch and manage their own companies (DHET, 2013b:36). The NQF in SA aligns with these programmes. The NQF Levels align with the technical degrees and college degrees from a TVET College. While some TVET institutions provide NQF Level 6 and National N Diploma credentials, most only offer programmes up to NQF Level 5 higher certificates with 120 credits (DHET, 2022:39). The SAQA prescribes that it is a requirement that after completing N4, N5, and N6, they must be integrated with the relevant 18 or 24 months of the practical workplace learning experience.



**Figure 4.2. Types of Skills and Development Programmes in the TVET**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The NCV programmes or courses offered in the TVET are optional for students to complete Grades 10 through 12, but the students must meet specific requirements to be awarded NCV Levels 2 and 3. Completing NCV level 3 enables the TVET learner to be awarded NQF Level 4 certificates, equivalent to National Senior Certificate (Matric). The learner can, therefore, qualify to further their studies at the traditional university or TVET College for a National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) qualification NQF Level 6 (SAQA, 2017:7). The DHET oversees the delivery of NATED programmes. The courses include eighteen months of college-level theory study and pertinent on-the-job training. The business and utility studies go from N4 to N6 and are offered in semesters (SAQA, 2017:9). The engineering studies run from N1 to N6 and are offered in trimesters.

The credential of NATED is intended for students who wish to advance their competencies in a particular occupational or vocational field and are exceptionally competent (Powell et al., 2024:25). The technical and theoretical knowledge, as well as the workplace and abilities necessary in the chosen professional or vocational sector, are developed in the students pursuing this certificate (DHET, 2024e:5). It allows them to pursue higher education or find entry-level or second-tier employment in the industry where they can be productive. The qualification enables the students to gradually qualify by completing the relevant N4 to N6 courses. In specific vocational or occupational areas, either in a single, prolonged study term of a year or eighteen months of practical application of their acquired knowledge in the workplace after completing the programme's theoretical portion (DHET, 2023c:9). After completing N6 and the required workplace experience and meeting all the requirements, a National N Diploma at NQF Level 6 is awarded.

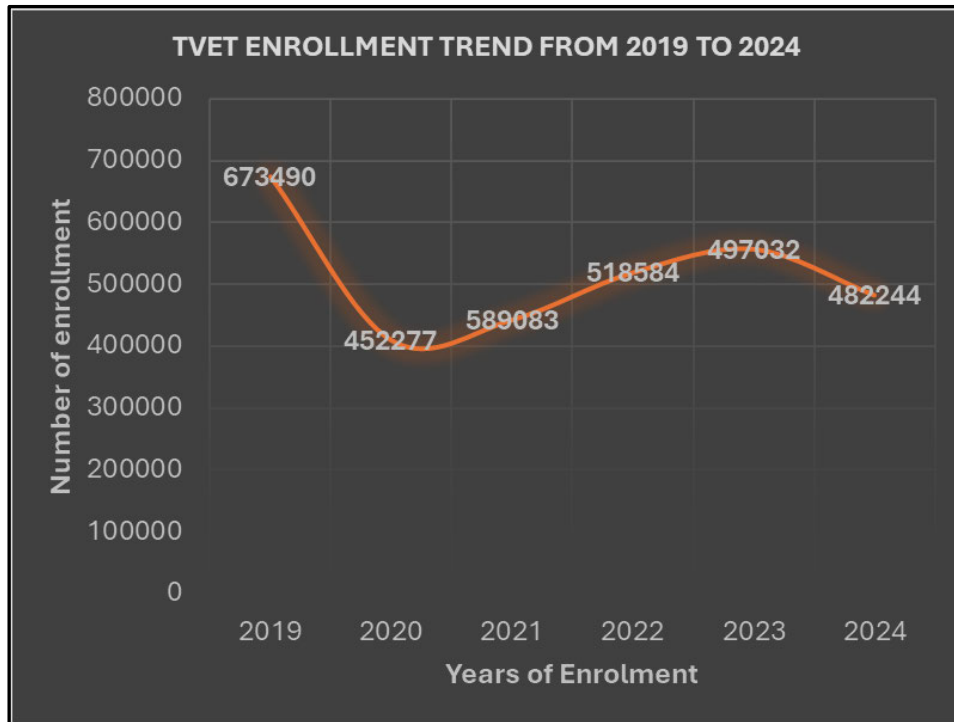
To prepare young people for entry into a particular vocational or occupational learning journey at TVET colleges, such as the NCV programmes at NQF Level 2, N1 Engineering Studies programmes (Report 190), and occupational programmes at NQF Levels 2 to 4, the Pre-Vocational Learning Programme (PLP) is foundational (DHET, 2020b). Its objectives are to close recognised learning gaps and raise students' prospects of academic achievement in the degrees and programmes they go on to after finishing the PLP. The PLP replaces no current fundamental programme. The Academic Boards of colleges support the findings of official assessments of progress and competency, even when the PLP lacks assigned credits.

The trade offers provided by other colleges and Centres of Specialisation (COS) are included in the occupational qualifications and part-qualifications. These curricula have a workplace learning component and are directly related to opportunities and skills needed in the workplace. Through the levy grant system, the National Skills Sponsor (NSF) and Sector Education Training and Authorities (SETAs) sponsor many occupational learning initiatives. The COS trade programme offers are included in the state-funded mainstream offerings and listed on the ministerially approved programmes register. Short courses that are both approved and non-accredited are part of skills programmes. They may last a few weeks or a year, depending on the terms of the stakeholder and college agreement. They speak to the requirements of the community and business. They primarily finance themselves.

#### **4.4.3. The TVET Enrolment in South Africa**

The DHET has plans to enrol 2.5 million students in TVET colleges by 2030 (DHET, 2013b). The NDP states that public TVET colleges should become institutions of choice for vocational education and training, a viable alternative learning pathway to secondary schools, particularly for training artisans and producing other mid-level skills (Papier, 2021:17). The TVETs are central to SA's long-term development. They are a critical mechanism for promoting access to education and training. To eliminate poverty and reduce inequality. According to the National Development Plan (RSA, 2012), adopted 14 years ago, the DHET has the mandate to ensure that by 2030, the number of students entering the TVET sector meets the set target. However, the NDP highlights the inefficiencies and poor quality in the TVET College system and calls for a significant increase in the student population. It also emphasises that this should be achieved by increased demand through improved quality and employability rather than purely focusing on improving access and filling capacity. The Post Education and Training (PSET) issued by the DHET provides a statistical report every financial year to provide information regarding the enrolment trends in the TVET across the different programmes offered (DHET, 2022).

Figure 4.3 provides a five-year enrolment trend in the TVET sector in SA from 2019 to 2024. The data was retrieved by the researcher from DHET (2022), the 2023 enrolment figures from the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG, 2023), and an opinion piece published in February 2024 on the South African Government's official website (South African Government, 2024).



**Figure 4.3. TVET Enrolment from 2019 to 2023**

Source: Researcher (2024)

In 2019, the enrolment number of TVET was 67 3490 compared to 2024, which DHET records 48 2244; TVET college enrolment in SA dropped immensely. In March 2020, following the COVID-19 outbreak, the SA Government imposed a national lockdown, which required the total shutdown of every educational institution, including TVET colleges (Chinengundu, 2021) the threat of the pandemic spreading led educational institutions to shift their coursework to a digital format. According to a survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), TVET colleges report more severe disruptions to their learning than students enrolled at historically more prosperous institutions of higher education (HSRC, 2021). The media exposed that “TVET colleges did worse in almost every indicator and had no system in place” to ensure that learning and teaching occur (Kahn, 2021:1). In this regard, in the first semester of 2020, about 60% of students could not access learning remotely. This worldwide epidemic exposed the inequalities in South Africa’s higher education sector. In the second semester of 2020, no new students were enrolled in TVET colleges and examinations in the first semester did not take place; this severely affected the TVET students’ performance.

In a media article, Ncobela (2022) reported that despite the critical development in the TVET, there needs to be more tangible progress in increasing enrolment. The Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Technology stated that this is concerning, considering the NDP goal of guaranteeing 2.5 million TVET registrations by 2030 (Burger, 2023). There is a high possibility that South Africa will not meet the NDP target of 2.5 million students in 2030. Among the reasons why the number of people enrolling in TVET colleges is decreasing is mainly because of the youth and community perception of the TVET. They are considered a second option for those who need help to meet the university requirements (Makola et al., 2023). This discourages potential candidates from enrolling in the TVET and companies from recruiting recent TVET new graduates. In his speech in the National Assembly, Member of Parliament, Cassim Yusuf, remarked that “there is no redemption while 60% of our TVET colleges remain dysfunctional” (Pretorius, 2018). Further, it was explained that this contributed negatively to the highest unemployment rate in South Africa as TVET colleges are facing challenges with performing according to the required standards.

According to a media article by Singh (2023), educational experts are concerned about 60% of students dropping out of TVET colleges in SA every financial year. This is causing a wasteful expenditure because the students stay home while they have been granted funding to cover the whole academic year. There are no systems in place to keep an eye on these pupils. The funding is provided regardless of how often students attend college. A lack of career guidance causes TVET’s high rate of dropouts to support students and ensure that they are placed in the correct courses, and the students end up selecting the wrong courses (Mkhize, 2024). In their study on the SSS in the TVET sector, Makibinyane and Khumalo (2021) found there were challenges with the implementation, such as a lack of academic support and insufficient SSS staff. The study also discovered that because of insufficient information on campus SSS units, students were not utilising the student support services. To guarantee that the South African TVET sector has a greater student retention rate, the DHET has put several initiatives in place to decrease the student drop-out rate, ensuring that every student enrolling at a TVET college successfully completes their courses.

A study by Edwards (2023) asserts that DHET adopted the Policy Framework on Administration and Management of Student Admission in TVET colleges to facilitate youth

enrolment in TVET college programmes, particularly for pupils from underprivileged and lower-class families. To guarantee entrance and enrolment in the appropriate courses that correspond with their cognitive capacity and ability, candidates must take selection and placement tests as part of the TVET college admissions procedure, despite the initiatives introduced in the TVET to increase enrolment and address the retention of students to encourage them to complete qualifications. This is affected by a need for more transformational leaders and principals in the TVET sector. Some need to be more connected to the industry and help implement measures to promote the TVET colleges within their communities. To put students on the correct track, institutions should adopt a “quality industry-driven curriculum,” which involves collaborating with employers to enhance and improve the curriculum (DHET, 2022). There are more than enough TVET colleges in SA, but they are struggling to expand enrolment because of limited resources and a lack of transformational leadership to bring change to the TVET sector.

#### **4.5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE IN THE TVET SECTOR**

According to Jain (2024), the framework of roles, duties, authority dynamics, and communication routes inside an organisation is known as its organisational structure. It outlines the division, coordination, and management of tasks necessary to accomplish the organisation’s goals (Jain, 2024). The organisational structure defines the decision-making hierarchy, reporting lines, and the authority and communication flow inside the organisation. The study by Ahmad et al. (2024) argues that the methodical placement of human resources inside an organisation to achieve shared business objectives is known as Organisational Structure (OS). It is adopted to ensure that work and information flow smoothly and that an organisation runs smoothly; it defines the tasks and responsibilities of each member (Ahmad et al., 2024).

An OS ensures that the human resources work together to support its objectives. It lays out precisely an employee’s responsibilities to facilitate productive and peaceful work. As a result, there is less resource waste and more production. A company’s operating system determines its workflow. In a business, an improper operating system might cause pandemonium. Because of this, an organisation’s OS must be either centralised or decentralised based on its workflow requirements. All power to make decisions in this system is vested in the highest management level. They assume the hierarchy structure, with the executive team or leader at

the top in charge of all decision-making. Supervisors are supervised by departmental managers who are below them. The workers under these managers are at the bottom of the hierarchy.

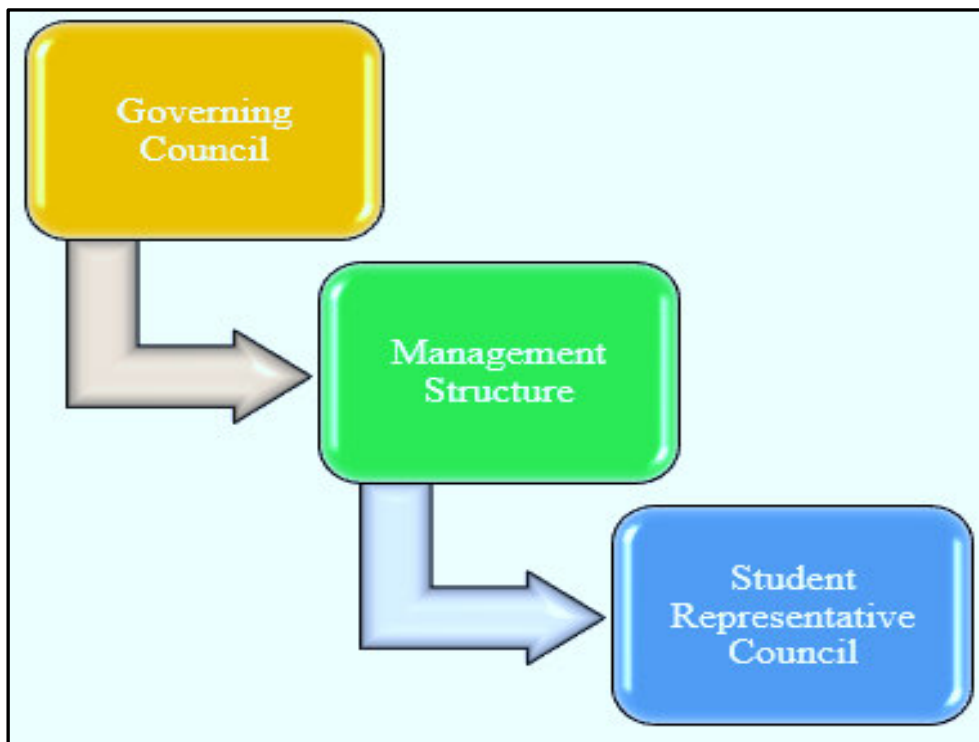
A centralised OS organisation provides policy consistency when operational units must choose between competing strategic aims and objectives. It speeds up making decisions as well. The public institutions of higher learning, including the TVET sector, use a centralised OS where powers are limited to specific individuals in the central officer. In a decentralised OS, the middle and lower-level managers make decisions based on regional norms and legislation under this OS system. The upper management is now free to focus on making important decisions. This kind of OS empowers staff members and flattens the hierarchy.

In South Africa, a decentralised OS usually occurs through a cooperative multilevel governance system. An OS is critical to the success of the institution. It helps to bring a variety of management and leadership functions and administration to meet the objectives and goals of the organisation. It promotes efficiency in the workforce and fosters better coordination between the various departments. It also helps to encourage effective service delivery. The organisation enforces unique types of OS depending on the culture and operational functions, needs of customers and products provided by the institution. There are different types of OS: hierarchical, functional, divisional, flatarchy, and matrix (Ahmed, 2024).

An OS framework outlines the decisions and procedures to accomplish the tasks necessary to meet the organisation's aims and objectives. Typically, these activities involve roles, duties, and regulations directly impacting TVET culture. Every college has a distinct culture, including amenities, a degree of centralisation or dispersion, and other elements representing the staff members' shared organisational values and beliefs (Algahtani, 2014). Besides offering instruction and training, TVET colleges in South Africa are parts of academic institutions that resemble corporate entities in many respects. They have missions, goals, procedures, structures, and tactics to help them achieve their objectives. Significant outside factors that impact TVET institutions' operations include demographics.

Management and leadership structure in the TVET sector refers to powers of roles and responsibilities amongst those assigned in hierarchical structures with a mandate to ensure the effective functioning of the college. Sithole et al. (2022) mentioned that any organisation has a management and a leadership structure which establishes the power of control over decision-

making. Effective management and leadership in the TVET sector consist of three structures that must exist to ensure a practical function of the college. Figure 4.3. illustrates the three structures in the TVET sector in SA. Each structure has a significant role to play. The council, prescribed by the CET Act (No 16 of 2006), is the highest decision-making body of the college. The Operation Management Structure is responsible for ensuring the effective administration of the college. At the same time, the SRC is the highest student representative body of the college regarding student matters of common interest across all campuses.



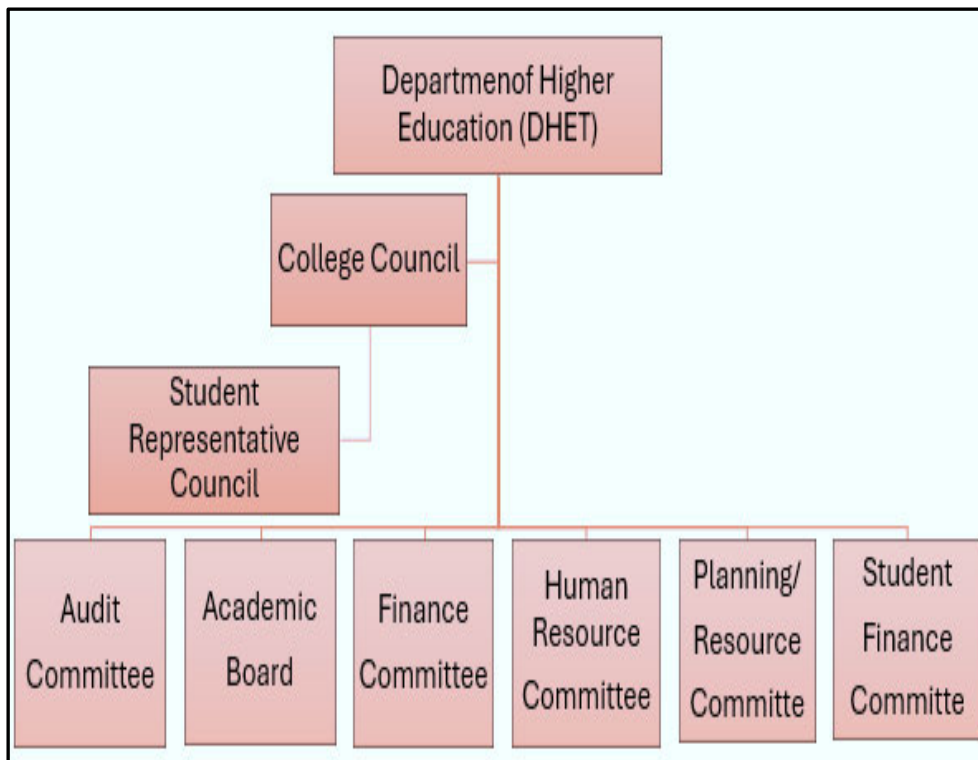
**Figure 4.4. Three Structures of Management and Leadership System in the TVET Sector**

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### **4.5.1. The Governing Council in the TVET Sector**

The Governing Council in the TVET Sector plays a crucial role in overseeing the management and affairs of TVET institutions. The Governing Council is typically appointed by the relevant government ministry responsible for education or vocational training. The college council is a leadership structure accountable for promoting good governance in the TVET sector in SA. The council, prescribed by the CET Act (No. 16 of 2006), is the highest decision-making body of the college. A fair representation of ten external and six internal council members makes up each council's sixteen members. Five of the ten are appointed directly by the Minister of

DHET after a nomination process in which candidates who apply and are selected are notified of their candidature. The Minister appoints four members of the council. College council regulations and rules, including information on its membership, functions, and duties, are provided by the DHET. College councils are assessed by the DHET using metrics related to sound governance. Transparency, accountability, and sound decision-making are some of the indicators. Within TVET colleges, the DHET is actively involved in revamping the curriculum. Figure 4.5 illustrates the governing structure of TVET colleges as prescribed by the CET Act.



**Figure 4.5. College Governing Council Structure**

Source: (Sithole, 2019)

The Constitution of the Governing Council consists of the following members:

- i. The Principal and Accounting Officer.
- ii. Five external persons appointed by the Minister.
- iii. Four additional external members with financial, human resources and legal skills.
- iv. One member of the Academic Board elected by the Academic Board.
- v. Two members of the Student Representative Council.
- vi. One external member representing donors.

- vii. One lecturer from the College, elected by the lecturers at the College.

The primary function and responsibilities of the Governing Council in the TVET sector are as follows:

- i. To provide a strategic direction to the college to enable the institution to fulfil its mandate of providing education and training to students.
- ii. Develop and adopt policies in various areas that will assist college management and staff in implementing the strategic plan.
- iii. Monitor and report on the performance of the college, its management, and staff fulfilling the institutional strategic plan.
- iv. The Council is required to report on the overall governance of the institutions. This ensures that the college is managed and governed following best practices.
- v. One member of the support staff of the College, elected by the support staff, and
- vi. Two students from the College, elected by the Student Representative Council of the College.

Figure 4.5 illustrates that the governing structure consists of six committees. The committees of the governing structure are essential to the overall duties of the council because they facilitate improved communication, lessen information asymmetry, and enhance oversight of the executive (de Andres et al., 2017:180). The Audit Committee is the most significant and persuasive component of good governance. The audit committee aids the college council in overseeing the management structure. It lessens the disparity in information between the college council and the management; it also enhances financial reporting practices (Olijnyk, 2015:33). The ultimate standard of a successful audit committee is the total independence of the committee, which helps to increase the calibre of information communicated between the governing council and the executive management (Mokoena, 2020). As a corporate governance tool, audit committees oversee implementing risks and internal controls, administering controls, working with external auditors, and guaranteeing the accuracy of financial reporting (RSA, 2006). To ensure that resources allocated in the TVET colleges are used accordingly to minimise the high potential of corruption and abuse of power by the executive management.

The college's Academic Board is responsible for creating new policies and launching new initiatives following an analysis of data and trends (academic performance and final enrolment figures for all courses) by campuses in consultation with the college council. This ensures the monitoring of teaching and learning, including course delivery, methodology, classroom management, conditions of venues reporting on class visits, and portfolio monitoring for both lecturers and students (RSA, 2006). The Academic Board is also tasked with facilitating the implementation of academic policies, including completing assessments and promoting quality assurance. It approves new learning initiatives, including proposals, suggestions for new initiatives and programme phase-outs. Further, it sponsors research and analysis for recommendations on approving new vocational initiatives. It ensures equal inclusive participation and encourages women and individuals with disability to enrol in programmes offered by the college. It also deals with student matters, including the Code of Conduct, updates, and revisions to the Code of Conduct, SRC matters, the status of financial aid (bursaries), induction progress, and induction.

The Finance Committee is responsible for the financial affairs of the TVET College. It comprises the principal two internal and four external members, constituted by the legislation. The College's budget is overseen and advised, and the Finance Committee provides financial analysis. They must guarantee that the college has the funding necessary to run its operations and offer services and programmes to the community. The Finance Committee is essential to maintaining sound financial management practices. It works together with executive management to create a yearly operational budget. Further, it establishes long-term financial objectives, such as setting aside money for cash reserves or working capital. It sets financial goals and distribute resources wisely, examines financial statements on an ongoing basis to determine the college's financial stability, and ensures the budget is followed. Finally, it monitors financial performance to enforce compliance with standard accounting practices and protect financial assets from fraud.

The Human Resource Committee (HRMC) manages several human resource-related matters. It comprises three internal staff members and five external council members. It convenes quarterly by college laws. The Committee guarantees that the College's Human Resource Development Strategy aligns with the College budget. The HRMC also examines and sometimes approves internal human resource management policies and procedures. These guidelines could include hiring, working relationships, pay, and benefits. Committee members

are not directly responsible for creating these policies, even though they are welcome to contribute their thoughts and supporting data. Further, the HRMC ensures that the college complies with all applicable local, provincial, and national employment regulations. It monitors values-based procedures and rules to make the workplace appealing to present and potential workers.

The Planning/Resource Committee creates, evaluates, and carries out the college's strategic plan. The institution's long-term aims, goals, and objectives are described in this plan. It guarantees that the TVET institution's overarching goal and vision align with the strategic plan. The committee oversees the college's distribution and application of resources (money, buildings, tools, and staff). It guarantees that resources are used effectively and efficiently to facilitate administrative, instructional, and learning activities. The committee works with stakeholders such as external partners, teachers, staff, and students. Further, employers, business leaders, and community members are involved in improving TVET programmes and addressing labour shortages.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is one of the three statutory entities that comprise a college. As discussed in Sec. 4.5.3, it is also represented in the College Governing Council. The SRC is legally defined in the Academic Board and College Council as the CET Act requires. The DHET seeks to meet the needs and capacities of students, increase student representation, and enhance the sector's reputation.

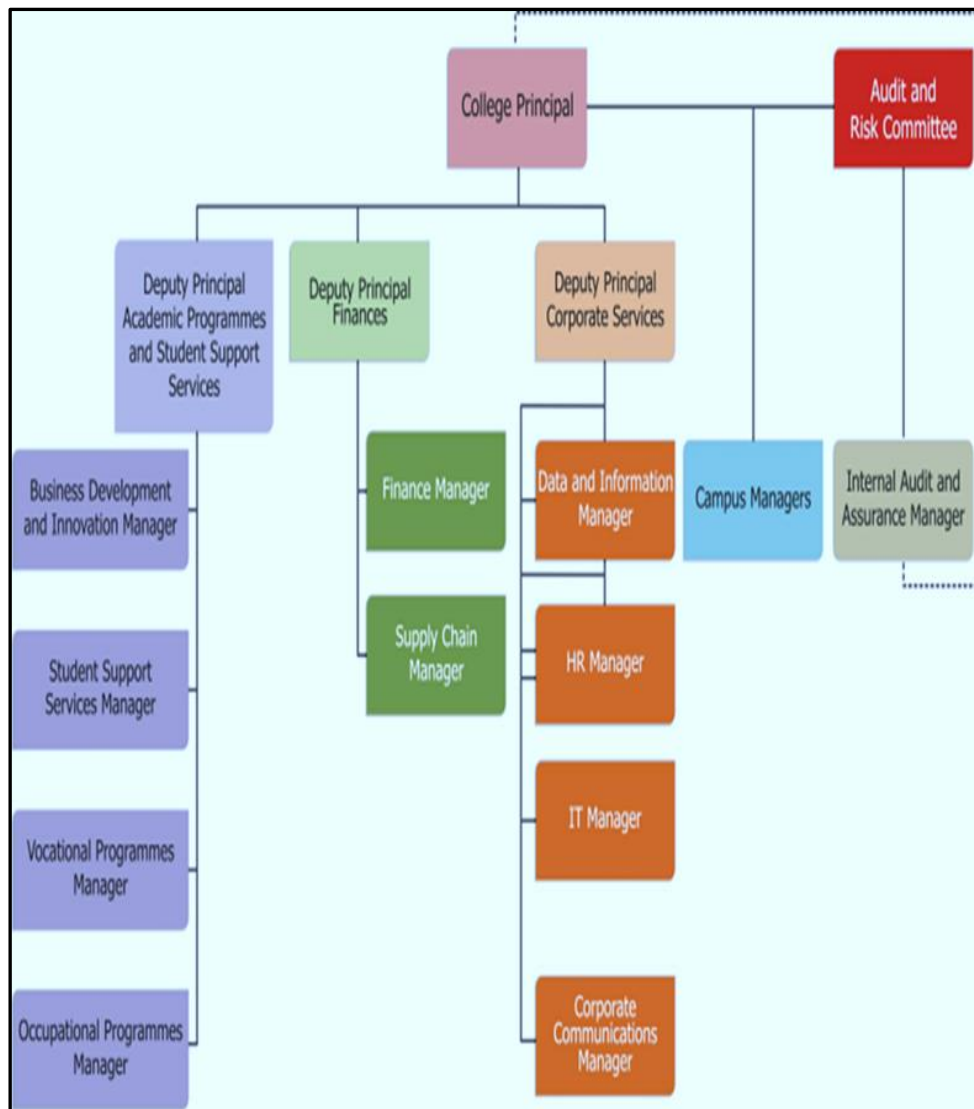
#### **4.5.2. The Executive Management Structure in the TVET Sector**

The TVET colleges have a management structure that establishes how obligations and duties are distributed, managed, coordinated, and conveyed between the various tiers of management. The management is responsible for operational administration functions. The TVET's management structure is essential to ensure that effective administration meets the necessary standards. In the TVET sector, the management structure plays a significant role in ensuring that the college resources are used for the intended purposes and that integrity and accountability are promoted to safeguard the college resources. An operational management structure predicated on labour collaboration within the organisation involves all employee levels. It contributes positively to the success of the organisation. According to Sithole (2019), the TVET management structure is governed by a centralised system where the power rests

within the higher officials in the management structure, which are located at a central officer where decision-making occurs amongst the senior management.

There are three layers of management in the TVET colleges. First, the top layer of management consists of a college principal who is an accounting officer appointed by the Minister of DHET. Second, the middle management level consists of the deputy principals concerning their portfolio, which are “finance, corporate services, innovation, and academic services” (Sithole et al., 2022). Deputy principals coordinate activities and ensure plans align with the college’s strategic goals and objectives. And third, the management level, which consists of campus managers accountable to the college principal and portfolio managers responsible to deputy principals irrespective of their management portfolios.

The management structures in the TVET sector are made up of officials responsible for the administration and daily operations of the college. They specialise in finance, human resources, and student affairs. These individuals possess the necessary skills and knowledge to implement managerial and leadership practices (Mbatha, 2018:18). Figure 4.6 depicts the hierarchical management structure within the TVET in SA.



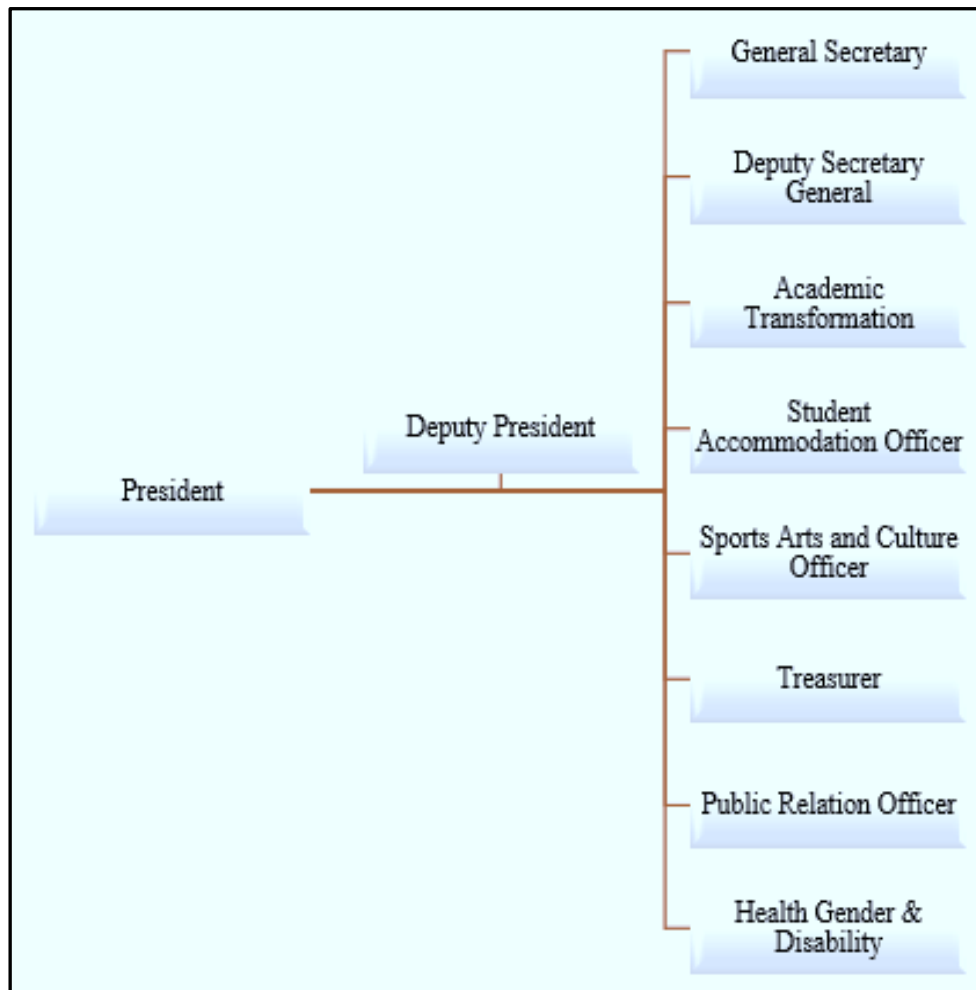
**Figure 4.6. Management Organigram Structure**

Source: Orbit TVET College (2024)

### 4.5.3. The Student Representative Council

Sithole (2019:60) notes that the Student Representative Council (SRC) is a statutory organisation that governs TVET colleges. It is tasked with specific issues by its constituents and college administration. The SRC represents student interests, coordinates events, and ensures good communication among students, management, and other stakeholders (RSA, 2006). The members that serve in the SRC structure are elected annually by the student to represent them in matters concerning the student. The SRC communicates with various stakeholders, particularly the college council, management, and other student organisations (Mtshali, 2020:97), and promotes issues that affect students. It ensures their views are

considered in decision-making processes. The SRC manages and oversees the usage of student resources. The SRC organises extracurricular events to build a thriving student community (RSA, 2006). It also oversees money granted by the college for student affairs and distributes it to student clubs, committees, and organisations. Additionally, it maintains and tracks financial resources and promotes openness. Finally, the SRC is tasked with preserving order at student gatherings and meetings and encouraging good behaviour among students.



**Figure 4.7. Student Representative Council Members**

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### **4.6. ROLE PLAYERS IN THE TVET SECTOR**

To ensure an effective TVET system that can play its vital role, all structures supporting the TVET must perform their duties and responsibilities accordingly to ensure that TVET activities are well coordinated and aligned with national developments. These structures and their role

players ensure that the TVET colleges in SA receive the best attention and that they encourage the sector to deliver its constitutional mandate.

#### **4.6.1. Department of Higher Education and Training**

The DHET is the governmental department in South Africa responsible for higher education institutions, including universities, TVET colleges and other post-secondary education. It was established in 2009 with a critical mandate to “develop capable, well-educated and skilled citizens” through promoting access to higher education and training (DHET, 2023a). The department is directly responsible for the 50 public TVET colleges. It provides national strategic leadership and plans the TVET programmes, practices, and systems (DHET, 2023e). A division of the DHET deals with TVET matters, including programmes and examinations, qualifications, and institutional support for efficient and effective management and governance (DHET, 2022:20). The TVET division oversees the management of TVET subsidies, transfers, and student support services. The Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation appoints principals to all public TVET colleges in SA (RSA, 2006). The DHET ensures that suitable resources are injected into the sector annually to achieve a well-functioning TVET system. Further, it monitors the college’s functionality and performance and requires that all public TVET colleges submit annual reports and accounts for the resources under their control.

#### **4.6.2. The Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation**

In South Africa, the post-school education and training system is predominantly under the direction of the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation. The minister plans, develops, monitors, and evaluates national policies about continuing and vocational education (DHET, 2022). This covers Community Education and Training Colleges and TVET colleges. The Minister responsible for the DHET plans, develops, monitors, and evaluates national policies about continuing and vocational education (RSA, 2006). In South Africa, the minister creates, oversees, finances, and supervises TVET colleges. The Further Education and Training Act of 1998 outlines the crucial function. To improve skill development nationwide, the minister works with SETAS, essential for advancing pertinent education and skills training (RSA, 2006). Further, the Minister oversees the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). Under Minister Blade Nzimande’s leadership, NSFAS funding expanded dramatically, assisting more South African students.

#### **4.6.3. The Principal (Accounting Officer)**

The principal of a public TVET college is an officer appointed by the minister responsible for the DHET as an accounting officer of the college. They are appointed to perform managerial and leadership roles and ensure the college's well-functioning (Mazibuko, 2022). Concerning managerial function, TVET principals must have expertise, knowledge, and wisdom to ensure that colleges succeed and perform according to the required standards. They are responsible for the operations and administration of the college. By this, the principal must be a member of all college committees and have the authority to execute managerial functions. Also, they perform tasks assigned by the minister responsible for the DHET and college council, and additional powers are transferred to the principal in the interests of the college (RSA, 1998). About leadership, the principal is known as a chief executive officer with a mandate to provide direction, support, and help the college council on matters concerning good governance.

#### **4.6.4. The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA)**

The Auditor-General must maintain accountability, openness, and efficient administration in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) industry. The Auditor-General examines TVET institutions' financial accounts. By comparing the financial statements to legal, financial reporting systems, accounting standards, and other regulations and laws, this examination establishes whether the financial statements are accurately disclosed. The Auditor-General assesses adherence to applicable laws, rules, policies, and recommendations regarding public resources. Furthermore, they evaluate whether public monies are utilised to ensure value for money and alignment with intended purposes prudently, efficiently, openly, and accountable. Within public TVET colleges, the efficacy of governance structures, risk management procedures, and internal controls is closely examined. Although an unaltered opinion does not guarantee complete compliance with all rules and regulations, this assessment assures ordered, efficient, and successful operations.

#### **4.6.5. Technical Vocational Education and Training Governors' Council**

The Technical Vocational Education and Training Governors' Council (TVETCGC) was founded in 2007 to serve as the only voice of the nation's public educational institutions and the exclusive representation for council members in the industry. It bargains on behalf of employees in the Education Labour Relations Council and General Public Service Sector

Bargaining Council Bargaining Units over terms of employment. The TVETCGC has communicated substantially with the presiding minister and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Even though the industry still faces many obstacles, the responsibilities and activities of the DHET and TVETCGC have helped the industry make significant progress. Through strategic and value-driven assistance, moral leadership, organisational positioning, and substantial interactions with stakeholders inside and beyond the PSET sector, their goal is to achieve cohesiveness with the success of the TVET college sector.

#### **4.6.6. Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)**

The Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) is the primary source of credible information on the supply and demand for skills. The SETA also distributes discretionary funds to upgrade skills in the workforce. Alongside the SETA, large corporate employers and state-owned enterprises cooperate with the relevant education and training institutions to provide training and staff to address educational needs. Partnerships between the DHET, SETA, employers, private providers, and public TVET colleges can meet the industry needs of the country. The SETA bridges students and workplaces by creating interventions and shaping solutions to skill demands within a sector. Since employers and workers back SETA, they are considered a credible and authoritative voice on skills. South Africa introduced a compulsory levy scheme in 2000 through the Skills Development Levies Act. The DHET, in conjunction with the various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), is responsible for administering the Act. The skills levy in South Africa is used to finance 21 SETA-run sector training funds to encourage levy-paying enterprises to train their employees.

#### **4.6.7. Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)**

With the 2008 amendments to the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998), the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) was founded in 2010. The QCTO also advises assessment centres and commercial and public skills development providers, which need QCTO accreditation to administer occupational qualifications (QCTO, 2024). The QCTO is an entity overseen by DHET; the QCTO establishes and upholds quality standards for occupational credentials. The workplace training and other occupational credentials are subject to quality control oversight by the QCTO. It controls the implementation, certification, and assessment of labour-related needs and converts them into credentials. The QCTO issues

TVET trade certificates in the National Learner Records Database. In contrast, occupational certificates are given to learners who meet the requirements of an occupational qualification or part-qualification by proving their competency.

#### **4.6.8. National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)**

In South Africa, a scheme known as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) offers financial help to qualified learners enrolled in TVET institutions and public universities. NSFAS offers financial aid for tuition, housing, and other study-related expenses to help students in financial need. Being a citizen of South Africa, enrolling at a recognised public university, and fulfilling certain economic conditions are among the eligibility requirements. On behalf of the DHET, NSFAS oversees and maintains the TVET College Bursary Scheme. The channels via which bursary applications can be submitted shall be recommended and supported by NSFAS to reach students and TVET colleges via a successful communication plan. This is completed promptly to avoid interfering with TVET College's academic courses. NSFAS measures how TVET colleges must distribute funding to students who require financial assistance due to their background.

#### **4.7. CHALLENGES FACING THE TVET SECTOR IN SOUTH AFRICA**

All TVET institutions in South Africa are tasked to constantly strive to overcome all challenges and barriers and thereby provide their students with quality education. Through the pursuit of creative solutions, establishment of alliances, and adjustment to market demands, these universities provide students with the tools required to succeed in the dynamic labour market. The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on TVET institutions; it triggered tremendous efforts from the TVET leadership and management structures to promote learning continuity and accelerated the uptake of innovative approaches to continue with TVET operations (Masina & Mawonedzo, 2022:13). The sector failed in developing countries, including South Africa; the pandemic exposed the weaknesses in the TVET sector (International Labour Organization, 2020). Many TVET providers scrambled to transition to remote learning modalities, identifying solutions and partners to facilitate this switch and establishing support for students and teachers (Emmanuel et al., 2020:49).

The TVET leadership in most countries did not have a pre-existing crisis preparedness strategy to ensure that learning and teaching continue, and very few of them engaged in remote learning.

Lack of transformational leadership in the TVET sector is identified as one of the significant challenges causing some dysfunctional colleges, and weak management eventually leads to less internal efficiency in the TVET colleges (Akinyele & Bolarinwa, 2018:10). According to Kahn (2021:1), it is reported that the Human Science Research Council survey exposed inequalities in the South African higher education sector. Less than 40% of students enrolled in TVET colleges claimed their colleges offered distance learning during SA's first lockdown, which was implemented in March 2020 in reaction to the outbreak (Kahn, 2021:2). However, when their colleges were forced to discontinue in-person instruction, only some benefited from online learning due to a lack of resources, as most TVET students come from disadvantaged communities (Papier, 2021:68).

In 2023, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported that in low-income nations, only 18% of TVET providers could offer utterly remote learning; in Africa, 51% of TVET providers could not provide students with any online or offline instruction during the pandemic (UNESCO, 2023:1). The TVET managers and leaders who cannot deal with unforeseen changes encourage motivation, innovation, direction, coaching, and planning, creating a mediocrity culture and poor performance. Ramadan and Xiaohui (2019:83) indicate that managers and leadership in TVET "lack the power of managing institutions" because they cannot think deeply about the industrial market requirements and their countries' economic conditions. The challenges presented by the TVET colleges concern leadership and management.

The recent increase in student demonstrations results from decades of neglect by these institutions, which have always played "second fiddle" to universities (Tyatya, 2017). A government white paper published in 2013 recognised these colleges' difficulties with poor governance and management, unqualified or under-skilled lecturers, inadequate funding and infrastructure, poorly differentiated programmes, and insufficient student support (RSA, 2013). The DHET was established, and it is generally acknowledged in TVET circles that this helped the institutions refocus and reposition themselves. However, many unresolved problems continue to impact the public's perception of TVETs and their standing (DHET, 2022).

South Africa's TVET institutions frequently face financial difficulties and resource shortages. They need more funding to offer high-quality instruction and training. The imbalance between TVET students' acquired abilities and the demands of the labour market is another major

obstacle. For workforce integration to be effective, this divide must be closed. It is critical to offer efficient student support services. Accordingly, career assistance, counselling, and attending to individual needs is provided to improve student achievement are challenges. Yet, more technology and information access are needed for several TVET colleges. Likewise, there is a need to enhance and improve digital infrastructure, educational opportunities, and prepare students for the contemporary workforce.

Mzabalazo Advisory Services (MAS) conducted an innovative study to assess the TVET governance system in SA (MAS, 2024). It was one of thirty studies the National Skills Authority financed in 2019 and commissioned by the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation. The study involved document reviews, department officials, TVET council members, the South African Public Colleges Organization, and the South African Further Education and Training Students Association (MAS, 2024:7). Some 300 council members from 48 institutions responded to a survey, and two TVET colleges did not participate. They were placed under the administration of Letaba TVET and Johannesburg Central TVET due to “mismanagement, maladministration, nepotism, theft, corruption and racism” (Fengu, 2024:1). The study findings revealed that college council members are entirely disconnected from the TVET industry (MAS, 2024).

The report indicated that corruption, inadequate oversight, and weak internal control measures in the TVET sector remain the highest challenges negatively impacting financial management practices (MAS, 2024:48). The college business units are experiencing frustrations in tender processes awarded without the involvement of the college’s procurement and supply chain sections. The political meddling in HR practices regarding recruitment and selection of staff members is appointment because they are connected to specific structures in the college (MAS, 2024:48). The ongoing pressure to accept additional appointments and cadre deployment and these individuals vying for council seats hoping to earn money are disrupting TVET colleges and wholly disconnected from the sector (MAS, 2024:48).

According to the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training (PCHE), the committee raised concerns about the Coastal TVET College’s inability to improve its governance and management since 2012 (PCHE, 2020). The Portfolio Committee expressed little confidence in the attempts made by the council, management, and student representatives to address issues related to financial maladministration, alleged maladministration, and looting

(PCHE, 2020). Other matters included unfilled positions, subpar audit results, inefficient internal controls, low academic throughput rates, an unsatisfactory correlation between council members' qualifications and performance, and a need for more student representation (PCHE, 2020). Some 60% of TVET colleges in South Africa were reported to be dysfunctional (Pretorius, 2018). Coastal-based colleges were identified as a true indicator of the status of the TVET colleges that could not perform according to the required standards.

These challenges in the TVET sector draw attention to the need for more robust governance procedures. Even with advancements, low governance measurements still require focus. Regardless of DHET enforcement, this entails promoting accountability in TVET colleges' decision-making procedures. According to Sithole (2019), there are gaps in the management practices in the TVET sector, and internal control and oversight measures still need to be strengthened to enforce accountability. The cooperation between the Governing Council, executive management, and administrators of the colleges is necessary to enable efficient management and leadership systems. Collaboration and coordination among the three institutional structures operations are essential to the colleges' successful operation. To prevent friction, miscommunication, and confrontation, there needs to be an explicit division between the duties and responsibilities of management and governance (DHET, 2019:37).

#### **4.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the historical foundation and status of TVET colleges in SA. The chapter began with an overview of the exposition of TVET, followed by the critical legislative framework underpinning the TVET sector in SA. The review also looked at the TVET system from the perspective of the size of the TVET sector in SA, the TVET educational system and the TVET enrolment for five years (2019 to 2024). The chapter also discussed the organisational structure, focusing on the three structures in the TVET to enhance management and leadership practices and the significance of role players. The chapter then concludes with the challenges presented in the TVET colleges in SA.

The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

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#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

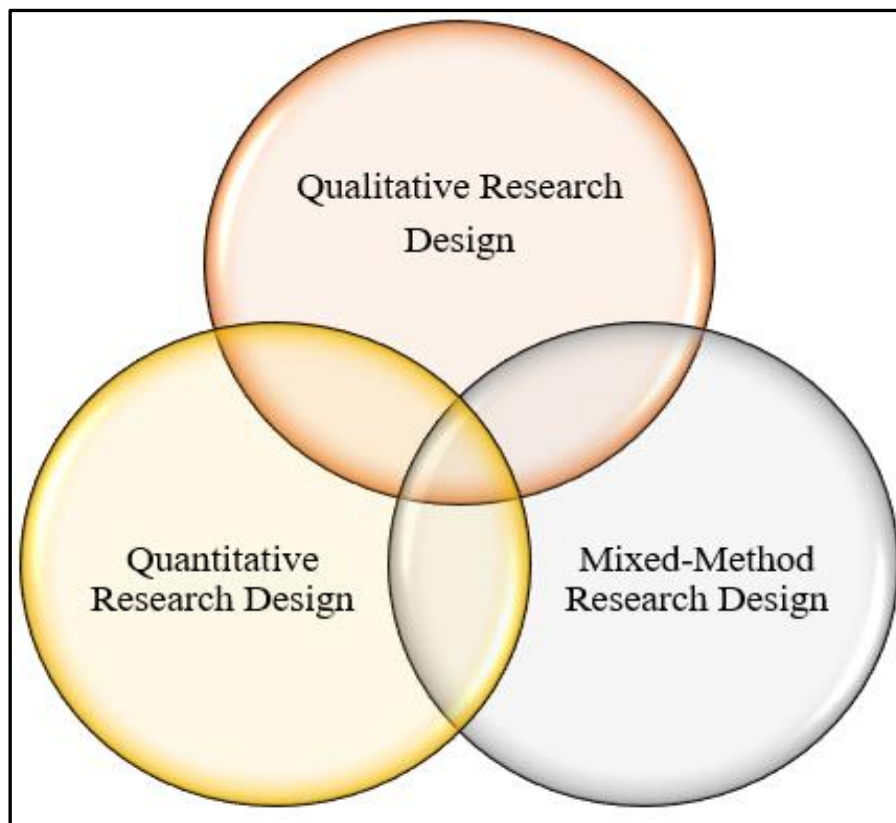
This chapter will provide a detailed discussion of the research methodology adopted to investigate the TVET colleges to solve the research problem. Scholars agree that a research methodology is a practical framework that governs the entire process of data processing and analyses. The present researcher utilises it to find answers to the research questions and objectives. This is an empirical study, and the researcher adopted a qualitative research design underpinned by interpretative and constructivist worldviews and a phenomenology research strategy. Through this chapter, the researcher seeks to generate new knowledge pertinent to the TVET sector and other higher education institutions through this chapters. To enhance effective management and leadership systems. This chapter also explains the data collection instruments, sampling, data quality control, data analysis and ethical considerations that were applied and considered during the investigation.

#### **5.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Daugbjerg (2023), research methodology refers to all practical research approaches for data collection and analysis. It provides a framework plan that describes in detail how the investigation was carried out to address the research questions and objectives (Mafuwane, 2012:67). Mthuli (2018:200) describes research methodology as a process encompassing critical steps that must be well-organized and properly implemented to collect all the necessary information to answer the research questions. In this present study, the researcher aimed to investigate the management and leadership system in TVET colleges in a natural setting to draw conclusions about the experiences, opinions, and empirical evidence. In chapter one, the researcher summarised data collection methods and approaches for this investigation. This is an empirical study in which the researcher employed qualitative research approaches and techniques to complete the study.

### 5.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This investigation was conducted following a qualitative research design discussed broadly in Sec. 4.5.1. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a research design is a broad framework or blueprint that guides the direction of the investigation. It underpins the entire process of data processing and analysis. Research design is a pillar of data collection as it informs and guides the researcher regarding suitable methods and techniques to conduct the study. Researchers must select an appropriate research design that can assist in solving the research problem. This ensures that the research questions and objectives of the study are fulfilled and that the findings are accurate and trustworthy. According to Taherdoost (2021:53), research design employs empirical data to address the problem being investigated. It also encompasses several elements that need to be considered when planning for data processing and analysis. A research design guides the researcher towards selecting data collection tools and techniques. Creswell and Creswell (2018) discuss three types of research design illustrated in the following diagram and covered in the following subsections.



**Figure 5.1. Three Types of Research Design**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 5.3.1. Qualitative Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to examine the experiences and opinions of those participants who were perceived to have knowledge and understanding of the South African TVET sector. A qualitative research design was deemed best suitable for conducting this investigation because it allowed a researcher to dive deeper and gain insight into the research phenomenon in a natural setting by gathering the perceptions and experiences of the participants who are part of the management structure, governing council and SRC. They ask about an individual's experiences and perceptions and can be used to explore a wide range of topics. The researcher used multiple data collection tools (semi-structured, focus groups and observations), which are discussed in Sec. 4.8. it provided an opportunity to interact with the respondents to understand their feelings and experiences and generate new ideas for the study.

For Mantula et al., (2024:03), qualitative research is the best method of enquiry to comprehend thoroughly human experiences, opinions, and behaviour. Although this approach is commonly employed in humanities, these methods can facilitate gaining in-depth information on education's social, cultural, political, and economic aspects (Bhangu et al., 2023:40). The common approaches include "grounded theory, ethnography, action research, phenomenological research, and narrative research" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:11). Qualitative research objectives are gathering primary, first-hand information and analysing it using specific interpretive strategies (Taherdoost, 2021:54). Qualitative research studies are based on non-numerical data in this regard. The researcher or investigator relies more on text, voices, and pictures, which provide insight into social problems (Ugwu & Eze Val, 2023:20). According to Gallegos (2022), qualitative research questions focus on the "how" and "why" of things rather than the "what."

Collecting qualitative data requires a researcher to identify the study site, the target population, and the data collection tools that help understand the research phenomenon. To illustrate this statement, the researcher selected three TVET colleges in KZN based on the investigation. The present study used qualitative data collection methods: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and observations. Sec. 5.6 provides a detailed discussion of data collection tools used in this research study.

### **5.3.2. Quantitative Research Design**

Quantitative research is defined by Thomas and Zubkov (2021) as a scientific approach that encourages researchers who are more interested in collecting numerical data. It is commonly used in experimental research to test hypotheses, measure variables, and conduct surveys (Bhandari, 2023a). Quantitative research is the opposite of qualitative research, although it can be used together depending on the research study. The researcher must consider that the data processing and analysis will differ. To illustrate this statement, the quantitative research design is based on statistical data collected through surveys or questionnaires, unlike the qualitative research design, which uses semi-structured interviews. The quantitative research method is more logical and scientific. It eliminates any possibility of ambiguity in a research study (Sreekumar, 2023:5). The standard techniques for quantitative research are “descriptive, correlational, and experimental,” which are used to collect statistical data. Quantitative research and statistical analysis use a large sample size to conclude the population based on collected data (Hassan, 2024).

### **5.3.3. Mixed-Method Research Design**

The term ‘mixed-method’ refers to gathering data for a single project using quantitative and qualitative research designs. A mixed-method research design integrates and combines quantitative and qualitative data (Eisenhauer, 2024:6). There are critical distinctions between qualitative and quantitative data, and these differences have less to do with words and numbers and more to do with compression and structure Schoonenboom (2023). A mixed-method research design is suitable for a research study that requires quantitative and qualitative research designs to answer the research phenomenon. Using various data collection techniques enables an investigator to connect with more individuals. However, employing a mixed-method research design can also be challenging because combining various research designs requires additional resources, including cash and time. It also necessitates an understanding of several techniques and their proper combination. In this regard, the researcher needs adequate knowledge and experience in qualitative and quantitative implementation.

## **5.4. PHILOSOPHICAL WORLDVIEWS/PARADIGMS**

Philosophical worldviews refer to a “set of values, beliefs, and practices that serve as the foundation for a certain way of thinking about the world” (Gretschel et al., 2023:4). As Gannon

et al. (2022:1) can note, philosophical worldviews are also recognised as a research paradigm. To conduct a thorough inquiry, a researcher must know the central philosophical presuppositions supporting their topic (Gannon et al., 2022). The paradigms greatly influence the researcher's thoughts on the best investigation method. Researchers must select appropriate research paradigms and follow them precisely during the study. Philosophical worldviews offer perspectives, self-awareness, a method of cognition, and the general guidelines of theoretical thought. They are utilised to plan, perform, analyse, and interpret research projects and their results to gain insight into truth (Moon & Blackman, 2017). For Moon and Blackman (2017:1168), three types of philosophical worldviews are recognised, viz., "interpretivism, positivism, and constructivism."

A researcher must consider the foundational elements (ontology, epistemology, and methodology) in research paradigms (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022:420). In cases where the study topic and objectives encompass quantitative and qualitative dimensions, a researcher may employ a mixed-method approach or two paradigms. Different paradigms frame qualitative and quantitative research. However, the researcher must justify using multiple research paradigms in the investigation.

The three paradigms that frame qualitative and quantitative research are as follows:

- i. Ontology: The focal point of ontology is "What exactly is the truth?" in the study. This pillar deals with determining the subject of the investigation.
- ii. Epistemology: Understanding is the subject of epistemology. "How is information acquired, and from which sources?"
- iii. Methodology: Research design and methods adopted to conduct the investigation and respond to how queries.

**Table 5.1. The Three Elements of Philosophical Worldviews/Research Paradigms**

<b>Research Paradigms/ Worldviews</b>	<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Research Method</b>
<b>Interpretivism Paradigm</b>	Interpretivism acknowledge that individuals perceive and comprehend the world in diverse ways. Although reality may only exist in one sense, perception of it varies. It holds that society constructs reality.	Interpretivism prioritise comprehension and significance. They contend that the worldviews of researchers influence the way they conduct research.	Qualitative research methods such as (interviews, focus group discussion, and observation) used to explore views and opinions.
<b>Positivism Paradigm</b>	Positivists hold that there is an observable, quantifiable world. They believe that there is just one veracity that can be found.	The methods used by positivists to acquire knowledge are sensory input and empirical evidence.	Quantitative research methods such as “surveys, statistics, and structured questionnaires”. Massive sample size or numbers are frequently used.
<b>Pragmatism/ Critical Paradigm</b>	Pragmatism's ontology is not fundamentalist. It avoids making hard assumptions about the nature of reality.	Pragmatism provides an alternate viewpoint by bridging the traditional realist gap and encouraging empirical heterogeneity.	Mixed methods research is used. Employs the methods of both qualitative and quantitative research

Source: Researcher (2024)

**5.4.1. Interpretivism Research Paradigms**

The interpretivism paradigm influences the study. Interpretivism holds that information and people are inextricably linked and cannot be separated. It sees the truth as a subjective process

that may be interpreted in many ways. Pervin and Mokhtar (2022:420) state that a researcher using an interpretive method should be curious about and investigate how individuals make sense of their surroundings. They are interested in the individuals' subjective interpretations since this provides an understanding of other people and their environment (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019:41). Interpretivists believe that reality can be understood by engaging with the participants to understand the research problem's nature (Chowdhury, 2014:434). This paradigm employs approaches focusing on meaning rather than measurement, including interviews, focus groups, and observations, which depend on the researchers-subjective interaction (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019:41).

Thanh and Thanh (2015:25) contend that qualitative methods are primarily used in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm. The research strategies such as “case study, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative, and grounded theory studies” are frequently preferred by interpretivists. They produce detailed reports that are essential for understanding context. (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26). Interpretive research is interested in understanding people's interpretations of the research phenomenon they encounter rather than seeking out universal, context-free, and value-free knowledge and truth (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:55). Interpretivists are intrinsically linked to the social reality they examine; they are not disengaged from their research topic (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022:422).

The fact that the approach of the researcher is from the perspective of those directly affected and identifies in-depth life experiences makes the interpretive paradigm applicable. The researcher had an opportunity to explore, explain, and try to put themselves in the participant's mind or image through the data analysis to reconstruct the opinions and views expressed during data collection. The researcher interacted with management, the college council and SRC to obtain multiple meanings for the research problem and questions. Figure 5.2. provides an overview of the application of interpretivist research paradigm and the influence it has on this present study.

**Table 5.2. Application of the Interpretivism Research Paradigm**

<b>Research Paradigms</b>	<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Research Method</b>
<b>Interpretative Research Paradigm</b>	<p>The participants are perceived to have knowledge and understanding TVET management and leadership practices from the perspective of those involved.</p> <p>The researcher assumed that access to reality is through social construction such as sharing opinions, meanings and experiences.</p>	<p>Prior to deriving any theory, compile all available information (data) and permit the emergence of fresh theoretical insights based on the data.</p>	<p>Qualitative Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-Structured interviews</li> <li>• Focus Group discussions</li> <li>• Observation</li> </ul>

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 5.5. PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH DESIGN STRATEGY

A phenomenology research design strategy was used in this study to understand the management, leadership, and student meaning concerning the management and leadership systems of the three selected colleges. Nicholls (2019:3) describes phenomenology as a strategy that applies to qualitative research, which explains how the participants experience a research problem. Yüksel and Yildirim (2015:5) note that researchers utilise phenomenological research strategies to investigate people's actual experiences within a particular phenomenon. To convey the broad scope of this research, it is crucial to define the phrase, 'lived experience.' It is most recognised as an empirical investigation of the fundamental nature of perception, explaining the concept and significance of each person's lived experience (Badil et al., 2023:10).

The phenomenological enquiry of Hourigan and Edgar (2020) is predicated on the idea that everything is universal and inevitably depends on how the participant perceives it. The main characteristic of this strategy is that the investigator must objectively explain the lived experiences before considering the motion of the research phenomenon (Dumlao, 2022:6). The task of a researcher is to describe, understand, interpret, and justify these experiences. As a result, the research analysis, interpretations, and conclusions are made deductively while frequently using the data (Zahavi & Martiny, 2019:157). Phenomenological research design is beneficial when researching a topic that requires delving deeply into the audience's ideas, emotions, and experiences (Almazi & Kaufmann, 2022:18). It is a valuable tool for developing fresh ideas regarding audience experience in a controlled setting, raising awareness of the investigated topic, and gaining insights from the audience.

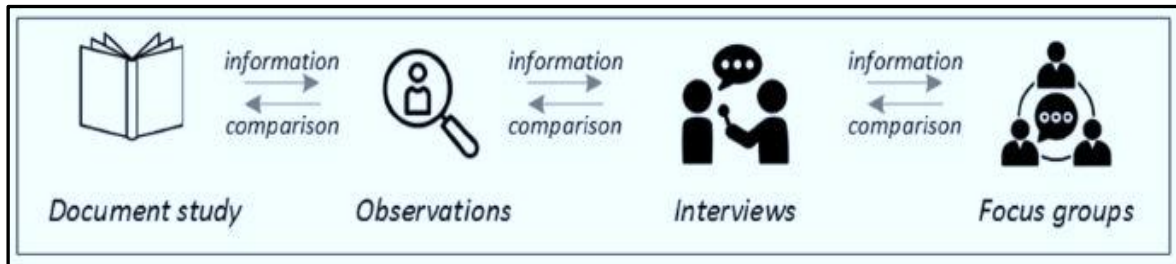
A popular phenomenological research method is interviewing or hosting focus groups with people who have experienced a specific phenomenon or event (Dumlao, 2022). The thematic analysis examines the information gathered from these talks or interviews. There are several benefits when utilising a phenomenological research approach. First, collecting data from actual participants can be beneficial when writing a research paper. Second, this approach offers fresh viewpoints and insights on a subject (Zhavi, 2019). Third, it aids in developing a deeper comprehension of the topic or incident in the issue (Almazi & Kaufmann, 2022). In other words, uncovering information that would otherwise be hidden is possible.

The most common method for gathering a sample for a phenomenological research study is purposive sampling. This sampling method approach is to consciously or purposely seek out people known to have experienced a particular event or phenomenon, or recruit people who have had similar experiences regarding the research problem. This results in creating the most comprehensive picture of the phenomenon. The researcher will also include the viewpoints of individuals with various worldviews on a given subject.

## **5.6. DATA COLLECTION**

Bhandari (2022a:1) describes data collection as a systematic process of gathering information for the study. In most cases, this involves collecting secondary and primary data. The primary data allows researchers to gain first-hand knowledge and the original insight into the research phenomenon through the utilisation of data collection methods depending on the research

design that informs the research study (Bhandari, 2022a:1). Secondary data assists the researcher in gaining extensive literature for this study, the data collection instruments that were utilized to collect primary and secondary is discussed below in the following sections. Figure 5.3 summarises the data instruments employed in this study to collect primary and secondary data.



**Figure 5.2. Data Collection Instruments**

Busetto et al. (2020:5)

### 5.6.1. Primary Data

Newly gathered information or data collected for the first time for empirical evidence, or any research project is known as primary data. It offers fresh perspectives that are directly related to the concerns or goals of the researcher and are unique and unedited. Frequently employed techniques for gathering information from primary sources encompass “interviews, surveys, and observations” (Stewart, 2024). Primary data is vital in evolving fields or situations where timely information is essential as it offers up-to-date information. This study collected first-hand data through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations at the selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN).

### 5.6.2. Secondary Data

Secondary data is the data or information previously gathered by another party for a different reason and employed by a researcher for a new investigation. The sources of information include scholarly journals, official documents from the government, collections of historical documents, and earlier research studies. This data provides existing literature that provides the researcher with information on the research phenomenon. In this present study, secondary data was used for various reasons. To begin with, existing scholars and media articles obtain information for the problem statement and literature review. The TVET policy guidelines and annual reports were also utilised to get more information about the sector.

### **5.6.3. Interviews (Semi-Structured)**

The interviews were employed as the data collection instrument for this investigation to collect data. This is mainly because the research problem, questions, and objectives require an interaction between the researcher and selected participants, principals, deputy principals, campus managers, and other managers in their respective portfolios. According to Knott et al. (2022:03) a deep discussion, flexible qualitative data-gathering method is utilised by investigators in the social sciences. They enable the participants to describe in their unique terms how they see and interpret the world around them in their unique social interaction (Knott et al., 2022). They are, however, a distinct sort of discussion directed by the researcher and utilised for specific purposes.

Semi-structured interviews were deemed best suitable for this investigation, allowing the researcher to delve more into the responses to specific themes (George, 2023a). Semi-structured interviews aid in gaining a deeper understanding of the various perspectives and experiences that TVET officials in their respective positions have to offer. It permitted the interviewer to plan questions ahead of time to help manage the discussions and keep responses on track. Annexures H and I describe the semi-structured interview schedules utilised to collect information from the management and leadership within the TVET colleges. The researcher used a recording device to capture the participants' responses during the interview session. In total, the researcher conducted seventeen (17) interviews with management and college council members.

### **5.6.4. Focus Group Discussion**

A discussion with about eight (8) to twelve (12) participants is known as a focus group and is used by a researcher to collect qualitative research data (Gundumogula & Gundumogula, 2021:299). It involves gathering a restricted number of individuals to answer questions in a regulated environment. The participant pool is chosen based on specified demographic characteristics, and the questions are intended to provide further insight into a topic of interest (George, 2023b). The researcher must lead and oversee the conversation and record the answers. This study also employed focus group discussion with a minimum of eight (8) participants in each TVET college. The present researcher conducted three (3) focus group discussions within the colleges on separate dates, locations, and times. This instrument was

used to collect data from the SRC members. It was best to use this instrument because the researcher was interested in obtaining multiple responses concerning the challenges facing the SRC within the TVET colleges. The questions used during the session are rooted in the perceptions and personal experiences of the participants, and they cannot be answered with a yes or no. Annexure J provides interview schedules that were used for the focus group discussions.

There is a specific procedure that the researcher followed to ensure that the focus group discussion took place and was successful. To begin with, the researcher created a flyer to recruit the participants for a focus group discussion. It was circulated among the colleges of interest to invite the SRC members to participate voluntarily in the study. Annexures K, L, and M describe the flyer to recruit the students to participate. Those interested in participating in the study used the information provided to reserve seats, limited to twelve participants. All those reserved to participate in the study received an email for confirmation. In addition, the researcher sent a reminder message before the date to ensure that participants were available. During the focus group discussion, the researcher provided basic study participation rules. The researcher ensured that this study highly practises ethical considerations, as discussed in Sec. 5.14. All focus group participants signed a consent form, ensuring they could voice their opinions and share experiences without fear of victimisation.

#### **5.6.5. Document Review**

The term document refers to written policy manuals, regulations, and standard operating procedures that organisations provide to guide managers and employees. It involves collecting secondary data from published or unpublished sources (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:357). The data can be retrieved from annual reports, legal documents, journal articles, books, dissertations” and all the existing literature related to the research study (Sithole, 2019:84). This study document review is a requirement because TVET colleges are under the administration of DHET and are responsible for policy directives and other resources. The TVET structures account to the Minister of the DHET. The researcher collected and scrutinised all relevant documents regarding the TVET sector to explore the existing policies and literature on TVET management and leadership. This present study used a document review process to address the research question RQ#04 and determine how effective the TVET leadership is in ensuring that management is supported in implementing managerial functions. The researcher

also procured annual reports, policy documents, statistical reports, and other relevant secondary data to answer this question.

#### **5.6.6. Observations**

Observation is a qualitative method of acquiring data that involves witnessing behaviour or events or observing the physical qualities in their natural environment. When collecting data, observation requires the observer to use their five senses: “smell, touch, taste, and hearing” (Jamshed, 2014:87). It is a subjective approach to acquiring information because it depends on the researcher’s senses. Observation was used to collect data from three (3) selected TVET colleges to assess the conditions and state of TVET facilities and infrastructure. To illustrate this statement, management, the governing council, and the SRC are responsible for ensuring a well-managed college. Therefore, all the facilities, including but not limited to classrooms, sports grounds, ablution facilities, and student residents, were all part of the items observed as indicated in the observation sheet, as provided in Annexure N.

The motive for including observations in this study was mainly to assess the availability of resources and the condition of TVET colleges regarding infrastructure and facilities, which is believed to be a crucial issue affecting the sector’s performance. During the data collection process, the researcher visited the colleges to observe the college's infrastructure and facilities. In this process, the researcher used a digital camera to take pictures and document all available physical items. The primary objective of this approach was to compare the photographic evidence with the information provided by participants. This method ensured that the reported conditions accurately reflected the actual state of the college’s infrastructure and facilities. By capturing visual data, the researcher could verify claims, identify discrepancies, and enhance the credibility of the findings.

#### **5.7. THE STUDY SITE**

This study was conducted within the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). In all, three (3) public TVET colleges were selected based upon their geographical and demographical location. Although these colleges are part of public sector institutions, they are at different levels regarding opportunities, challenges, and other factors affecting the sector. These colleges attract students across the province of KZN and form part of the fifty (50) TVET colleges in

South Africa. In KZN, there are a total of nine (9) public TVET colleges. These were as follows:

- i. Coastal TVET College is in Durban, under eThekweni Municipality, a coastal city in the eastern part of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province. It is one of KZN's most prominent public colleges, with about 15 000 full-time equivalents and 800 staff members (DHET, 2022). The college has eight (8) campuses "Appelsbosch Campus, As Salaam Campus, Durban Campus, Ubuhle Bogu Campus, Umbumbulu Campus, Umlazi-BB Campus, Umlazi-V Campus, and Swinton Campus" (DHET, 2022).
- ii. Umfolozi TVET College is in Kwadukuza, under Jozini Municipality, in the northern region of KZN, which is mainly a rural area with few small towns. The college has eight (8) main campuses: Chief Albert Luthuli Campus, Eshowe Campus, Eskhawini Campus, Richtek Campus, Sundumbili Campus, Isithebe Campus, Mandeni Campus, and Nkandla Campus.
- iii. UMnambithi TVET College is in Ladysmith, under the UThukela District Municipality western boundary of KZN; the college has three campuses: Ladysmith, Ezakheni, and Estcourt. Most of the region is rural, with the Drakensberg and Battlefields regions serving as significant tourism hubs.

The rationale behind selecting these three TVET colleges mentioned above was influenced by geographical areas and demographics. These colleges were chosen because they represent a diverse geographical spread across KZN, covering rural, urban, and pre-urban settings. In Ladysmith, where Mnambithi TVET College is situated in a more rural area, faces unique leadership challenges such as dealing with a shortage of staff, limited funding, and lack of resources, and needs more collaborations with local communities and industries. This made the college in Ladysmith an important case for leadership in a resource-constrained environment. Umfolozi TVET, located in Richard Bay, is identified as a growing urban centre with a significant industry presence and has a more formalised and structured approach to leadership. The Coastal TVET is peri-urban and offers an insight into a more dynamic, diverse, and rapidly evolving environment and the leadership and management practices needed to balance the needs of a diverse student body and staff and the challenges of proximity to a metropolitan area in Durban.

Figure 5.4. provides a map, giving the precise geographical location of the three TVET colleges.

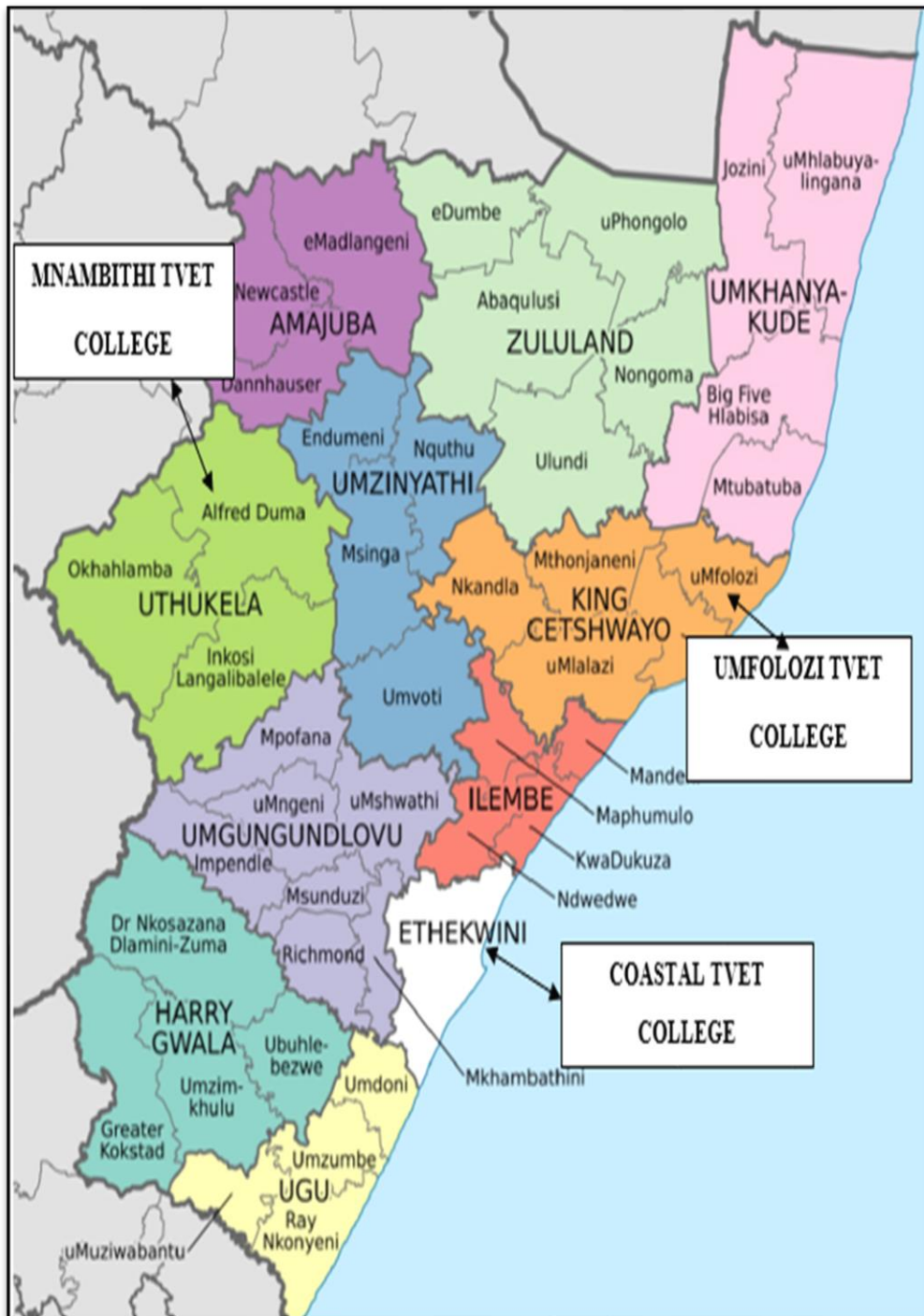


Figure 5.3. Map Showing Location of the Three TVET Colleges

Source: Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia (2024)

## 5.8. SAMPLING METHODS

Sampling identifies the group from which the researcher gathers data to answer the research questions. The present study employed two non-probability sampling techniques (convenience and purposive) to select the sample to represent the study. The sampling techniques were informed by the data collection instruments discussed in Sec. 5.6. In terms of the interviews, purposive sampling was used to recruit the participants, and convenience sampling was used for a focus group discussion. The researcher selected the participants based on specific characteristics and demographics. Sec. 5.10 provides a profile of all the participants that were selected. Figure 5.4 depicts the two types of sampling methods and techniques utilized in the study.

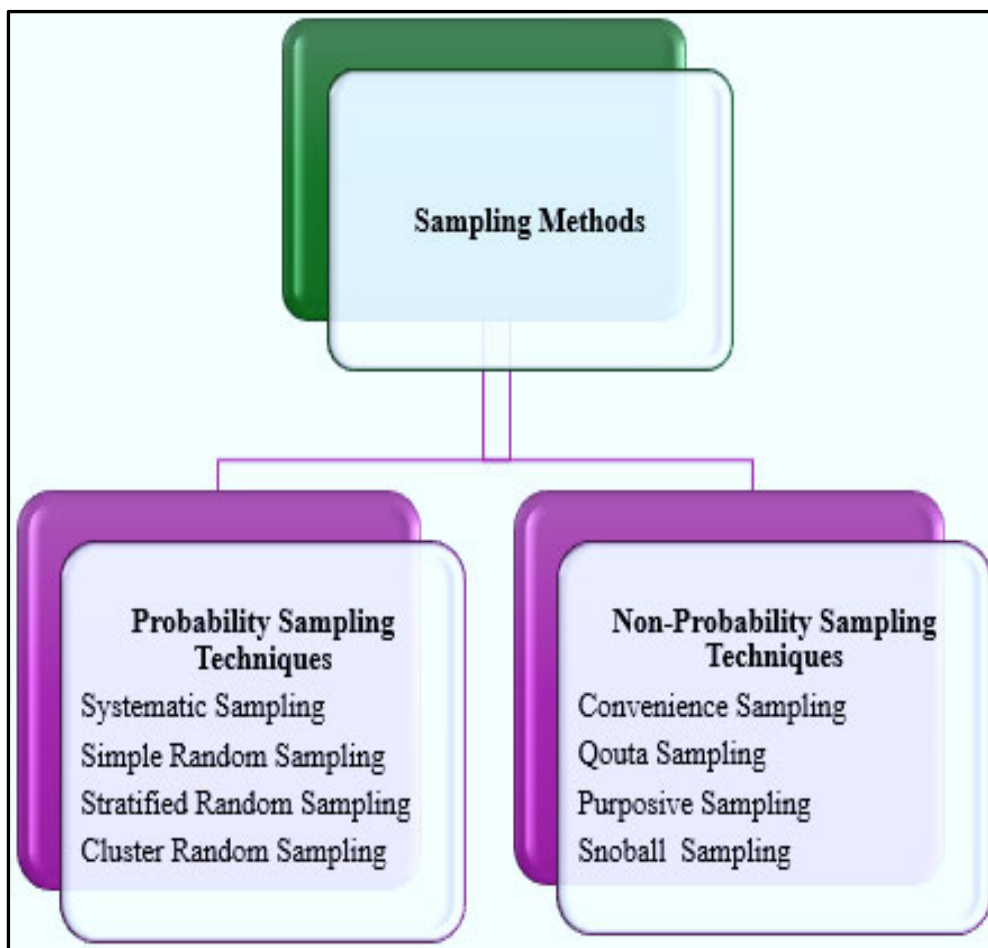


Figure 5.4. Types of Sampling Methods

Source: Researcher (2024)

### **5.8.1. Probability Sampling Techniques**

In research, probability sampling is used to randomly choose a sample from a larger population. For probability sampling to be efficient, it is essential that every research unit, that is, every individual, company, or organisation, have an equal chance of being chosen instead (Makwana et al., 2023). Stratton (2023) describes the process of systematic sampling as choosing each *n*th unit from a list. It is helpful when the population is organised such as a list of customers, student register, and organigram of the organisation. For instance, you may choose a sample of every tenth of the 200 clients on your list. Simple Random Sampling is a method to randomly choose units from a total population and has an equal chance of selection for every unit (Bhardwaj, 2019). For example, citizens can be selected from a list of 4 000 people living in a municipality using a random number generator for research (Bhardwaj, 2019:158). Probability sampling is helpful when directly sampling individuals is impractical, such as surveying houses within neighbourhoods (Stratton, 2023). It can lessen prejudices. Using random selection, this survey technique may yield results most representative of the broader population while reducing researcher bias.

### **5.8.2. Non-Probability Sampling Techniques**

When population attributes are unknown or not individually identifiable, non-probability sampling is employed in research. Non-probability sampling depends on non-random criteria, unlike probability sampling, which assigns an equal chance of selection to every unit in the target population (Bhardwaj, 2019:158). In convenience sampling, the researchers choose participants according to accessibility or closeness. For example, asking people about their purchasing habits outside a strip or shopping mall. Purposive (judgmental) sampling is used by researchers who deliberately choose individuals according to predetermined standards, including specialisation or distinctive qualities. Subsequently, non-random units are selected to fulfil these targets. Snowball sampling selects the initial group of participants, and they recommend more individuals. This approach can be helpful when a complete list of possible volunteers is not enough or the population being studied is challenging to reach.

#### **5.8.2.1. Convenience Sampling**

Convenience sampling was used in this study to select the research participants. The motive for employing is mainly because the participants involve the students and SRC members who

can conveniently be perceived as part of the study. The researcher ensured that flyers with information to encourage the students to participate in a focus group discussion were distributed to all three colleges. The flyers are presented in Annexures K, M and L and discussed in Sec. 10.4.2. Although there was a limited number of seats for the participants, the students were expected to contact the researcher to confirm their availability or sign up to participate. According to Mahmutovic (2022:14), convenience sampling is an affordable research method. Still, researchers need to consider factors that might affect the accuracy of data collected since only those participants are easily reached.

#### 5.8.2.2. Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was adopted to select the management and leadership officials in the TVET sector. They are chosen based on the researcher's judgment that they have a solid background and understanding of the TVET and research phenomenon. Nikolopoulou (2023) describes purposive sampling as part of non-probability sampling techniques used to select individuals with specific characteristics that can provide data for the investigation. A random sampling technique, purposeful sampling, targets the sample group to have a particular characteristic (Etikan et al., 2015:2). This technique can be applied to various groups. However, it performs best in a more homogeneous population with smaller sample sizes (Nikolopoulou, 2022:5). Purposive sampling has little room for error because the participants are picked based on the right attributes. Therefore, the researcher conducting the investigation follows a precise and effective procedure to select the participants to represent the study.

### 5.9. TARGET POPULATION

The population for this study includes managers, college council members and SRC representatives employed by the colleges and enrolled students. They are part of TVET management and governance structures and are responsible for addressing the challenges presented in the colleges. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with twelve (12) management officials, five (5) college governing council members, the chairperson, and the executive secretary. The participants were interviewed individually in their offices. However, eight (8) respondents withdrew from the study because of other commitments and were thus unavailable for interview.

The study also utilised a focus group discussion to collect data from the SRC. Three (3) focus group discussions were conducted with a maximum of eight (8) SRCs in each college, and in total, the focus groups involved twenty-four (24) participants. The researcher chose to study the three TVET colleges in KZN, as it would have been time-consuming and costly to study nine TVET colleges in KZN. Mweshi and Sakyi (2020) maintain that when choosing a sample in qualitative research, the researchers must consider selecting a small size but must represent the population. The researcher resides in the province of KZN and is familiar with the demarcations and locations of the TVET colleges. Therefore, the TVET colleges were easily accessible despite being in different KZN demarcations.

#### **5.10. SAMPLE SIZE**

As indicated by Creswell (2013), a phenomenological research investigation may benefit from a sample size of three to thirty people; whichever sample size a researcher selects, they must provide a convincing justification for the decision. According to Bekele and Yohannes (2022), between twenty and sixty is the most common sample size for doctoral research studies. Choosing an appropriate sample size for a qualitative research study comes down to judgment and experience when weighing the value of the data gathered against its intended use, the specific research methodology, deliberate sampling techniques, and the desired study output. This study focused on public TVET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and was deliberately limited to three TVET colleges only. It was also narrowed down to specific management officials and council members. Sec. 5.11 presents the illustrations of the participants included in the study. It should be noted that only some of the officials who governed and managed the TVET institutions were selected for the study. This was to understand the leadership and management practices better. The total sample size for this present study was forty-one (41).

#### **5.11. UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

The aspects that frame the subject of the study or the subject being examined or explored in its entirety is the unit of analysis (Gaikwad, 2017:3436). The participants for this study are both females and males of different ages. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with college leadership and college managers. In the TVET sector, the college leadership refers to governing council members. It comprised the chairperson, executive secretary, treasury, and

committee representatives. In terms of Sec. 10 of Continuing Education and Training (CET) Act No. 16 of 2006, the governing councils oversee the TVET colleges. Accordingly, they are ultimately in charge of establishing corporate governance systems and developing a strategic plan incorporating the college's mission, vision, and goals. In this study, two (2) leaders were purposively selected to participate: the chairperson and the executive secretary. The TVET managers are responsible for the day-to-day administration and operation of the college, while the college council serve as the oversight structure.

As Sithole et al. (2022:95) maintained the management of the TVET colleges is divided into different hierarchical levels. The top level consists of the principal and an accounting officer; the middle level consists of the deputy principals, irrespective of their portfolios; and the first level consists of unit managers and campus managers (Sithole et al., 2022:96). The managers were selected purposefully because they have sound knowledge and experience of TVET management practices. In this present study, the principal, deputy principal, portfolio managers, and campus managers were interviewed. The SRC members participated in the focus group discussions, and the intention was to obtain a collective view from the SRC regarding their experiences engaging with the college council and management in efforts to promote a conducive environment for teaching and learning and address challenges faced by the students within the colleges. The researcher intended to ensure that the target population was met, but one participant withdrew from the study.

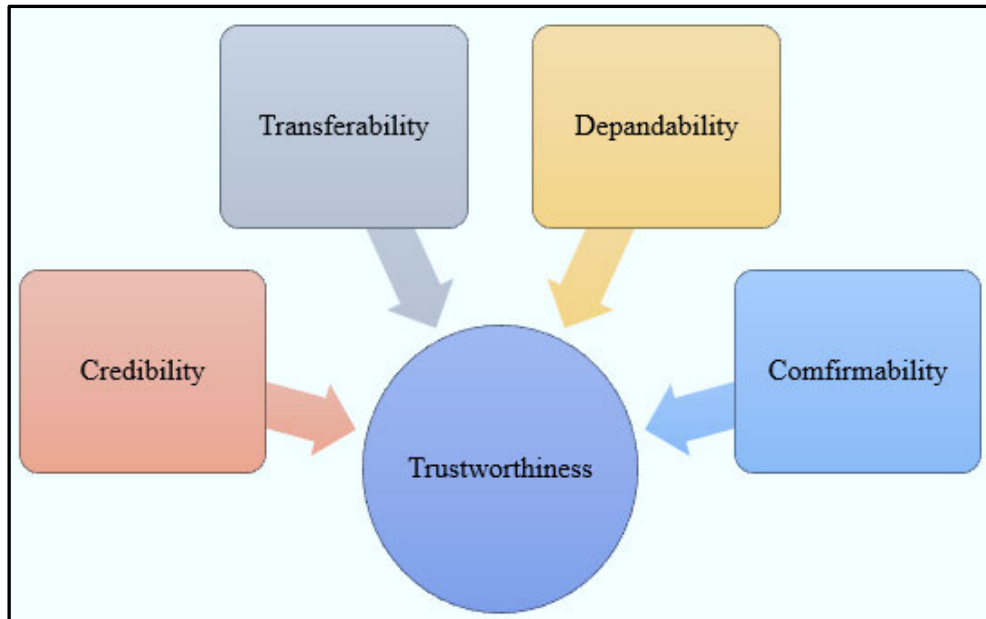
**Table 5.3. Unit of Analysis**

<b>Segments</b>	<b>TVET Central Office</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Data Collection Instruments</b>
TVET Principal/Accounting Officer	TVET Central Office	3	Semi-structured interview
Deputy Principal Academic	TVET Central Office	3	Semi-structured interviewed
Campus Managers	TVET Central Office	3	Semi-structured interview
Portfolio Managers	TVET Central Office	3	Semi-structured interview
College Council Chairperson	TVET Central Office	3	Semi-structured interviews
College Council Executive Secretary	TVET Central Officer	3	Semi-structured interviews
Student Representative Council	TVET Central Office	24	Focus group discussion x3

Researcher (2024)

### 5.12. DATA QUALITY CONTROL

Jaya et al. (2017:2648) describe data quality control as a practical procedure followed by the researcher to store the data to ensure that the collected data meets quality measures. Stenfors et al. (2020) note that qualitative research studies must be trustworthy. The procedure to ensure the quality of data processing and analysis is referred to as trustworthiness, which researchers are expected to maintain. Figure 5.4. provides the four elements of trustworthiness. During data processing and analysis, the researcher ensured that trustworthiness was considered to achieve quality for the study.



**Figure 5.5. Elements of Trustworthiness**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Nowell et al. (2017:03) point out that credibility is the degree to which the investigation results are regarded as genuine, reliable, and correct. It is the extent to which the phenomenon under study is precisely captured and examined (Adler, 2022:599). This study's credibility was assured through sharing the research findings to ensure accuracy. The researcher engaged in the process of self-awareness to avoid assumptions and bias. The study included extensive interaction with the literature and a subset of participants to ensure trustworthiness. Additionally, data were triangulated from several sources, including TVET policy guidelines, annual reports, and other relevant sources relevant to TVET management and leadership practices.

Transferability is the extent to which the results can be transferred to other context settings (Gunawan, 2015:10). To address this principle, the researcher ensured that the interview responses were recorded to capture as much information as needed. The recordings were later used for transcribing to illustrate this statement. The researcher spent enough time listening to all the tapes and transferred the recorded responses in writing.

The term 'dependability' describes data consistency across time and aims to consider dynamic changes in the phenomena being studied or the study's design (Ahmed, 2024:2). The researcher achieved this by ensuring sufficient data to answer the research questions and that

all documents and records that were utilized were kept safe for verification. The researcher initially selected a combination of data collection instruments, such as interviews, focus groups, and observation, to improve the reliability of the study findings.

Confirmability is the degree to which other people can validate the findings. The researcher ensured that the participants, especially the individual semi-structured interviews, verified their opinions to address confirmability. After conducting the interviews, the management and leadership received an electronic copy of their transcribed responses to verify and confirm. The transcribed version of the recordings is a true reflection of what was discussed during the interview sessions. This guarantees that the results truly represent the opinions and experiences of the individuals who participated in the study.

### **5.13. DATA ANALYSIS**

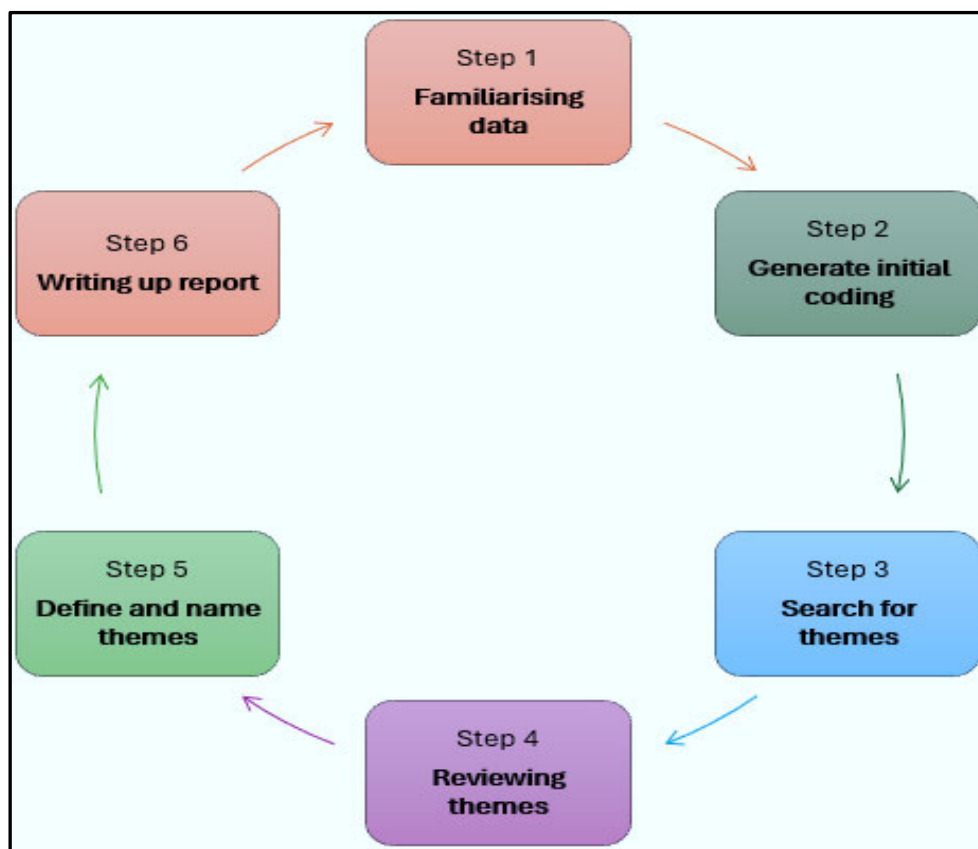
Data analysis refers to a particular stage in the research methodology process that a researcher conducts after completing data collection (Lacy et al., 2015:4). Data analysis in qualitative research is an iterative and complex process that allows the researcher to uncover the implicit meanings of the raw collected data associated with the opinions and responses of the participants (Madalani, 2016:41). In this regard, the researcher examines the data to conclude from the information gathered. The present study employed qualitative research analysis methods, which are thematic and content analysis. The motive for utilising these two qualitative data analyses is mainly because the study used interviews, focus group discussion, observation, and document reviews to collect data on TVET management and leadership practices.

#### **5.13.1. Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is an applicable method for analysing qualitative research data collected through interviews or focus group discussions (Caulfield, 2022:2). Alhojailan (2012:40) argues that the researcher assesses the collected data to identify and report recurring patterns. Once all the data has been collected, the researcher applying this method must follow a procedure that involves “familiarising, coding, generating themes, reviewing” (Caulfield, 2022:4). Thematic analysis is characterised by the fact that it can be used within a wide range of theoretical and phenomenology research studies. Thematic analysis is adopted in this study to reduce qualitative data to relevant topics to offer a well-organized, comprehensible, and

historically informed comprehension of the studied subject. When analysing qualitative data, thematic analysis helps understand people's beliefs, perspectives, experiences, knowledge, or values. Figure 5.6. provides an illustrative overview of the thematic analysis steps taken when analysing data collected through interviews.

Researchers often undertake thematic evaluations using inductive or deductive procedures. In the inductive technique, researchers use the data to uncover themes. Likewise, researchers analyse the data based on their expectations of the patterns in the data sets. Investigators often undertake theme evaluations on two levels. The first level is semantic, in which analysis is made of the direct content of the sources. The second level is the latent level, in which they the root implications of the resources are examined. In this study, the researcher applied thematic analysis to analyse the data collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. According to McLeod and Guy-Evans (2024), an investigator must perform six steps when analysing data using a thematic analysis method.



**Figure 5.6. Thematic Data Analysis Process**

Source: McLeod and Guy-Evans (2024)

#### 5.13.1.1. Step 1: Familiarizing Data

Finding overarching themes in your data is the first step in the thematic analysis process. This is the stage of text-to-audio transcription. The researcher must choose which codes best represent the material, what to code, and how to use them. Assessing resources by evaluating data, transcribing audio recordings, and creating copies of original papers is essential. After comprehensively reviewing all the entries, the researcher must appraise the materials to understand the information presented properly. By taking and comparing notes, the researcher can observe emerging trends, or whether the responses reflect the themes that are expected to surface.

#### 5.13.1.2. Step 2: Generate Initial Coding

Code themes or patterns are created at this point. The transition from codes to themes take work and effort on the part of the investigator. To understand more about the data, it is important to apply other codes or themes. Coding the data is crucial since it enables the researcher to create appropriate topics. At this point, the investigator can sort resources into categories based on their meanings and spot various patterns within them. For example, suppose the research is being undertaken on how consumers react to a specific marketing campaign. In that case, the investigator may find that complaints about the campaign and recommendations for improvements indicate that a portion of the audience needed to be fonder of the effort. After this has been done, it is important to highlight related words or phrases using the same colour; the same should be for additional codes.

#### 5.13.1.3. Step 3: Search for Themes

Examine the coded information and group the items into more comprehensive themes. Codes that belong in larger groups can be found by summarising the codes and analysing the data. At this point, the investigator is expected to check to see if what is identified as a theme exists in the data and fits the data. The investigator can then move on to the next stage, knowing that all the themes are correctly and wholly programmed, or, if any need to be added. These themes need to be divided up if they are too broad and have too much information under each so that the researcher can focus on aspects of the data more specifically.

#### 5.13.1.4. Step 4: Reviewing Themes

The researcher can review the codes once they have been reviewed and categorised into themes. Examining the themes entails reviewing the data sets, contrasting them with pre-existing themes, and ensuring all the data can be effectively handled and assessed. At this point, it is important to verify that the chosen themes appropriately capture the data sets, and that all pertinent data has been categorised. Concurrently, it is essential to make sure that all themes align with the research questions. The conclusion of the analysis is reached when this process is refined. It is important to remember that the research aims and objectives must be met in the final report, a procedure that will be discussed in the next phase.

#### 5.13.1.5. Step 5: Define and Name Themes

The next stage is to give the topics names or definitions. Writing a precise description or explanation of each theme's content and what it means is now required. Recognising and using the themes when they are defined before an investigation is begun is more straightforward.

#### 5.13.1.6. Step 6: Writing Up a Report

Creating a thorough report is the final stage in the thematic evaluation procedure. The opening paragraph of a report informs readers about the nature of the research topic and the analysis that was done. It also emphasises the steps taken to acquire resources and the various stages and levels of theme analysis that were carried out. The final paragraph describes the research study's findings and explains how they address or reframe the research questions. Creating a report provides other researchers a reference to use should they want to conduct further research in that field.

### **5.13.2. Content Analysis**

Content analysis is a method extensively used in qualitative research for carefully describing written, oral, or visual communication. It is a data analysis technique for determining the existence of specific words or concepts in collections of texts (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017:96). This technique analyses any material in the current literature to identify its meaning. It usually entails analysing the current meaning and interrelation of such terms and concepts to conclude the notions (Bengtsson, 2016:16). This present study utilised content analysis to examine the existing literature and other reports related to the study and identify what has been

written about the research phenomenon. One research technique for finding patterns in recorded speech is content analysis. To perform content analysis, a researcher must methodically gather information from a collection of texts, which may be written, spoken, or visual. It can be used to analyse both quantitative and qualitative research. However, qualitative research is used with an emphasis on comprehension and interpretation, while quantitative focuses on measurement and accounting. In both cases, the researcher classifies words, themes, and concepts found in the texts by coding them and then examines the outcomes.

#### **5.14. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics in research are fundamental principles that seek to guide and protect the researcher against unethical conduct (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). The researchers must respect the rights of individuals because research frequently involves their opinions and views. According to Bhandari (2024), research ethics provide principles vital to ensuring integrity and human rights. It guides the researcher in all interactions with the participants. Further, it ensures that participation in the study is voluntary and that the participants are informed and safe to participate. There were several matters that the researcher in this study had to adhere to or comply with to obtain ethical clearance. The following subsections provide insight into the ethical research considered in this study.

##### **5.14.1. Permission**

Permission to conduct the research was requested and approved by the principals of the three chosen TVET colleges. The researcher sent an email requesting authorisation to conduct the study. Annexures E, F, and G provide copies of the letters sent to each of the TVET colleges. Each of the principals of the respective TVET colleges granted their permission to conduct the research. Annexures A, B, and C provide the Gatekeeper Letters issued to the researcher as evidence that permission was granted. All the necessary documents were submitted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Committee via the Research Supervisor through the RIG On-Line Application System for Ethical Clearance. Ethical Clearance was approved in March 2024, and the researcher informed the colleges before engaging with the college management officials, council members, and SRC members recruited as participants in this study. Annexure A provides the Ethical Clearance letter.

### **5.14.2. Informed Consent**

One of the cornerstones of research ethics is Informed Consent. Its goal is for human subjects to be able to willingly (voluntarily) participate in research after being fully informed about the implications of doing so and having given their agreement in advance (Bos, 2020:154). The researcher consulted all the participants to tell them about the nature of the research study and arranged for an interview schedule time. Annexure O provides a copy of the Informed Consent Letter that was sent to every intended participant whose voluntary compliance was sought. Each participant was required to give their verbal and written agreement before any interviews were conducted. The researcher made available clear guidelines and instructions to all participants, explaining to each that their involvement was entirely voluntary, and that they were under no obligation to consent to their participation. Furthermore, they were free to leave the interview at any point, and to withdraw their data up until the point when analysis had begun, and could withdraw from the study at any stage of the proceedings.

### **5.14.3. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality in research refers to the duty of investigators to guard against unwanted disclosure of participant data (Dougherty, 2021:481). This entails safeguarding the information from being revealed to uninvited parties. The handling of data that someone has disclosed in a relationship is based on the trust and understanding that it will not be revealed to others without their express verbal and written consent, or in ways inconsistent with the original disclosure's understanding and confidentiality (Bos, 2020:150). The researcher was careful to maintain both privacy and anonymity during all phases of the study. The names of the research participants were hidden and were not disclosed. All the information gathered from the research participants was kept strictly private and confidential. To protect their identities, each of the participants were given codes and pseudonyms. Table 5.4 provides the participant codes utilized in this study.

**Table 5.4. Research Participant Codes**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Codes</b>
College Principal	P1
Deputy Principal	D1
Portfolio Managers	M1
Campus Managers	C1
College Council Chairperson	CC1
Executive Secretary	E1
Student Representative	SR1

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### **5.14.4. Anonymity**

Anonymity means that neither the researcher nor any other party involved in the study will know who the participants were. The information gathered for anonymous research needs to identify information personally, so there is little chance that the data can be linked to specific people (Kang & Hwang, 2023:6). The participants were considered anonymous and given codes to safeguard their identity. Each of the participants received a formal promise that their names would not be disclosed, and precautions were taken to protect all data collected.

#### **5.15. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

Limitations in research are critical factors that affect how the study results are interpreted. Such restrictions may exist due to methodology and research design limitations that guide the entire procedure for collecting data to answer the research questions. Limitations are possible research flaws that are out of the researcher's control. During this study, the researcher encountered restrictions that negatively impacted the study. The limitations that were encountered in this study were as follows:

- i. Using semi-structured interviews as a data-gathering method, the researcher experienced drawbacks during the interview sessions. Some participants could have been more forthcoming in sharing their experiences and opinions; some even voiced their fear of victimisation and showed signs of not wanting to share information. The

researcher tried to be sensitive to each participant and build rapport to get them to open-up about their experiences. They were also given enough time and space to make them comfortable sharing information.

- ii. With limited access to data, the researcher depends on document reviews such as colleges' annual reports, policies, and other reports. It was anticipated that the colleges may not grant access to certain documents. To address this, the TVET management was assured that the papers and reports would only be treated as confidential and used exclusively for the study. It took an extended period for the colleges to issue the annual reports, despite granting permission to access the documents. This presented an enormous challenge to the present researcher, both in terms of time and effort taken.
- iii. The timeframe to complete data collection was affected, and the researcher needed help reaching the participant within the prescribed time. Data collection was expected to be completed within two months, but achieving the target timeframe took much work. This was experienced both through unanswered emails, and the often-delayed response to confirm a suitable time to conduct the interviews. The researcher also proposed Online interviews such as through Teams and Zoom. The researcher visited all three TVET colleges and explained to those participants who purposively selected the study's intention, and that is when they agreed to participate.

## **5.16. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter explained the methods used for the research. It described the goals, models, and types of research, together with the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological underpinnings of an intended research project. In addition, the research design, research tactics, data gathering, and research design: investigation sample, data analysis, data quality assurance, and ethical considerations were described and discussed in detail.

The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of data analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the results.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

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#### **6.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reports on the data presentation and interpretation results for this research study, which were gathered using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, and observation. The results are derived from empirical research of the Coastal TVET College, Umfolozi TVET College, and Mnambithi TVET College to ascertain its management and leadership practices. As discussed in Chapter Five, the data was gathered from a sample of the college's management leadership and SRC. To evaluate the circumstances at the chosen colleges, the researcher used observation to assess the status and conditions of the three TVET colleges' resources, including infrastructure, facilities, and human resource capacity, essential for effective teaching and learning. The observation results are presented in tables and figures, while the views and opinions of the participants are presented verbatim.

#### **6.2. BACKGROUND OF THE TVET COLLEGES**

Understanding the context of the three TVET colleges is critical for analysing and interpreting the responses. Photographs provide information on the conditions under which the colleges function and operate. The researcher used an observation sheet to document the scenario at the colleges. The researcher used visual observation by taking pictures of evidence to portray the conditions of the colleges in KZN accurately. The discussion provides an overview of the Coastal TVET College, Umfolozi TVET College, and Mnambithi TVET College, among the nine TVET colleges in KZN. In Chapter Five, the researcher indicated that the colleges were selected for the study because of their geographical area. As discussed in Chapter Four, Sec. 4.4.1, there are 50 registered public TVET colleges in SA, and in KZN, there are nine TVET colleges across the province. However, the data presented in this section was collected from three public TVET colleges.

The three selected TVET colleges form part of the KZN public TVET colleges. They each differ, however, in terms of their size, geographical location, and demographic. The researcher travelled 185 kilometres from Durban to Richards Bay, where Umfolozi TVET College is

situated. The distance between Durban and Ladysmith is 247 kilometres, which is quite a distance to travel to Mnambithi TVET College. The Coastal TVET College was easily accessible since the researcher resides in Durban, and the total distance is 34.5 kilometres. Although the researcher comes from the KZN, she cannot claim to be well-informed about the communities surrounding the TVET colleges in KZN. Therefore, having a solid background and understanding of what is happening around the communities where the three TVET colleges are situated was difficult. However, the researcher visited the central offices to obtain permission and show the study's importance to the college principals. Table 6.1 lists the three public TVET colleges that formed the basis of the research study and the categories used to identify the colleges throughout the data presentation.

**Table 6.1. List of the Three TVET Colleges**

Category	College Name
College A	Coastal TVET College
College B	Umfolozzi TVET College
College C	Mnambithi TVET College

Researcher (2024)

### 6.2.1. Coastal TVET College

eThekweni Municipality is home to three public colleges, one being Coastal KZN College. KwaMakhutha Township is home to the college's central office (Coastal TVET College, 2014). The town of Amanzimtoti, which is 20 kilometres from the city of Durban, is 8 km from KwaMakhutha Township. The institution has eight (8) campuses/learning sites across several locations within the eThekweni Municipal area. Eight (8) campuses or locations of the college are found between 0 and 200 km from the main office. The college maintains campuses in urban and rural settings in Durban and its neighbouring areas. The college also has six (6) skills units. The institution has three dormitories within the college, located at the Umbumbulu Campus and uses external residences accredited by NSFAS (Coastal TVET College, 2014). Table 6.2 lists the names of the Coastal TVET College Campuses and the type of courses that are offered.

**Table 6.2. List of Coastal TVET College Campuses and Type of Courses Offered**

NO.	CAMPUSES	COURSES/PROGRAMMES OFFERED		
0	Central Office	NCV	NATED	PLP
1	Appelsbosch	Yes	Yes	No
2	As-Salaam	Yes	Yes	No
3	Durban	Yes	Yes	No
4	Swinton	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Ubuhlebogu	Yes	Yes	No
6	Umbumbulu	Yes	Yes	No
7	Umlazi BB	Yes	Yes	No
8	Umlazi V	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Researcher (2024)

**6.2.2. Umfolozi TVET College**

One of KwaZulu-Natal province's public TVET colleges is Umfolozi TVET College. In the uMhlathuze local municipal area in the uThungulu district, Richards Bay is home to the organisation's central administration office (Umfolozi TVET College, 2023). The college has one campus, Eshowe, within the uMlalazi municipal region, and two campuses, Esikhawini and Richtek, under the uMhlathuze local municipality. The uThungulu district is home to three campuses, Esikhawini, Richtek, and Eshowe, while the KwaDukuza local municipal area and the Mandeni local municipal area are home to the other two campuses, Chief Albert Luthuli, and Mandeni. Nevertheless, the iLembe district is home to both universities. The distance between the campuses and the central office is 0–145 kilometres. There are two student dormitories in the college. Table 6.3 lists the names of the Umfolozi TVET College Campuses and the type of courses that are offered.

**Table 6.3. List of Umfolozi TVET College Campuses and Type of Courses Offered**

NO.	CAMPUSES	COURSES OFFERED/PROGRAMMES		
0	Central Office	NCV	NATED	PLP
1	Chief Albert Luthuli	Yes	Yes	No
2	Eshowe	Yes	Yes	No
3	Esikhawini	Yes	Yes	No
4	Mandeni	Yes	No	No
5	Richtek	Yes	Yes	No
6	Isithebe	Yes	Yes	No
7	Sundumbili	Yes	Yes	No
8	Nkandla	Yes	Yes	No
9	Bambanani	Yes	Yes	No

Source: Researcher (2024)

**6.2.3. Mnambithi TVET College**

The uThukela district, which encompasses KwaZulu-western Natal's interior, is home to Mnambithi TVET College (Mnambithi TVET College, 2024). It is one of KwaZulu-Natal province's nine public TVET institutions. Ladysmith's central business area (CBD) is home to its central administrative office (Mnambithi TVET College, 2024). Five campuses/sites of the college are located 0–75 kilometres from the central office. Even though most students are from the local vicinity, their homes are too far away from the campuses. Accordingly, students need housing that is nearer to their campuses. The Ezakheni A campus has a single student residence which can accommodate 540 students. Table 6.4 lists the names of the Mnambithi TVET College Campuses and the type of courses that are offered.

**Table 6.4. List of Mnambithi TVET College Campuses and Courses Offered**

NO.	CAMPUSES	COURSES OFFERED/PROGRAMMES		
0	Central Office	NCV	NATED	PLP
1	Estcourt	Yes	Yes	No
2	Ezakheni A	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Ezakheni E	Yes	Yes	No
4	Ladysmith	Yes	No	No

Source: Researcher (2023)

### 6.3. OBSERVATION DATA PRESENTATION

This section provides a data presentation of observations conducted at the three TVET colleges, Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET, as well as figures obtained during interviews from the colleges and not part of the observations. A visual data presentation follows this. The researchers documented the status of facilities and infrastructure of all three colleges to portray the conditions using an observation sheet. It is imperative to present an authentic picture of the three TVET colleges to understand better the elements and difficulties that the management, leadership, and students face daily. This provided more insight into the challenges faced by TVET colleges and validated and supported the data from the research participants. The observation results are presented from Sec. 6.3.1. to Sec. 209 in the form of pictures that were captured.

This section also consists of data that was not part of the observation, and the inclusion of the data presented in Tables 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7, which detail the student enrolment and human capacity. While this data was not directly derived from the observational process, it has been placed under this section for contextual relevance. The data on these figures were obtained during formal discussions with college principals and was verified with the administrators responsible for coordinating student enrolment and managing institutional staffing records. This inclusion is deliberate, as these figures provide essential contextual information that

complements the observational data, contributing to a fuller understanding of the institution's human resources and operational capacity.

**Table 6.5. Student Enrolment and Academic Staff**

College	Student Enrolment	Academic Staff	Location
College A	11 700	421	Durban
College B	9178	245	Richards Bay
College C	7198	175	Ladysmith

Researcher (2024)

The observation results indicate that Coastal College is one of the largest colleges in KZN in terms of student enrolment, estimated at 11 700; this is followed by Umfolozi with 9 178 students, and Mnambithi having the lowest student enrolment with 7 198. A contributing factor with respect to enrolment is geographical area, where most students prefer to be in Durban, where there is a high rate of employment and personal growth.

**Table 6.6. Availability of Resources**

Category	College A	College B	College C
Computers for Students	No	Yes	No
Internet Access	Yes	Yes	Yes
Photocopying Machines	Yes	Yes	Yes
Library Materials	No	No	No

Source: Researcher (2024)

The availability of learning resources at the colleges is a challenge. As detailed in Table 6.6 only College B provides Computer LANS for students to use for activities such as researching information and completing assignments. Internet access is however available at all three Colleges. There are no library facilities at College C; students must use public libraries.

**Table 6.7. Human Capacity (Management, Leadership & Support Staff)**

Category	College A	College B	College C
<b>Senior Staff</b>	-	-	-
Principal	1	1	1
Deputy Principal			
Campus Managers	3	3	3
Portfolio Managers	8	8	3
	11	9	14
<b>Academic Staff</b>	-	-	-
DHET Permanent	421	276	144
Contract	19	11	37
<b>Support Staff</b>	-	-	-
SLO	8	8	3
NSFAS/Bursary	1	2	1
Librarian	1	1	-
Exam Officer	1	1	1
Stock Controller	2	2	1
<b>General Workers</b>	-	-	04
DHET Cleaners	-	16	12
Outsourced	18	03	
<b>Risk Management</b>	-	-	-
Security Personnel	6	4	2

Source: Researcher (2024)

Neither Colleges A and C have general workers who are employed by the DHET. All the cleaners are outsourced, meaning that a private company provides cleaning services. College B has sixteen (16) general workers employed by the DHET and three (3) who are outsourced.

College C has four (4) workers employed by the DHET, and twelve (12) which are outsourced. It was challenging to identify the number of security personnel available at these colleges. The college's risk management services are outsourced and depend on the security company, which allocates the number of security staff present. The researcher noticed a few security officials on duty during the observation at the colleges. This data is presented in Table 6.7.

**Table 6.8. Infrastructure and Facilities**

Category	College A	College B	College C
<b>Computer LANs</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Student Residences</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Ablution Facilities</b>			
Female Students	Yes	Yes	Yes
Male Students			
<b>Recreation/Sports</b>			
Soccer Ground	No	Yes	No
Basketball/Netball	Yes	No	Yes
Security Fence	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Cafeteria</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tuckshop			

Source: Researcher (2024)

The infrastructure and facilities at Colleges A, B, and C are presented in Table 6.8. These include Computer LANs (Local Area Networks), student residences, ablution facilities, and sports grounds. It was observed that some of these facilities are not in good condition and need repair and maintenance. Only College B has a functional cafeteria, whereas in Colleges A and C, the cafeteria buildings are extant but remain closed.

### 6.3.1. College A Visual Presentation

The College A infrastructure and facilities are available, but the buildings are old and need better maintenance. While observing the facilities, the researcher noticed that most buildings had been vandalised and were not in good condition to provide a conducive environment for teaching and learning. As depicted in the photographs, there is evidence that the college facilities require immediate attention. While observing the college environment, I noticed that no general workers were visible, yet most areas were clean.



**Figure 6.1. College A: Structure of the College Building**

Source: Researcher (2024)

As depicted in Figure 6.1, the College A building needs to be in better condition. The walls of the building structure have cracks, and the paint is peeling. There is evidence of previous renovation work and repairs made to the buildings.

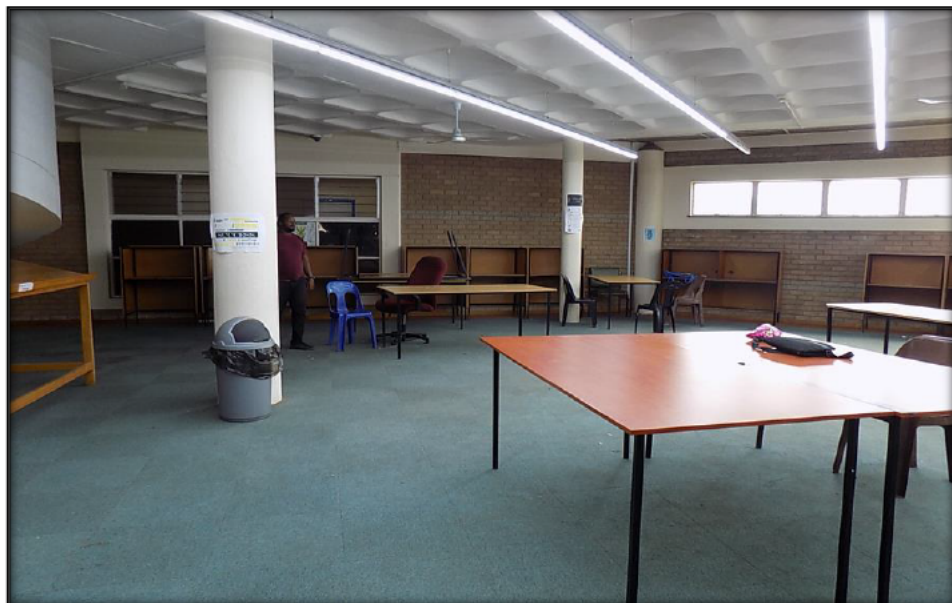
Visibly, the library building structure depicted in Figure 6.2 seems in good condition, although the roof facias have broken sections that require replacement. There are overgrown flower planters on either side of the main entrance, which shows that nothing has been done to improve the general aesthetics of the building entrance regarding the planting and care of flowers or shrubs by the general maintenance staff tasked with gardening or landscaping.



**Figure 6.2. College A: Library Entrance**

Source: Researcher (2024)

As shown in Figure 6.3, the library facilities need more equipment, such as chairs, books, computers, and other facilities. The librarian has a desk and a chair, while other furniture or equipment is unavailable. The library area is full of dust and dirt, and some window panes are broken. The library is not serving its purpose; instead, students use it as an area to relax.



**Figure 6.3. College A: Library Facilities**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.4 depicts a book storeroom. The room could be better organised. There are shelves to store the books, with many books being kept in cardboard boxes. There is much dust in the room and on the shelves, which can seriously irritate students and staff who suffer from allergies. The books are also covered in dust.



**Figure 6.4. College A: Book Storeroom**

Source: Researcher (2024)

As depicted in Figure 6.5, most of the auditorium facilities are damaged, and the area seems abandoned. The students use the auditorium for group meetings, whereas college management

seem to have abandoned this facility. Most fixed equipment such as wall fans, chairs, tables, etc., need repair.



**Figure 6.5. College A: Auditorium**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.6. College A: Auditorium Floor**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.6 shows the auditorium floor. The plastic floor tiles are badly damaged, worn out, and need replacing.

As depicted in Figure 6.7, the auditorium has a side room filled with broken computers and boxes that were no longer in use and needed to be discarded. The college uses one of the auditorium side rooms to store general refuse, which is supposed to be disposed of properly.



**Figure 6.7. College A: Auditorium Side Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The computer room depicted in Figure 6.8 is in good condition, and all computers are functional. There is proper furniture for students and lecturers, but it is only used for teaching and learning. The students cannot use the computer for other learning activities, such as assignments.



**Figure 6.8. College A: Computer Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.9. College A: Ablution Facilities—Handwashing Sinks**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.9 depicts the ablution facilities. At least one handwashing sink is broken, with its waste pipe disconnected. There is no water coming from the taps. The college has been

experiencing a water crisis for some months and is paying for a private water tanker to deliver water to the college. Some of the ceramic wall tiles are missing and one of the wall mirrors is severely broken, posing a distinct health risk.



**Figure 6.10. College A: Ablution Facilities—Toilet Stall**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.10 depicts a toilet stall in the ablution facilities. It is not in good condition, there being no lid to the toilet cistern and the porcelain floor tiles are cracked and require repair. There is no toilet paper available in the wall dispenser. Presumably, the toilet cistern lid has been discarded to assist the use of a bucket to manually fill with water and flush afterwards. Piped water is not available and the toilets must be cleaned by the students themselves.

Figure 6.11 depicts the backyard of the college buildings, that has long overgrown grass, raising safety issues within the college. Tall grass attracts animals and vermin, which may pose health risks to both students and lecturers alike.



**Figure 6.11. College A: Yard**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.12. College A: Sports Ground**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The sports ground shown in Figure 6.12 needs to be in a better condition and have proper facilities. The tarmacadam surface appears very old, and the basket-ball court markings need to be repainted. The basketball hoop stand is not firmly fixed to the ground, but is secured very poorly using miscellaneous concrete slabs, thereby posing a safety hazard. The basketball net is severely weather worn, and needs replacement, as does the timber backboard.



**Figure 6.13. College A: Student Hostel Entrance**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The front entrance to the student hostel is depicted in Figure 6.13. The door at the entrance is off its hinges, and one of the safety glass panes is broken. Both issues raise a severe health and safety hazard to students entering the residential area.

The centre court of the student hostel is shown in Figure 6.14. There are no designated areas for student laundry. Because there are insufficient washing lines available, the students must use the walls and balconies to hang out their washing to dry. Laundry hanging all over the buildings makes the residence look both untidy and unkempt.



**Figure 6.14. College A: Student Hostel**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.15 depicts a two-person student hostel room. There is a desk, chair, wardrobe, and bed for each student. However, the rooms need to be in better condition and require renovation.



**Figure 6.15. College A: Student Hostel Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.16 is of the Television area in the student hostel. The rather drab room appears to be a storage area for a faulty washing machine and various desks, some in a state of disrepair. There is TV wall bracket and electricity point, but no television. There are no curtains on the windows, only one sofa which appears to be broken, and no other soft furnishings or wall hangings.



**Figure 6.16. College A: Student Hostel Television Area**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.17 depicts the electrical engineering workshop where students learn electrical theory and conduct practicals. The floor area is small and becomes crowded during lecture time.



**Figure 6.17. College A: Electrical Engineering Workshop**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.18 depicts a female student conducting an electrical practical. Due to the limited space and lack of apparatus, students must take turns performing their practicals in terms of their learning experience.



**Figure 6.18. College A: Student Conducting an Electrical Practical**

Source: Researcher (2024)

As depicted in Figure 6.19, the cafeteria building is present, and has been closed for some time. Instead, both students and lecturers must use street vendors and local tuckshops close to the college.



**Figure 6.19. College A: Cafeteria**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### **6.3.2. College B Visual Presentation**

The infrastructure and facilities at College B are in good condition and well-maintained, with renovations being undertaken regularly. While observing the College B facilities, the researcher noticed several cleaning and security staff working around the campus. As illustrated in the following photographs, the buildings and facilities at College B provide a conducive environment for both teaching and learning.

As depicted in Figure 6.20 the main college building is in good condition, showing that renovations and maintenance are adequately conducted at the college.



**Figure 6.20. College B: Structure of the College Building**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.21. College B: Library Reception Area**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The library reception area depicted in Figure 6.21 appears well-accommodated with both furniture, and one computer for the use of the librarian. The condition of the floors and walls

is in good condition. Upon investigation, it was found that the Wi-Fi network is not accessible at the library due to network connection problems.



**Figure 6.22. College B: Library Facility**

Source: Researcher (2024)

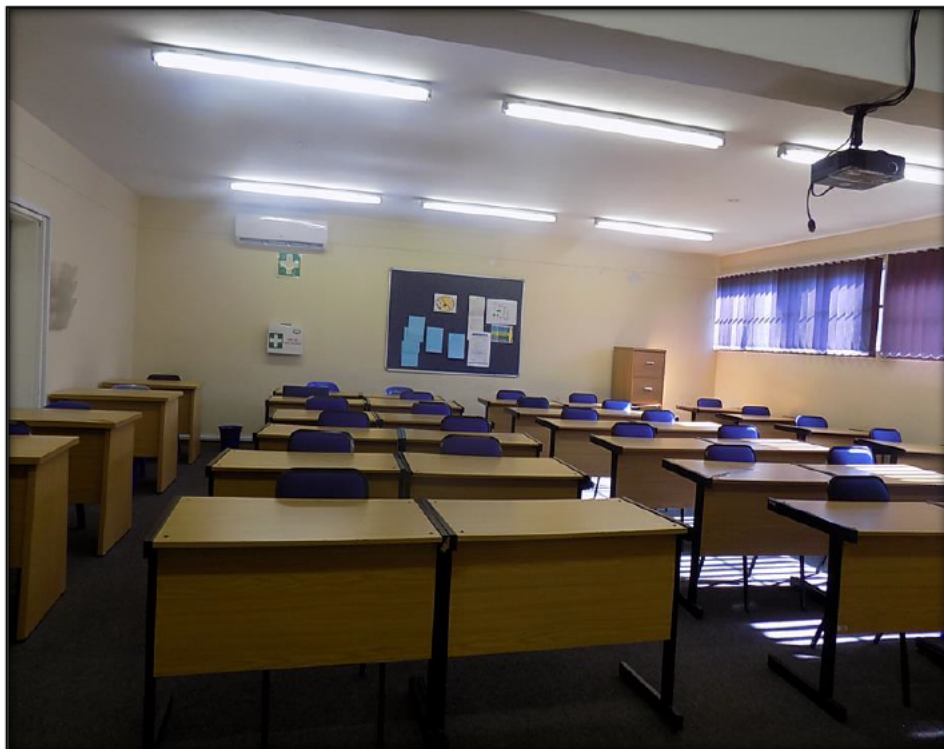
The library facility depicted in Figure 6.22 is very crowded. The furniture available at the library is not fit for purpose; instead, boardroom tables and chairs have been used. The library does not serve its purpose of providing access to study materials that directly align with the courses offered by the college. The books that are kept on the shelves need to be updated.

The book storeroom depicted in Figure 6.23 could be in better condition. The books are stored on shelving, and only used books are stored in boxes.



**Figure 6.23. College B: Book Storeroom**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.24. College B: Classroom I**

Source: Researcher 2024

The classroom shown in Figure 6.24 has sufficient chairs and tables to accommodate the students. It is equipped with a functional air conditioning system and a projector. The classroom has a first aid kit in case of emergencies.



**Figure 6.25. College B: Classroom II**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.25 depicts another classroom used for teaching and learning. This classroom has recently been renovated.

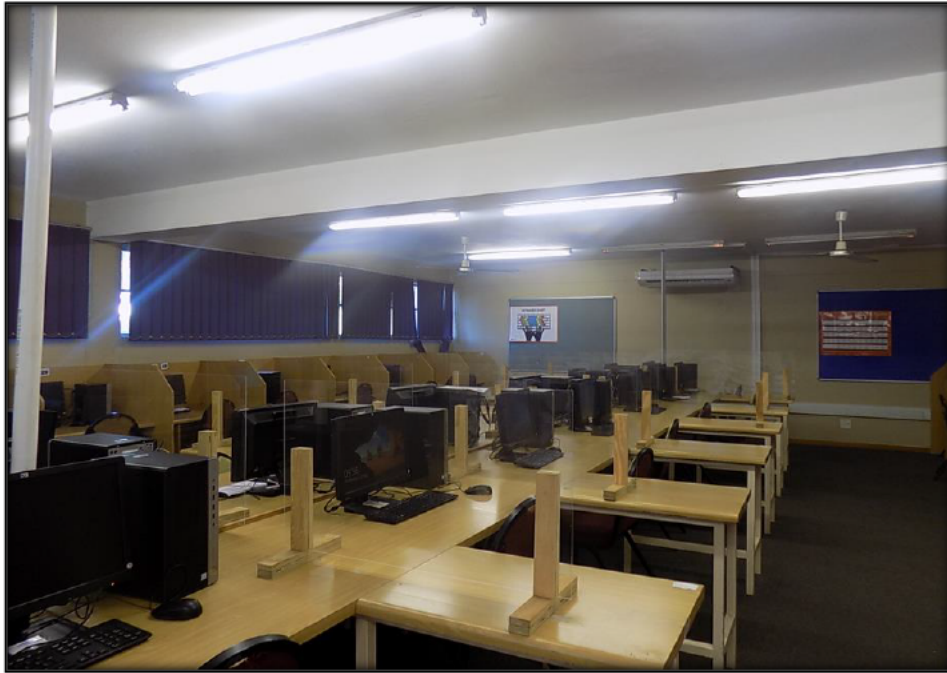


**Figure 6.26. College B: Auditorium**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.26 depicts the auditorium. This is reserved for special events such as meetings and other gatherings. The auditorium is small, but equipped with proper furniture and technological equipment, which is a requirement.

The computer room is depicted in Figure 6.27. It has computers and proper furniture, all in good condition. There is a printing machine that is used both by students and lecturers alike. However, the computer room is only accessible to the students when the lecturer is available and cannot be used during other times.



**Figure 6.27. College B: Computer LAN Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.28. College B: Ablution Facilities—Male Urinals**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.28 depicts the male urinals. All are all working, but the floor requires attention as there are stains.

Figure 6.29 depicts the female toilet stall. The toilet is functional, except there is no cistern lid. The floor requires attention as there are stains.



**Figure 6.29. College B: Ablution Facilities—Toilet Stall**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.30 depicts the hand washing sinks in the female ablution facilities. The area is spotless, besides the broken glass that poses a safety risk to students and must be repaired.



**Figure 6.30. College B: Ablution Facilities—Hand Washing Sinks**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.31 depicts the sports ground, which appears is in good condition.



**Figure 6.31. College B: Sports Ground**

Source: Researcher (2024)

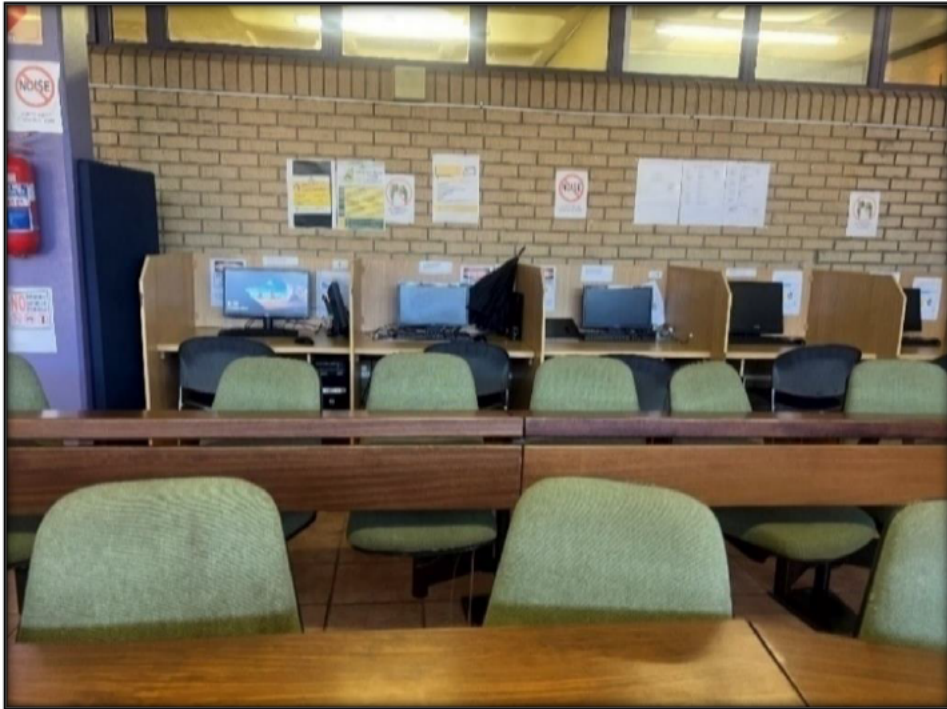
Figure 6.32 is of the student resource centre, located inside the Student Support Resource Centre.



**Figure 6.32. College B: Student Support Resource Centre**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.33 depicts the computer room within the Student Support Resource Centre, and is equipped with computers used for student research information.



**Figure 6.33. College B: Computer Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.34. College B: Cafeteria**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.34 depicts the tuckshop within the cafeteria area. It is open Monday to Friday and is operated by external members renting the college cafeteria facilities.

Figure 6.35 shows the furniture students use at the cafeteria during lunch times. Everything appears in good condition.



**Figure 6.35. College B: Cafeteria Furniture**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### **6.3.3. College C Visual Data Presentation**

The infrastructure and facilities at College C appear in good condition; however, it took much work during the observation to access some rooms and areas of the college due to their being locked.



**Figure 6.36. College C: Structure of the College Building**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.36 depicts the building infrastructure, which is in good condition.



**Figure 6.37. College C: Open Space for Students**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.37 shows the open quadrangle, an open space used by for students to sit and relax, and converse with other students during their free time. The area has proper outdoor tables and chairs.



**Figure 6.38. College C: Classroom**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.38 depicts a classroom used for teaching and learning. It is accommodated with study desks and chairs for the students. There is enough space between the desks for the students to move around. The classroom appears to be recently decorated, and the window shades are in good condition.

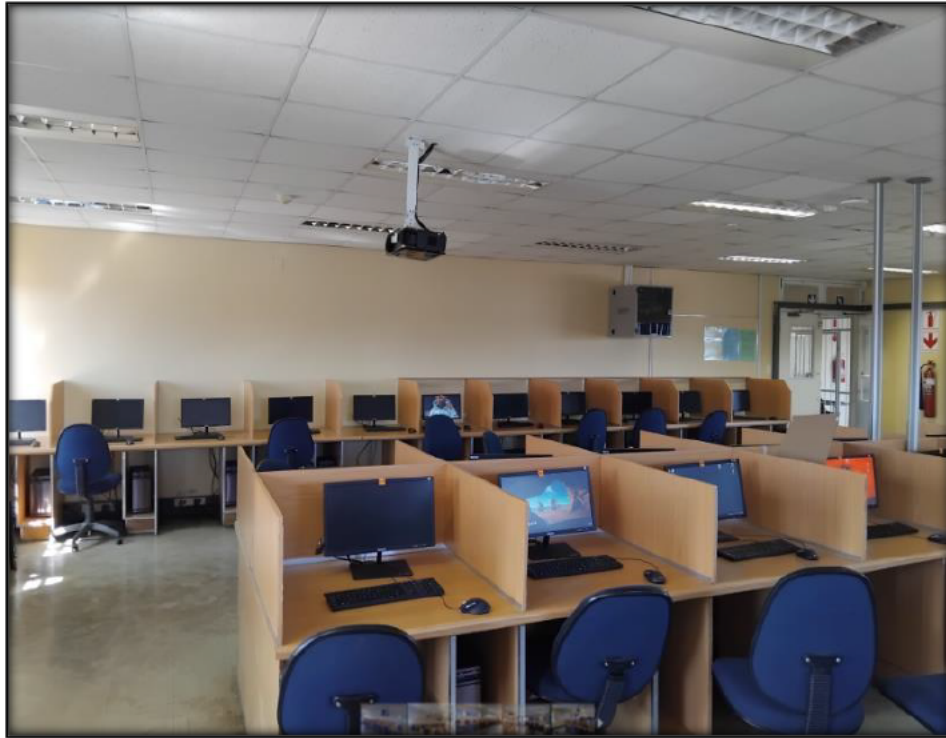
Figure 6.39 depicts a computer room with one office jet printer. All the computers are reported as being in working condition.



**Figure 6.39. College C: Computer Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.40 depicts the computer LAN room. Due to limited resources, the computers are only available to the lecturing staff, and not the students. Only some of the computers available are in working condition, while others need to be repaired.



**Figure 6.40. College C: Computer LAN Room**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.41. College C: Female Ablution Facilities—Hand Washing Sinks**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.41 depicts the female ablution facilities for students. The handwashing sinks and mirrors are all in good condition and piped water is available.



**Figure 6.42. College C: Ablution Facilities—Female Toilet Stall**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.42 depicts a female toilet stall. It is in good condition and piped water is available.

Figure 6.43 depicts male ablution facilities, where the stainless-steel urinal and toilet stalls. All are in good condition.



**Figure 6.43. College C: Ablution Facilities Male Urinal and Toilet Stall**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.44. College C: Sports Ground—Basketball/Netball Courts**

Source: Researcher (2024)

As part of the college sports ground, Figure 6.44 shows the netball / basketball court. The court and its surroundings are in poor condition, and need attention by the general / ground staff. As can be seen in the photograph, the grass is overgrown and tall, and needs cutting. There is no sports equipment such as basketball hoops, nets, and backboards. Some of the weed grass has grown through the deteriorating tarmacadam surface.



**Figure 6.45. College C: Rear Entrance**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.45 depicts one of the rear entrances of the college. The area is entirely littered with discarded boxes and polystyrene packing material, which needs to be disposed of correctly. Such an abandoned area can become a haven for vermin.

Figure 6.46 depicts the first of the electrical engineering workshops. The machinery available is limited due to the college not having funds to purchase proper equipment for teaching and learning. Sometimes, the students must take turns using the facilities to conduct their practical experience.



**Figure 6.46. College C: Electrical Engineering Workshop I**

Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6.47. College C: Electrical Engineering Workshop II**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.47 depicts the second of the electrical workshops. The photograph clearly shows the paucity of equipment available. Additional equipment and resources are needed for effective practical teaching and learning to take place.

#### 6.4. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS DATA PRESENTATION

Some Twenty-two (22) semi-structured interviews were conducted with the management and college council officials. At each college, the researcher conducted a total of nine (9) interviews. The interviews were mainly conducted at the central office. Prior to the commencement of each interview, all participants were asked to respond to a few questions about their biography. Two sections of the interview schedule were provided and used to interview the participants. Sec. A covers generic questions about each participant's biographical information. Sec. B covers the research questions that generated themes for data presentation and interpretation.

Table 6.9 provides an overview of the participants that participated in the study.

**Table 6.9. Description of the Research Participants**

<b>TVET Colleges</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Deputy Principals</b>	<b>Portfolio Mangers</b>	<b>Campus Managers</b>	<b>College Council Chairpersons</b>
<b>College A</b>	1	1	1	1	2
<b>College B</b>	1	1	1	1	2
<b>College C</b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	3	3	3	3	5

Source: Researcher (2024)

In Colleges A and B, most participants, including the college principal, are in acting positions. They are temporarily placed in those positions. In College C, all management officials are permanently placed in their positions. This data indicates that the executive management structure in the TVET sector is highly affected by many of the management staff being in acting

positions. Despite the posts being advertised in 2023, especially for the college principals in other colleges, the DHET has yet to make permanent appointments. The information gathered from the interviews was categorised and labelled following the study's research questions.

The study topics and themes are reflected in Table 6.10, followed by a thorough description of each theme.

**Table 6.10. Generated Research Themes from the Semi-Structured Interviews**

Research Sub-questions	Generated Themes	Sub-themes
What are the roles and responsibilities of leadership and management in the TVET colleges?	6.4.2. Roles and responsibilities of management and the college council.	6.4.2.1. TVET Management responsibilities. 6.4.2.2. TVET College Council responsibilities.
What is the effectiveness of leadership in ensuring TVET management is supported by implementing managerial functions?	6.4.3. Working relations between management and leadership.	-
What leadership tools and management strategies have been adopted in the TVET colleges to ensure a well-managed institution?	6.4.5. Management strategies. 6.4.6. TVET Leadership tools.	-
What factors impact the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal?	6.4.7. Factors affecting TVET Performance.	6.4.7.1. Shortage of skilled workers. 6.4.7.2. Insufficient academic support. 6.4.7.3. Extensive absenteeism. 6.4.7.4. Inadequate career advice. 6.4.7.5. Lack of library facilities. 6.4.7.6. Lack of resources.

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 6.4.1. Demographical Data on Leadership and Management

The biographical information consists of collective data on the background of each participant. All seventeen (17) interviewees were asked standard questions about their qualifications, age, race, and years of experience in the TVET sector. The participants further disclosed that they were integral to the 2002 merger of colleges in the TVET sector, which transformed it into a multi-college TVET system (Bisschoff & Nkoe, 2005). The data indicated that before 1994, during the Apartheid era, most participants worked in the TVET colleges. This was done to ascertain the management and leadership status of credentials, experience, and job roles. The following graphs provide data that was gathered concerning biographical information. About (41%) of TVET leaders and managers hold only a diploma, which is concerning since they are expected to manage institutions of higher learning that promote continuous education. The diplomas and bachelor's degree provide foundational managerial skills but are not sufficient for handling complex leadership responsibilities. Only (6%) possess doctoral degrees, highlighting a potential gap in advanced academic expertise, strategic leadership, and research-driven decision-making.

#### 6.4.1.1. Qualifications

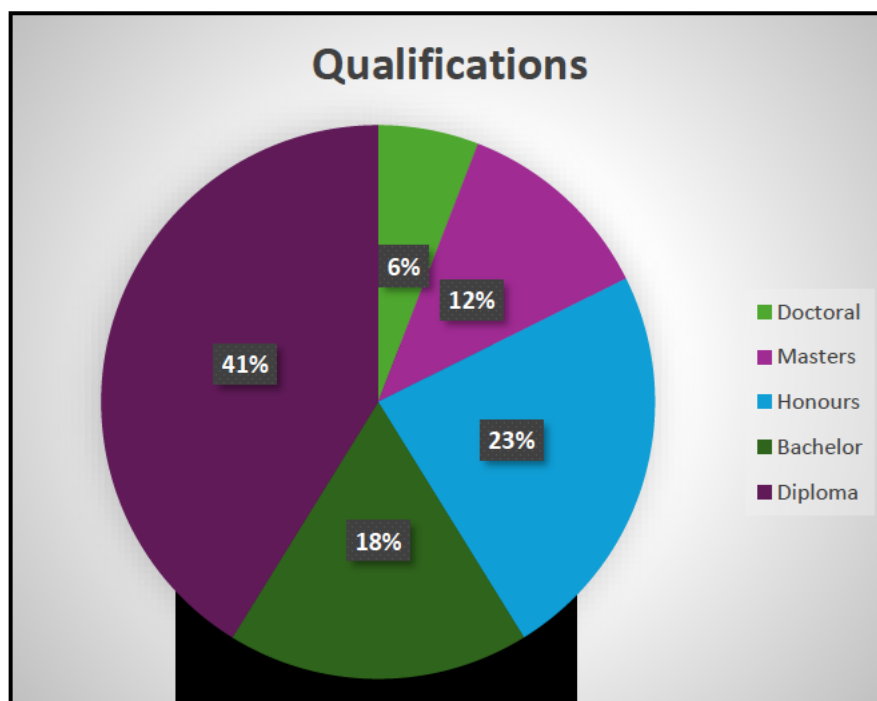
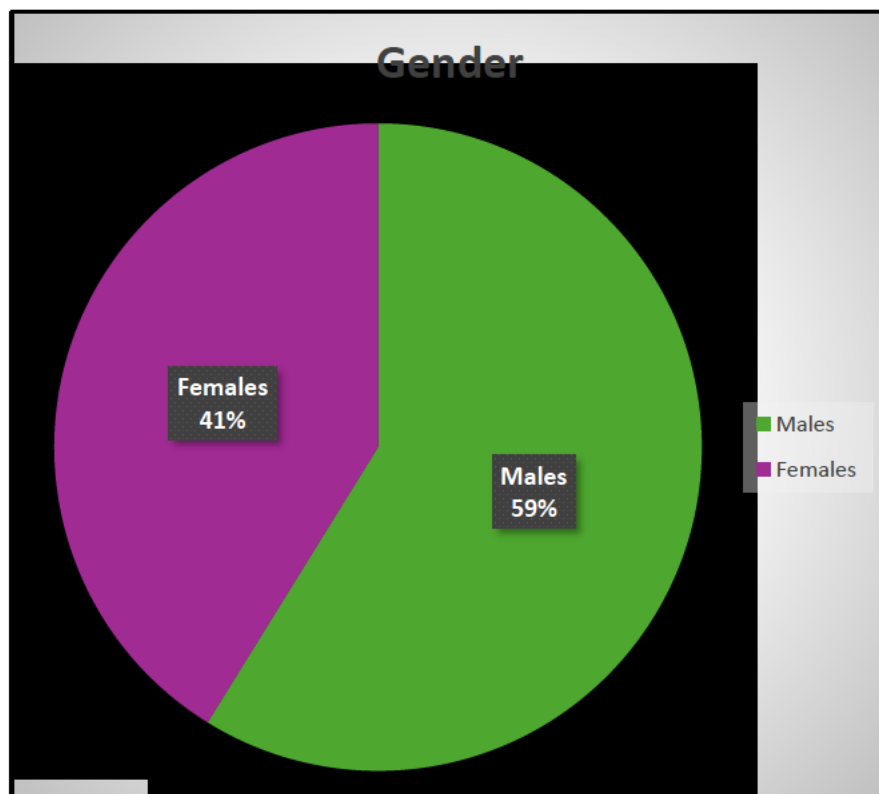


Figure 6.48. Level of Qualifications

Source: Researcher (2024)

The data gathered from the management and college council members who participated in the study is shown in Figure 6.48. One (1) (6%) leadership official who serves as a college council member confirmed to have received a doctoral qualification. Two (2) (6%) reported to have obtained a master's degree, and four (4) (23%) have completed an honours degree. Three (3) (18%) of the participants hold a bachelor's degree, and seven (7) (41%) are reported to have obtained a diploma. The data presented reveals that none of the top and middle management officials within the three colleges have NQF Level 10 qualifications, and neither are registered to further their studies. It was concerning that none of the management officials were furthering their studies; they mostly completed a bachelor's degree several years before. Another concern regarding the qualifications was that most of the managers were appointed in portfolios not aligned with their qualifications. Instead, they were promoted and placed in those areas because of their years working in the college system.

#### 6.4.1.2. Gender Distribution

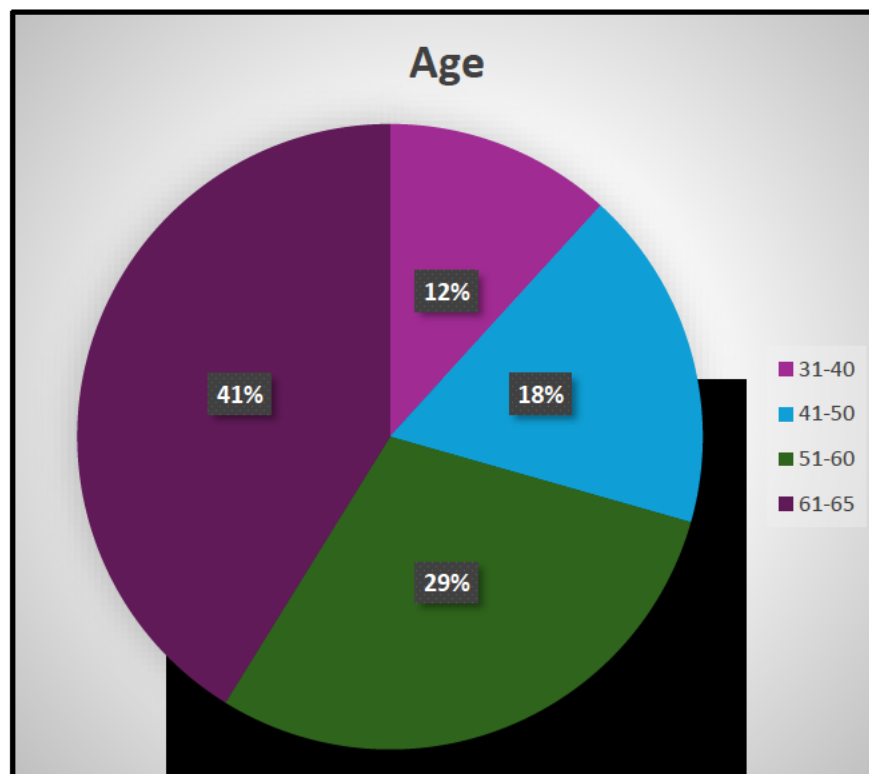


**Figure 6.49. Gender Distribution**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The information contained in Figure 6.49 depicts the gender distribution of the participants serving in management positions and college council structures. The data reveals that most of the officials appointed in management and leadership positions within the TVET colleges surveyed are males, there being a total of ten (10) (59%), while only seven (7) (41%) are females. This data indicates that males have more opportunities to be appointed in the TVET sector than females.

#### 6.4.1.3. Age Distribution



**Figure 6.50. Age Distribution**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 6.50 depicts the data regarding age distribution. In the highest age group, seven (7) (41%) of the participants aged 61–65, were appointed in executive management positions in the TVET colleges surveyed. This includes college principals at the top level and deputy principals at the middle management level. This is followed by the second highest five (5) 29%, aged 51–60. This data reveals that about 71% of the participants are close to retirement age. The lowest age group is two (2) 12%, ages 31–40, followed by the second lowest three (3) 18%, aged 41–50. Given that most participants are set to retire, this is alarming. According

to current South African labour legislation, the DHET prescribes that the average retirement age is between 55–65.

6.4.1.4. Ethnic Group

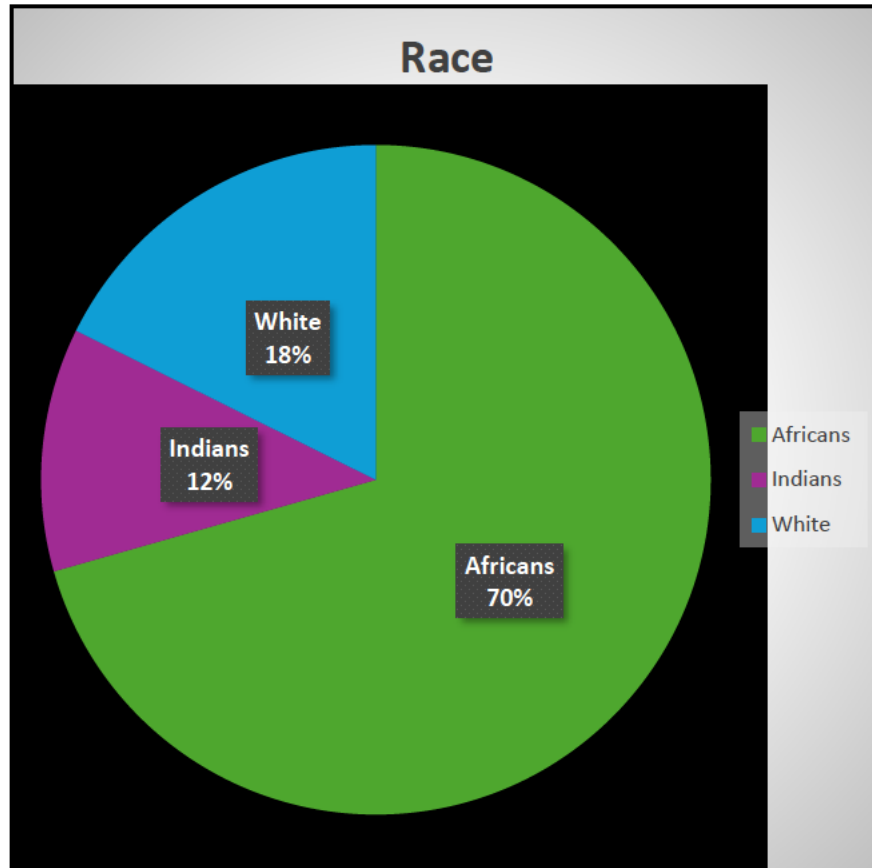


Figure 6.51. Ethnic Group Distribution

Source: Researcher (2024)

As illustrated in Figure 6.51, the data on the ethnic group of the participants for the study indicate that the highest racial group for this investigation were twelve (12), 70% African participants, followed by three (3) white participants, 18%. The lowest racial group was two (2) 12% Indian participants. The data reveal that most of the racial groups that are given preference in terms of the appointed senior management positions in the TVET colleges are Africans. In KZN, Africans contribute to 80% of the population, followed by Indians, who contribute to 10%. This could be why more Africans are represented in management and leadership positions.

## 6.4.2. Theme #01: Understanding Management and Leadership

### 6.4.2.1. Management Definition

The Literature Review in Chapter Two, Sec. 2.2.1 and Sec. 2.2.2, extensively explains management and leadership. Helen (2022:41) asserts that management prevails whenever individuals strive to accomplish a specific objective; they are effectively involved in the management process. It plays a critical and indispensable role in every organisation as it involves effectively coordinating and utilising resources to achieve specific objectives. Kaehler and Grundei (2019:22) contend that management is a structured and methodical process of devising strategies, organising resources, providing direction, and supervising individuals working towards achieving organisational objectives. The capabilities of officials entrusted in managerial roles affect TVET (DHET, 2024a). The managers must oversee staff members and collaborate with higher-ranking officials to ensure the team fulfils objectives and advances the college's mission. It involves individuals who hold managerial roles, particularly those in strategic positions wherein they are responsible for significant decision-making on behalf of the organisation (Civelek, 2019:4).

Upon conducting the interviews, the researcher deduced from the responses that the research participants had no trouble explaining what management and leadership meant. Several participants responded with their opinions when asked about their interpretation and comprehension of management and leadership definitions. Most participants reported that management entails overseeing and managing various tasks, such as evaluation and monitoring, to guarantee that resources are used properly. According to more than half of the participants, management in the TVET College sector consists of upholding the *status quo* while considering the college's policies, processes, and regulations.

The term 'management' encompassed all the college's support services, with management abilities as the key instruments for overseeing these services (Dunn, 2014). Operational managers are responsible for managing various administration processes within the TVET college. Essentially, they are responsible for the optimal functioning of both the educational and administrative aspects of the college and supporting overall success and maintaining smooth operations.

Participant P1 reported:

*My understanding of management basically talks to the achievement of the strategic goals of our organisation, or rather what fits to the overall strategic goals of the department as a whole, in terms of teaching and learning. So that we can then have our own strategic plans. My job is then to manage that, to identify key responsibility areas in my field that target the actualisation of those goals, or targets or outputs we need to achieve regarding our responsibility.*

Participant C1 stated that:

*Management is about the administration and coordination of tasks to accomplish an objective. Setting the organisation's strategy and directing staff members' efforts to achieve these goals using resources are examples of such administrative tasks. Within an organisation, the seniority hierarchy of employees can also be called management.*

Participant M1 reported that management is a process that involves key functional areas of planning, organising, and controlling to ensure the organisational goals and objectives are achieved.

Participant D2 indicated that management in the TVET sector is about the power of authority vested within the highest management level. All managerial decisions are strongly influenced by the principal, who decides on college activities. Participant D2 went on to state:

*Within the TVET, the management executives handle planning and decision-making duties, known as centralised management. The college principal is a decision maker, and all other tiers of management within the institution receive guidance from these upper management experts, who aid in the decision's implementation.*

Participant C1 described management as a function that involves controlling human capacity, ensuring effective teaching, and learning, and ensuring high compliance with college policies. For TVET colleges to run smoothly and accomplish their objectives, management roles are crucial. These roles are adapted to the requirements of the educational setting, although they generally resemble conventional management roles seen in most organizations.

Participant D2 reported that management is divided into three layers: top management, middle management, and lower management levels:

*Management in the TVET College is divided between authority and responsibility levels, which are called management levels. Top-level, mid-level and first-line management are the standard levels of management. These levels*

*determine the responsibilities of different manager positions and who they report to, and who reports to them. In this regard, the college hires a labourer divided into management levels since more supervisors are available to oversee and guide various tasks. This guarantees that every level of management may review each other's work before releasing a product to the public and facilitates the creation of efficient approval processes.*

Participant CC1 mentioned that management is a procedure used by college administrators to oversee the resources available to achieve the system's objectives, which educational leaders set. Ensuring the acquisition and upkeep of all resources, instruments, and apparatus required for instruction and learning.

Participant M2 described management as giving employees and students clear guidance and motivating them to pursue the mission and objectives of the college. The management is responsible for promoting a cooperative atmosphere and directing workflow, operations, and personnel to achieve college objectives. Participant M2 could thus state:

*Management fosters an atmosphere where workers are empowered to perform effectively and productively. As a manager, you must have the necessary skills and knowledge to direct workers and set the tone and direction of their work. To ensure that work processes are adhered to and all personnel work towards achieving the strategic goal.*

Participant P2 reported that:

*I would say that it is often thought that the word 'management' encompasses all of the college's support services and that management skills are required to oversee these services. The several college functions are under the process ownership of their managers. Defining performance metrics and routinely assessing staff effectiveness, student results, and overall institutional performance in relation to these measures.*

#### 6.4.2.2. Defining Leadership

According to Gutterman (2023c:2), leadership is the ability to bring about positive, non-incremental change. This involves creating a vision to motivate change and a plan to help people involved carry it out without facing obstacles. Toma et al. (2020:51) agree that a leader is someone who tells their subordinates about the plans and policies so they can get to work. Effective leaders should stay in touch with their staff, listen to their concerns, and work to find solutions. Toma et al. (2020:51) further agree that a leader is someone who tells subordinates about the plans and policies so they can get to work. Effective leaders should stay in touch

with their staff, listen to their concerns, and work to find solutions. A leader must consistently hear the opinions of their staff and, in the event of a dispute, persuade them to agree with him or by providing pertinent clarifications (Toma et al., 2020).

During the interviews, the participants struggled to define leadership. Most participants described leadership as a structure that goes beyond overseeing groups of people and financial plans, consisting of college council members and SRC members. Leadership in the TVET sector creates a supportive learning atmosphere, encourages inclusivity and variety, and leads towards holding to a commonality of objectives.

Participant CC1 indicated that:

*When it comes to influencing organisational behaviour, leadership is essential. It establishes the direction and goals, serves as an example of behaviour, takes decisions, settles disputes, manages change, assesses performance, shapes organisational culture, and encourages lifelong learning and growth.*

A total of eight (8) participants reported that leadership is about creating a conducive work environment, thus ensuring individuals are inspired and motivated to achieve visionary goals and objectives. A leadership structure ensures that a clear vision is articulated effectively and implemented, which is the responsibility of the college council.

Participant CC2 reported that:

*Leadership shapes college culture and sets the tone for an innovative, customer-focused, or inclusive culture. A strong organisational culture shapes how people interact within the college.*

Participant E1 stated that:

*Leadership creates and maintains procedures and systems to define the college's mission, values, goals, and objectives, as well as to identify and manage performance standards and track accomplishments. The highest decision-making body in the college is the college council, which is responsible for providing strategic direction and acting as an oversight to ensure accountability. But how can you achieve that if you an incompetence leader..*

Participant CC3 detailed that:

*Leadership keeps track of and reports on the college's personnel, administration, and performance in the institutional strategy plan.*

Participant E1 indicated that:

*Leadership is frequently associated with a person's seniority, title, or place in a hierarchy. An individual with certain qualities and attributes influences others to follow the strategic directions to enable the college to provide quality education.*

The respondents acknowledged the necessity for leaders to possess vision, the ability to identify possibilities for the organisation, and the ability to make things happen. TVET sector leaders need to stay current on the latest advancements, be aware of community needs, and remain knowledgeable about national and global patterns in a changing world. They were released from overseeing the different operational divisions to enable them to accomplish this.

Participant CC2 reported that:

*In addition to being visionary within the South African TVET sector, the leader must be aware of global developments. Also, to establish connections, recognise best practices, and be able to interact with others to determine advantages for their colleges. We cannot stay confined to our offices. As leaders, we must participate in the global community and be informed about recent advancements.*

### **6.4.3. Theme #02: Roles and Responsibilities of Management and Leadership**

#### **6.4.3.1. Management Roles and Responsibilities**

In the TVET sector, management responsibilities are based on the hierarchical level of powers. The highest level of management comprises senior management with the most authority and power to make decisions and formulate policies and plans for strategy and choices about overall corporate direction (Marhisotti et al., 2018). The managers at this level are usually called accounting officers, which is the college principal, and more powers of authority rest or are invested within this level (Sithole et al., 2022:95). The middle management level comprises of four (4) deputy principals depending on the size and management structure of the college. The deputy principals spend more time on organisational and directional tasks and are accountable to the top management level (Tokarski, 2016:82). This entails outlining and debating crucial policies for lower management, advising lower management to attain improved performance, and carrying out organisational plans under the senior management's supervision (Pawar, 2014:2).

Most participants reported that in the TVET sector, roles and responsibilities are based on the division of labour. In the TVET sector, the tasks are distributed among the different levels of management, and the positions of authority are distinctly stipulated and arranged hierarchically in the college. Each college has a well-defined hierarchical management structure, and the tasks are distributed among the top, middle, and lower management, thus creating a distinct chain of command and delegation. These management practices can be viewed in terms of the Max Weber Bureaucratic Management.

Participant C2 reported that as a manager, part of their responsibility and role was to ensure oversight and accountability in teaching and learning at the campus level, and the effective use of resources. The participant indicated that the TVET sector uses a hierarchical structure in which roles and responsibilities are delegated from the superior and management at the central office:

*According to my job description as a campus manager, my duties are to ensure accountability for the general oversight of the campus. I oversee the daily operations of the campus, its employees, and its students. I take the lead and assist in overseeing the support and academic staff members' professional development. I am also responsible for all campus property and monetary transactions. Also, I must keep an eye on and assess campus administration procedures. However, even though I am responsible for the campus, I must constantly approach the central office where decision-making rests.*

Participant C3 reported that:

*Within the college, part of my responsibilities is to oversee groups of people and themselves and carrying out that role requires a range of duties. Including organising the campus instruction and learning. I also oversee the section's academic activities, such as scheduling, attendance, monitoring, and evaluation. Further, I must ensure that the resources within the campus under my authority are used effectively and efficiently.*

From the foregoing discussion, campus managers know that part of their job is to assign, oversee, and manage the educational activities and human capacity on campus. The middle managers, who are deputy principals, consist of three or four managers representing each unit within the college. During the interview, most of the participants in this position revealed that their role and responsibility was to support the college principal concerning academic services. The responses of the participants were clear.

Participant D2 reported that:

*My responsibilities are concerning the overall management of academic services within the college. I Take the lead strategically in ensuring that curriculum services and programme offerings are delivered efficiently. I am also in charge of overseeing the College's registration procedures. I also oversee and plan the gathering, drafting, and application of all college-wide student administration policies and procedures. In addition, I check the accuracy and authenticity of all EMIS data reports and registration documentation. Finally, I oversee the examination preparation for all programmes that require assessment.*

Participant D3 mentioned that:

*As a manager, I ensure that the latest examination guidelines and customs are followed. I communicate with all employees, including department heads, about entries. I oversee the college's administration, academic programmes, and lectures to ensure students receive high-quality instruction. I make sure the programme is delivered with excellence. I am also in charge of developing the curriculum, implementing performance-related plans and policies, and ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation tools meet the goals.*

The respondents also expressed that performing managerial functions in the TVET sector is challenging because managers are not encouraged to use discretion. They rely more on the college principals, even for matters that can be resolved at a lower management level. Participant M1 reported that principals do not promote delegation, and when requesting essential goods and services for campus functionality, delays occur because the college principal must authorise them first. The TVET sector adopted a centralised management system in which more power rested on the principal to make a final decision over the day-to-day operational activities.

Participant M2 expressed that:

*The adoption of a centralised management system in the college sector has caused a disconnection between us as managers because we have little autonomy and control over our work. At some point, I feel undervalued and unimportant.*

#### 6.4.3.2. College Council Roles and Responsibilities

Most participants reported that leadership functions in the TVET college sector are divided into college leadership affairs and student affairs. In this regard, two structures are responsible for leadership. The success of any college has been linked to leadership, and the scholars in the literature revealed that effective leadership is responsible for transforming the TVET sector.

The TVET leadership assist in informing management about the college's vision and objectives. This gives everyone direction and aids in determining which roles best suit their backgrounds and abilities. Effective communication is an essential strategy leaders use to motivate their staff to act towards goals. During the interviews, most participants reported that The Continuing Education and Training Act (Act No. 16 of 2006) (CET) governs the functions and duties of college councils in TVET colleges in South Africa. To guarantee efficient management and delivery of vocational education by national priorities, this Act establishes a framework for governance in TVET colleges. The TVET college council is essential to the management and control of the organisation.

Participant CC3 explained that:

*I can say that we are an oversight that is appointed by the minister to promote good governance. The college council oversees all college policies, including administration, student affairs, and academic programmes. It guarantees that the college functions under the guidelines established by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The council makes sure the college abides by all applicable laws.*

Participant E1 stated that:

*The college's budget is prepared, approved, and overseen by the college council. This involves making sure that funds are distributed efficiently to satisfy institutional requirements. The council oversees the appropriate financial management, accountability, and openness. This includes approving financial statements and making sure audits are carried out.*

Participant P2 reported that the college council established performance monitoring mechanisms and monitors how well the college principal and senior administration perform. This makes the leadership responsible for meeting institutional objectives and promoting accountability. In addition, it oversees student disciplinary procedures and ensures students' rights and obligations are respected inside the college.

Participant P1 stated that:

*The college's leadership role is to give it strategic direction to realise its mission of offering students instruction and training. College councils create and approve policies in various areas that help the management and employees carry out the strategic plan.*

Section 9(1) of the CET Act stipulates that the college council is the highest decision-making and is a leadership structure that promotes good governance. The college council has high ethical standards and a mandate to act appropriately. The council's responsibilities include strategic direction, management, and ensuring the college runs smoothly and efficiently.

Participant CC1 reported that:

*As members of the TVET council, we can make decisions regarding the college. We are mandated to instil trust and maintain high standards of ethics, ensuring that management performs their roles and responsibilities as required by the policies. However, when we perform our duties, the college principals always view us as interfering in day-to-day operations.*

Participant P2 stated that:

*The college council is responsible for formulating strategic plans, enacting regulations, and overseeing the college's management. They are not directly involved in college administrations but are mainly responsible for providing guidance and ensuring oversight.*

Other participants pointed out that there is always a misunderstanding among college council members and executive management about duties and responsibilities. Participant D1 explained that the primary governance responsibilities of the college council include approval of policies, financial and legal compliance, and strategic monitoring. Rather than being involved in day-to-day operations, its duty is to provide guidance and oversight. Participant P1 expressed that the council members are unclear about their roles and responsibilities:

*Council members are unaware of the distinctions between operations and governance. In most situations, college council members, especially the chairperson, frequently disregard the CET Act regarding their obligations and tasks.*

Even having experienced interpersonal difficulties, some respondents had pleasant things to say. Establishing rapport and confidence between management and councils is essential to operating governance institutions. Participant E3 stated that:

*Good leadership is crucial; for instance, our college is fortunate to have a chairperson who fosters unity among us and always shares his vision; we are all encouraged to work towards improving the college. I can confidently say that we have been very lucky to receive someone passionate about TVET. Despite the challenges that the college faced within a short period of time while*

*he joined the college, we have seen change, and I believe we are going to the right direction.*

Participant M3 reported that:

*I do not work closely with the college council, but I know him because he has been in the TVET industry for decades. I am trying to say that he has a strong TVET background and good experience in the sector.*

The interviewees emphasised the significance of council members' expertise in governance and college system operation. In response to enquiries concerning the breadth of the council members' expertise and experience, the participant's answers varied regarding their comprehension of their duties and responsibilities, with some unpleasant opinions and remarks made by a few interviewees.

Participants D3 mentioned that:

*Many present council members contribute positively to college governance and are well-qualified. We have worked with those individuals and brought change to our college.*

Participant D1 indicated that there are still gaps in the recruitment procedure for council members. Some colleges are unlikely to receive unqualified council members with no passion for serving in the college council. After being appointed, the college council faces challenges because others do not attend meetings. The college council's cadre deployment presents severe difficulties in the TVET sector. These difficulties impact TVET institutions' overall performance, financial supervision, educational quality, and governance.

Participant M1 indicated that:

*College council ministerial appointments compromise the college's capacity to reach wise and sensible conclusions. A council made up of people who have been politically deployed encourages a culture of leadership that does not have the technical and experience needed to oversee and lead the TVET colleges. Political ties play a role in the appointment of members of college councils and lead to politicised decision-making, where choices are made based on party agendas rather than what is best for the college and its students.*

#### **6.4.4. Theme #03: The Relationship between Management and Leadership**

Three structures are necessary for effective administration and leadership in the TVET sector to guarantee the college's functional operation. The three structures in the TVET sector in

South Africa are described in chapter four, Figure 4.3. Each structure has an important function to perform. The council is the college's highest decision-making body, as defined by the CET Act. The operation management structure oversees making sure the college is run efficiently. In addition, the SRC is the college's top student representation body regarding issues that affect all campuses equally. Effective management and leadership working together and communicating are common attributes in successful TVET colleges. This guarantees that staff members are motivated and engaged and that strategic goals align with operational capabilities.

The participants' responses revealed that a functional TVET college critically depends on a good working relationship between the executive management college council and SRC. The responses shared a negative insight into the working relationships between management and leadership. Most of the participants indicated that TVET colleges need to exercise visionary leadership. Unfortunately, there is a conflict of power between management and leadership, which affects the functioning of the college. The colleges are experiencing unhealthy working relationships because of poor communication channels and lack of transparency and authenticity. Consequently, there have been tense relationships within these colleges between the councils, executive management, and personnel. Additionally, there seems to have been some confusion and disagreement regarding the council members and management responsibilities. The views of the participants are highlighted below:

Participant P2 reported that:

*The working relationship between management and the college council is not in a good or healthy position, which is needed to transform the college to meet its objectives. We constantly experience unnecessary conflicts with the college council members who are power-hungry. They interfere with the college administration and management activities to an extent that, as managers, we are demotivated and not inspired during meetings.*

Participant P1 indicated that:

*It is very difficult to work with council members at this point because they come to the college with a political agenda and have no interest in transforming the college. These individuals are appointed by the Minister and deployed in our college, and they are completely disconnected from the TVET. Council members with political influence always advocate for appointing politically connected people to executive positions in the college, a move that management may oppose, especially if the candidates lack the necessary skills or qualifications. When the council tries to sway or obstruct management's*

*decisions about hiring, which belong to them, conflicts emerge. This covers choices on employee hiring, firing, promotions, and staffing levels.*

The belief held by council members is that management fails to carry out their decisions or provide suitable reports sufficiently. This is countered by the belief held by management that council members become overly-involved in operational problems that impact hiring decisions and tender awarding.

Participant CC2 reported that the council receives reports from the principal, but it lacks the authority to act against them for not being accountable.

Participant E2 expressed that:

*Even if the council is aware of the lecturers' poor performance and the principal's involvement in corruption, we cannot change the situation because our powers are limited. We can only report to the minister who does not participate in TVET council meetings, so the site for accountability is far removed from the TVET college concerned.*

Participant E1 reported that:

*In 2020, our college was placed into administration following a series of accusations of wrongdoing and a critical report by the auditor general. The administration was terminated in August 2022; we had unethical college council members and senior management officials involved in the corruption scandals. We have lost one of our senior managers who was brutally killed at the college premises, and I strongly believe it was an inside job. There were individuals trying to convince the college to give them contracts, and some of our colleagues were intimidated and victimised. During meetings, we are scared even to voice our opinions because we have lost trust in each other and fear that we might be killed if we report any suspicious activities.*

The primary flaw in effective governance is the ambiguity around the governors' function about the executive management's responsibilities. As a result, there is a propensity for certain college councils to participate in micromanagement inside the organisation, weakening the team executive management.

Participant P2 stated that:

*One of the problems with having a council that believes it is the board and should set policies rather than carrying out its monitoring duties under the CET Act is that it makes operating a college difficult.*

Participant D1 reported that:

*I have been at this college for years and started as an educator. I have experienced the shift from technical colleges. I was part of the college when it was combined to form a FET, which is now TVET. They were good leaders and visionaries who would lead the college in the right direction. But it all changed when the college was led by toxic individuals who abused power. We have been battling with our working relationship. We do not have a healthy working relationship between management and the college council, and this has caused dysfunction. Our performance is very poor despite the administration ending in 2022. It is difficult to improve because we do not have strong leadership.*

Participant M2 stated that:

*Trust is damaged when managers and leaders are opaque about choices, objectives, or difficulties. There are situations where lower management feels misinformed or thinks ulterior motives exist. I can say that building strong connections requires authentic communication to succeed as a college; we are struggling because of poor communication. The working relationship between the structures at our college is strongly influenced by ineffective communication channels, which are confusing, unmet expectations, and annoyance. A division has arisen because our leaders and senior managers fail to communicate clearly or don't actively listen. Yet, we are expected to implement without clear communication.*

The conflicts between councils and management stem from a lack of clarity regarding final power over colleges and fragmented lines of responsibility. Suspicion is reciprocal. Councils believe their job is to hold management responsible; yet management is inclined to think of the council as a corrupting agent.

According to Participant CC1 the lines of accountability in the TVET sector are ambiguous.

*If the principal cannot oversee and manage their deputies, you must bring the issue before the regional office where the principal's manager is seated. If you cannot do so, you must speak with the DG. Anyone who visits the website finds this process to be irritating. As a council member, we meet once every three months and is not the college does not employ us. Sometimes, the management needs to adequately inform the council before deciding. In most situations, the principals bypass us and make choices without consultation with the college council.*

Other participants revealed they had experienced a hostile workplace because of unresolved colleague disputes. The participants reported they had experienced discrimination and social isolation. They further mentioned that these encounters have escalated into more harmful

exchanges, bullying, and aggressiveness, which is not limited to the management. The students themselves have also been affected by these poor working relationships.

Participant D2 reported that:

*I'm newly appointed in my position and have already experienced a behaviour that started as sarcasm. I reported it to the HR manager, but nothing was done. Instead, I was told to let it go, and the behaviour continued to the extent that I involved the union to intervene.*

Participant M2 stated that:

*Especially as women, we do experience discrimination in college. I would say that a man's voice is regarded as more powerful regardless of our position. Some of my colleagues left the college because they were being bullied, and nothing was done to discourage that behaviour.*

The participants were also asked about the status of the working relationships between management, council and SRC. Most participants spoke about the SRC which is elected annually, in a process which usually takes a long time. This is unlike the college council, which serves a five-year term. The SRC began to participate in council meetings at a very late stage when almost all matters concerning the students had been finalised in their absence.

Participant M1 stated that:

*Members of the college council office serve five-year terms, and SRC serves only one term, meaning the SRC may hold office for more than one academic year, although their terms are for one academic year. Because of the delays in elections this financial year, the SRC started participating in the college council after May, during which we already covered a lot of discussions regarding the college activities.*

Participant P1 indicated that SRC frequently has the least experience in council matters, especially when discussing high-level strategic concerns that are not always directly related to students' challenges. The SRC seems to comply with ensuring they are represented in the college council structure, while participation in matters concerning college activities is very poor.

*The SRC exists in the TVET in compliance with the CET regulations, which state that all TVET colleges must ensure that students are represented in the council. Still, the SRC does not fully participate in council decision-making because they don't know and understand the matters sometimes discussed. Having them on*

*the council serves as a reminder of how crucial students are to the college as major stakeholders.*

Two of the participants, M2 and P2, reported that the purpose of the SRC is to collaborate with management. Rather than to oppose any initiative from management, their role is to identify and address any challenges the college may encounter. Accordingly, Participant M2 reported that:

*The conflicts between management and SRC are based on students' misunderstandings or misinterpreting guidelines. For instance, the NSFAS is responsible for providing funding for students, and within the college, there is not much we can do, but when we explain this to the SRC, it becomes a problem that leads to protests.*

Participant P2 stated that:

*Political parties have controlled SRC elections for a long time. They come to the college with a political agenda that is not in line with promoting good values. These settings foster the reality of ineffective and complacent government, which has been shown on college campuses nationwide and refuted. We experience major disagreements with the SRC because they are heavily influenced by political parties who often mislead them regarding their political agenda.*

Participant E3 reported that:

*SRC is responsible for creating an environment that is healthy for students. As management, we must maintain a conducive environment for teaching and learning, but how the protesting students behave is inappropriate for resolving disputes.*

Other participants agreed that a deficient organisational culture – as seen by the absence of the ethical values of humanity and cooperation and ineffective and unstable administration – has weakened the position of the TVET colleges. The TVET colleges are marked by a severe lack of an organisational culture that values shared ownership, accountability, and teamwork, which makes institutional planning and management difficult.

#### **6.4.5. Theme #04: Management Strategies**

The Literature Review in chapter two, Sec. 2.6 provided an overview of the management strategies adopted in the TVET sector. These tools are implemented to raise the standard of education while also fortifying management and accountability frameworks. The TVET managers utilise management strategies to guide and oversee their units and sections. A wide

range of strategies, including goal setting, staff development, performance management, communication, accountability delegation, motivating, and conflict resolution. During the interviews, the researcher asked questions about the type of management strategies adopted by the management to ensure effective administration within the colleges.

Most participants who are officials within the executive management reported that TVET colleges implement management strategies that are like the management strategies that the DBE implements. The colleges and schools are required to implement the Management Information System for Education (MIS), the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), and the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). To guarantee that a high standard of excellence is encouraged and attained, colleges must apply the IQMS to evaluate the performance of their academics by following the norms and regulations controlling the TVET sector in South Africa.

Participant M2 explained that:

*The management of TVET colleges is centred on supporting the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) and the NDP 2030, which seek to develop a workforce capable of driving economic growth.*

Other participants stated that TVET colleges use the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) system as a management strategy to develop the skills and knowledge of the lecturers. The Performance Management and Development System (PDMS) is a management strategy that ensures employee evaluations are carried out and documented correctly. This system assesses the performance of the executive management officials, administrators, support staff, and other non-educator members working within the college (Sefora, 2013:57). It commences on 01 April and ends on 31 March and serves as a binding agreement between the supervisor/manager and the employee.

Participant M1 stated that:

*Management strategies are very broad, depending on the portfolio or managerial responsibility. I used IQMS as a strategy to encourage good performance; this allows us as managers to identify potential areas of educator development and reward those excelling in their subjects or call them modules. IQMS is closely related to CPTD; it entails a variety of projects, programmes, and activities aimed at assisting educators in enhancing their efficacy, knowledge, and abilities in the classroom. The professional development of*

*educators in the TVET sector is highly dependent on the opportunities provided by CPTD. But limited resources affect the implementation of CPTD.*

Participant P2 mentioned that:

*Implementing the CPTD system has assisted in improving the skills of educators within our college. We had lectures from a different field of work, in particular, not education, but were considered because of their results in maths and science. These individuals come to our college with a lack of practical skills in teaching in the TVET sector. The CPTD system provided them opportunities to improve their skills, enabling them to obtain teaching methods. These TVET management strategies emphasise the ongoing professional development of lecturers and instructors. This entails providing educators with up-to-date knowledge of current industry trends and technologies using workshops and courses on upskilling.*

Participant D1 reported that:

*As a senior manager based at the central office, we used the PDMS to enter an agreement between those under my authority every financial year. This helps us to ensure that every team member understands what is expected of them to deliver and supports our team in ensuring that the goals and objectives of the college are prioritised.*

Participants P1, D2 and M2 have been in the TVET college for a long time. Indeed, these participants have more than 30 years of service in the TVET industry. According to their responses, they mentioned that the DHET stipulates in its policy documents which strategies are required to be implemented at the college level without offering support and training to ensure that the management understands the new strategic initiatives.

Participant D2 mentioned that:

*We are expected as college senior management to implement strategic initiatives and compliance with initiatives that you were not even part of when it was developed. We have recently been told that IQMS will be replaced by QMS, but the TVET will have its system because this has been designed for basic education. How can we be expected to implement strategies while we don't even receive training as college-level personnel are expected to execute?*

Participants M2 stated that:

*The execution of a new strategy is never finished. The fresh strategy should undergo formal reviews regularly to review protocols, verify that the plan is operating as intended, and make any required modifications. Training needs to be a component of this continual process evaluation. This ongoing training is*

*affordable, focused on the team, and may include a curriculum that adapts as the business's goals do.*

Two participants mentioned that TVET management oversees student recruitment strategies, including reaching enrolment goals, assuring fair admissions procedures, and promoting the college's offerings to prospective students. They manage the delivery of academic tutoring, career assistance, counselling, and financial aid, including helping students apply for funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). This is achieved through the implementation of the Student Support Services (SSS) framework

#### **6.4.6. Theme #05: Leadership Tools**

Adequate and well-trained personnel are necessary to achieve a well-managed and sustainable TVET colleges; this is where leadership comes in action to support the management in executing their functions. Consequently, institutions must have capable transformational leaders because these leaders have the capacity to inspire and formulate ideals and goals for realising organisational objectives. A foundation of fundamental tools forms the basis of effective leadership. Becoming an effective leader in the contemporary, unpredictable climate requires more than just charisma or personal traits; it necessitates appropriate tools and resources. These tools are instrumental in enabling leaders to manage their teams efficiently and achieve organisational objectives. While some of these tools may be tangible, they also encompass intangible elements such as skills, attitudes, and strategies. Mastery of these tools is not instantaneous; it is a developmental process that demands careful reflection, consistent practice, and a commitment to personal growth. With the proper tools, leaders are better equipped to inspire their teams, navigate challenges, and successfully attain their goals.

During the interviews, the participants serving on leadership structures, college councils, and senior management officials were asked to provide the types of leadership tools used in the TVET to ensure effective leadership practices. There were mixed responses, some participants could identify and explain the tools without difficulty. Their responses were as follows:

Participant CC1 stated that:

*As leaders, we must have internal communication tools that reduce inefficiencies and promote fruitful discussions. We used communication to ensure that the college's vision and mission were communicated accordingly and that everyone within the college was well-informed about the strategic*

*objectives. Technological advancement has played a significant role in improving communication. We can host virtual meetings even when we are far away from the colleges, and it ensures that everyone is informed. At the college I serve, we use Zoom, teams, and other video conferencing platforms to simulate the in-person interactions frequently required to communicate information effectively.*

Two participants, E1 and CC2, indicated that TVET leadership uses assessment tools to ensure effective leadership practices in the TVET sector. TVET leadership and management can drive change and enhance their institutions with the information and skills these tools and programmes offer, making them more effective in their respective position. The participants indicated that assessments in the TVET are essential to raise the standard of instruction and administration in TVET institutes in South Africa.

Participants CC2 reported that:

*There is a self-assessment TVET toolkit that involves activities that are geared towards promoting a sustainable college. It encourages us to assess our strengths and weaknesses and identify gaps in our policies for improvement. I have participated in workshops that have been provided to improve our skills as college council members.*

Participants P2 and D1 reported that a Whole School Evaluation (WSE) is used in the TVET sector as part of the leadership instrument. In the context of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Whole School Evaluation refers to a thorough appraisal of the complete educational setting. This procedure guarantees that the institution offers high-quality instruction and training while meeting the necessary criteria. These assessments assist in pinpointing areas that want enhancement and guarantee that the organisation is offering its students a pertinent and superior education.

Participant D1 mentioned that:

*The assessments assist in pinpointing areas that want enhancement and guarantee that the college is offering its students a pertinent and superior education in practice; leadership and management are required to focus on different key aspects, including governance, which informs us how the school is managed and governed.*

Participant P2 reported that:

*Whole School Evaluation (WSE) plays a significant role. We can identify areas of oversight across many areas. However, improving those areas relies highly*

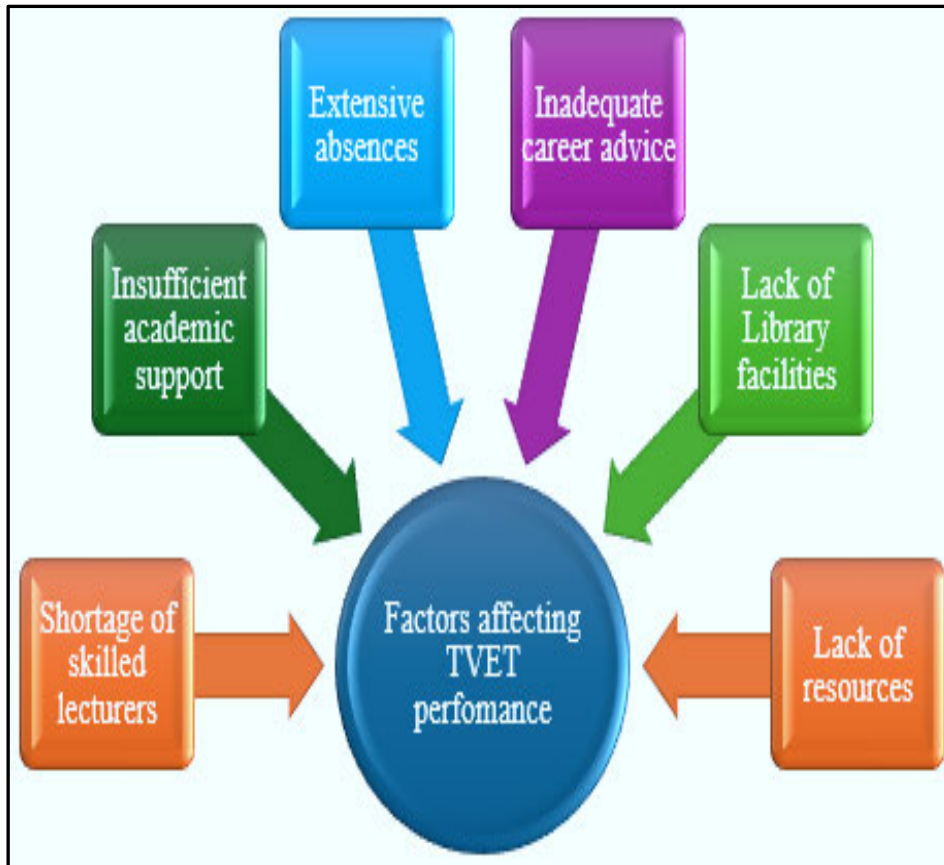
*on the availability of resources, which is an issue in the TVET, especially colleges like us in poorly disadvantaged communities. Whole School Evaluation (WSE) seeks to guarantee that TVET colleges offer top-notch instruction that satisfies industry standards and government requirements. It pushes colleges to use best practices and enhance their administration, infrastructure, and instruction.*

Two participants indicated that college councils employ strategic planning tools to define the institution's long-term vision and objectives. They create strategic frameworks or plans outlining objectives for student performance, programme development, infrastructure, and financial sustainability. College councils employ evaluation measures to determine their own efficacy and success. Regular self-evaluations assist the college councils in discovering areas for improvement in governance, leadership, and supervision.

#### **6.4.7. Theme #06: Factors Affecting TVET Performance**

The TVET sector in South Africa needs to perform according to the required standards set by the DHET. Yusuf Cassim, a member of the Democratic Alliance (DA) in South Africa, claimed during a parliamentary discussion that approximately 60% of TVET colleges in South Africa are dysfunctional (Pretorius, 2018). He cited poor student performance, particularly low pass rates in most courses offered in the TVET. This goes against the constant efforts of the government and the level of funding put into the TVET sector to raise student achievement and the standard of instruction offered at TVET colleges (Stops, Lortan, Singh, & Ramsuroop, 2022). DHET has identified several factors influencing student performance in South Africa's TVET colleges. These factors encompass a range of academic, financial, infrastructural, and psychosocial elements (DHET, 2023e).

During the interviews, the researcher asked the participants to share their experiences with the factors that affect college performance. The researcher was interested in obtaining information about the causes of poor performance. The views and opinions of the participants revealed many factors that influence the success of TVET colleges in South Africa. Some factors are related to institutional practices, while others are more systemic. These elements have the potential to help or impede TVET colleges in their endeavours to fulfil their mission of offering excellent, pertinent vocational education that meets industry, student, and economic demands. The factors highlighted by the research participants affecting TVET performance are depicted in Figure 6.52.



**Figure 6.52. Factors Affecting TVET Performance**

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### 6.4.7.1. Shortage of Skilled Lecturers

Ensuring that students receive high-quality education to improve their skill levels for better employment chances and opportunities for further education at national universities is the primary objective of the TVET college (DHET, 2020b). Lectures in the TVET sector are the most effective teaching methods as practical and theory highly depend on the availability of academic staff. They are expected to analyse curriculum theory and connect it with industry demands, workplaces, and local sources. During the interviews, eight (8) participants confirmed that TVET colleges are facing a shortage of skilled lecturers who lack the necessary credentials to carry out their duties efficiently. In this, the DHET has also failed to fill the vacant posts in line with the level of student enrolments, thereby affecting the colleges' overall performance.

Participant C1 reported that:

*The urgent problem affecting the college performance is a shortage of lecturers; as a campus manager, I have struggled to fill vacant posts because we rely more on the central office and DHET to advertise posts... and when they see the need, regardless of the challenge we face daily at the campus.*

Participant D2 expressed that:

*Our college's human capacity for lecturing does not satisfy the competencies needed for efficient lecturing. We don't have the right people to deliver good performance results; those with the right skills and qualifications are resigning because of better job opportunities.*

Participant C3 stated that:

*Some of the courses offered have a high enrolment rate that does not match the number of required lectures. This creates a huge challenge when teaching and learning starts.*

During the interviews, three (3) participants indicated that the DHET introduced the Post Provisioning Norms Policy (PPN), which was adopted to address the employment of lecturers in the TVET sector. The PPN prescribes how many lecturers are assigned to a particular college after considering a variety of parameters, including the number of students enrolled, the curriculum, and the courses offered by the college (DHET, 2021). During the interviews majority of the participants expressed that PPN policy has been applied unevenly across TVET colleges and causes disparities in staffing levels. Other colleges are overstaffed while others faces shortage of staff even though enrolment suggest the need for more lectures. TVET colleges experience fluctuations in student enrolment because of changing economic conditions, shifts in the job market, and changes in government policy. Two participants indicated that PPN policies are not flexible enough to respond quickly to these changes, leading to mismatched staffing.

Participant P2 explained that:

*The PPN system creates issues as the students' enrolment fluctuates, making it difficult to retain lecturers at the college. The DHET takes forever to replace the lectures, yet, simultaneously, expect to ensure that teaching and learning take place.*

Participant C2 stated that:

*The PPN states that the size of a class should be limited to fifteen students for practical and thirty students for theory per lecture, but this does not happen that*

*way. The lectures end with a high number of students in the class, and as management, we are pressured by the government to increase the intake of students because of the National Development Plan (NDP) goal.*

Participant D1 reported that:

*The PPN is a barrier to quality assurance and effective teaching and learning. The campuses are struggling because there are not enough lecturers. If the college experiences a decline in student enrolment, the teacher shortage will persist.*

Other participants explained that the PPN policy involves a detailed bureaucratic process for staffing. This means that multiple layers of administration are involved in determining how many lecturers are assigned to each college based on parameters like student enrolment, curriculum, and available resources.

Participant C1 confirmed that:

*The PPN involves bureaucratic processes that delay responding to the dynamic needs of TVET colleges. When there are sudden changes in enrolment or new programs being introduced, the policy's reliance on a structured, multi-layered approval system can slow down the allocation of lecturers.*

#### 6.4.7.2. Insufficient Academic Support

During the interviews, three (3) participants explained that students need varying degrees of academic support depending on the starting point of their educational career at the college. This is mainly because of each student's unique circumstances, which may include personal health, disability, challenges at home, and diagnosis of special educational needs that limit their capacity to participate in their academic studies fully. The views and opinions of the participants indicated that TVET students did not receive enough academic support to reach a successful outcome. The TVET colleges fall short when offering remedial programmes, tutoring, and mentoring, all essential for assisting students in succeeding academically, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds. Employability is also impacted by inadequate career counselling and job placement services for graduates.

Participant D1 stated that:

*Many students drop out of college yearly without completing their National Certificate (Vocational) Programmes NC(V) or National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) courses. The TVET students are driven out of the*

*system because our colleges do not have proper academic support. The government has not yet facilitated programmes and resources to support TVET students academically.*

Participant M2 explained that:

*Students enter TVET colleges unprepared for them to achieve great results. They rely more on academic support, which is absent in our colleges, and the DHET is solely to blame for the lack of comprehensive academic help for students who need it. We are performing poorly because the students are not supported to reach out their full potential.*

Participant M3 voiced that:

*There are no writing centres at colleges to help students with assignment writing, and what makes it even worse the library does not exist at our college.*

Participant C3 reported that:

*Our college students come from rural areas where English is not their home language. These students struggle to understand the content of the courses because of the language barrier. We do not have any support system to help them improve their language.*

#### 6.4.7.3. Extensive Absenteeism

One of the most significant issues TVET colleges face is student absenteeism, particularly with respect to instruction, learning, and academic performance. High absenteeism rates in TVET colleges harm employability outcomes, student retention rates, and academic performance. Whatever the reason for the absence, personal, societal, or institutional, it undercuts the primary goal of TVET programmes: to provide students with real-world, industry-relevant skills and competencies. The participants mentioned that extensive absenteeism is a factor that affects the student's performance, and this is a major impediment to TVET institutions accomplishing their goals. The responses of the participants revealed that despite the laws and regulations put in place to prevent absenteeism, the number of absentee students, particularly those who obtain college bursaries, is rising each year.

Participant C3 reported that:

*TVET college students in South Africa are from disadvantaged backgrounds and face many difficulties, including socioeconomic issues. Dealing with teenage students in TVET colleges can be especially challenging, as many are already parents or heading families.*

Participant P2 stated that:

*There are always many unauthorised absences from class, including skipping lectures and missing certain times, which occurs when a student misses class without permission. We have also been aware that in certain households, parents frequently encourage their children to work overtime to supplement the family income, affecting the students and the college performance.*

Participant E1 indicated that:

*Personal problems that each student experiences have an impact on their attendance. These problems make students less motivated to attend class and negatively affect their academic achievement. We have students who have been at the college for years repeating subjects because they are vulnerable to non-attendance to classes, which leads them to failure.*

During the interviews, two (2) participants reported that peer pressure is another factor in absenteeism. Peers persuade students to join gangs and engage in bad behaviour while attending college. When pupils engage in unpleasant and unwanted aggressive behaviour, it becomes challenging. The lecturing staff at TVET colleges frequently come across pupils abusing drugs or other substances. These students typically miss their classes regularly.

Participant M2 explained that:

*Absentee students miss important workshop sessions, hands-on learning opportunities, and practical evaluations of theoretical knowledge. Due to the cumulative nature of many skills, students may find it more difficult to make up lost time, ultimately hindering their ability to satisfy minimal proficiency criteria. Prolonged absences cause the students to become disengaged from the educational process. Missing lessons make it difficult for students to comprehend the material, which causes confusion and frustration fully. Their motivation is badly impacted by this, which lowers their academic achievement.*

Participant P1 explained that:

*We are dealing with a few students who are not dedicated to studies and have a very hostile attitude; for instance, the number of cases we have of students who come to campuses to attend classes under the influence of alcohol and drugs has increased over the years. This not only impacts academic performance but also leads to health challenges.*

Participant D3 expressed that:

*After these students register, lecturers must follow up to implore them to turn in their assignments and responsibilities, even after explaining the repercussions.*

*As management, we have noticed that most students do not attend classes when they get NSFAS allowances. These students registered at the college because of NSFAS, but have no intention of completing the courses.*

#### 6.4.7.4. Inadequate Career Advice

During the interviews, the research participants indicated that the lack of career assistance from the outset leads to students making unsuitable career choices. The participants identified this as one of the leading causes for students not completing their selected courses in the TVET. A student's prospects of success at college and in their future careers are greatly influenced by their decision to choose a study route that aligns with their passion, purpose, and academic aptitude. To assist the student in making the best study decisions, students must gain a sufficient degree of self-awareness, as well as knowledge of the state of the profession.

Participant E2 explained that:

*One of the most prevalent problems at our college is undoubtedly a need for more career guidance, preventing the students from making better judgements for a prosperous future and making educated and realistic decisions about their future.*

Participant P2 stated that:

*The students make career decisions based on projected social and economic rewards without knowing their abilities and interests. Poor career guidance encourages poor performance because if you do a course in which you have no interest, you will produce poor academic results.*

Other participants reported that a major issue that substantially impacts student performance, retention, and employability outcomes in TVET colleges is the absence of academic support and career counselling. These support networks are critical in assisting students in making career options, supporting them throughout their educational path, and providing the tools by which they can excel academically.

Participant M3 reported that:

*To address poor performance in our colleges, the DHET needs to consider hiring experts to assist students in selecting courses that align with career paths. Due to their low educational backgrounds, TVET students lack prior knowledge, particularly in basic areas like maths, science, and language. When students lack access to academic support services like mentoring, remedial*

*classes, or tutoring, they find it difficult to stay up to date with the content and perform poorly academically.*

Participant E2 stated that:

*Our college administration structure must include career counsellors; students are not offered emotional and mental support during difficult periods. Colleges use the assessment to encourage students to enrol. The colleges do not provide any career counselling sessions. The policy stipulates that Student Support Services (SSS) must offer career guidance, but the human capacity to handle such activities is unavailable to assist the students.*

Participant D1 explained that:

*Unresolved academic issues in our college have led to exam failure or late coursework completion for students. If students do not have access to educational support programmes, many students give up and leave the college before earning their N6 and NCV Level 4. We do not have structures to handle the support services in the TVET sector, and the government has failed to address this challenge.*

#### 6.4.7.5. Lack of Library Facilities

During the interviews, the participants reported that the inadequate library infrastructure within TVET colleges seriously impedes student performance. This makes it more difficult for students to navigate and locate the required information, which could affect their learning process. Academic achievement is high in TVET colleges with well-functioning library systems. Education needs to be guided, driven, accepted, and encouraged outside of the classroom, and the availability of a library is quite helpful in this regard. The views and opinions of the research participants revealed that the absence of library facilities in the TVET colleges is causing a significant learning barrier.

The participants from College C reported that there was no library structure in their college.

Participant C3 expressed that:

*I feel very embarrassed to mention that we do not have a library in our college. Our students use the public library, which does not provide them with proper resources. Yet, we expect them to perform outstandingly. The absence of a library denies students the opportunity to access regular readings and is the cause of poor academic performance. Access to academic journals, e-books, and online databases is essential for study in the modern digital age. The lack of library services frequently results in restricted access to these digital*

*resources, making it more difficult for students to finish projects and assignments.*

Participant M3 stated that:

*None of our campuses have a library structure, and the library services at the college do not exist. Learning only takes place in classrooms. Libraries are study areas that encourage involvement and curiosity in the arts. Without a library, students would not have as many opportunities to research subjects they are interested in, which lowers their desire to learn and perform well.*

Participant D3 expressed that:

*The government has yet to realise the need to improve the library provision and facilities in the TVET sector. Our college attracts students from previously-disadvantaged rural areas where they have never seen a library in their schools. Joining a college with no library is a challenge to their academic performance.*

The participants from College B indicated that they have one library in their college. However, the library is not in good condition for studying, and the students occupy the library while waiting for lecturers. The geographical locations of the campuses make it difficult for other students attending remote campuses to use the library.

Participant P2 mentioned that:

*Our college library needs to be up to a better standard; there are no facilities such as computers, learning and reading resources. It is currently not serving the purpose. The DHET is aware of the situation in our college; we have requested that they provide a library structure with a big space to create a conducive environment for students' extra learning. But we do not know what is causing the delays because it has been years.*

Participant C2 stated that:

*Our library is very small and cannot accommodate all the activities or services students should get when attending a library. A librarian also does not have the necessary resources to assist the students needing library services. It is very sad to mention that out of eight campuses, only one campus has access to a library, which is also dysfunctional because there are no resources.*

A participant from College A indicated that the college has a library structure that is large enough in size. Yet, the library was detrimentally impacted by its lack of maintenance. The TVET colleges have limited funding; hence, they put the demands of students' immediate

education ahead of library upkeep. This leads to a lack of money for maintenance, repairs, and the purchase of resources.

Participant P1 reported that:

*The library at the college used to be in good condition, but it was destroyed because of a lack of maintenance; we had previously been exposed to fraud and corruption. The money that was intended for infrastructure maintenance and renovations was misused. The performance of our college is poor because the library facilities are in a bad state. When you walk inside the library, there is absolutely nothing.*

Participant D1 expressed that:

*Our college strategic strategy does not give libraries first priority. Management has neglected the maintenance of library facilities in favour of other educational facets, such as workshops or classrooms. We have raised the issue of the library for years, but it is possible that the DHET does not invest in library resources because they do not completely comprehend the critical role that well-maintained library services play in student success.*

#### 6.4.7.6. Lack of Resources

During the interviews, the participants acknowledged that one of the largest problems students face daily in the TVET sector is the need for more resources. The participants expressed concern about the college's lack of resources for teaching and learning. They reported that the study materials, including textbooks, were not delivered on time to the college. This causes a significant challenge for lecturers and students because sometimes TVET students must write tests without access to dependable and current textbooks for the modules they are registered for since the textbooks are not delivered on time. The resources available at the campus libraries pertinent to their studies are inadequate and these are identified as major factors contributing to poor performance.

Participant P2 stated that:

*The colleges are experiencing a huge crisis in resources for teaching and learning, which negatively impacts the quality of education students receive. To be honest, the government makes provisions for financial resources to procure resources, but the college mismanagement results in these funds being used inappropriately.*

Participant M1 reported that:

*Textbooks are extremely valuable since they offer clarification on fundamental ideas and information. The calibre of textbooks directly impacts the calibre of the educational system. Regardless of how often we raise the issue of delays in receiving books and their impact on learning, the management fails to address the challenge. At the campus level, we must deal with problems with students.*

Three (3) participants reported that the lack of physical equipment needed in the classroom in TVET colleges is another factor that affects teaching and learning. The participants cited that the classrooms in the TVET are not equipped with proper materials.

Participant E1 reported that:

*At the college, we have an issue with the lack of equipment necessary for the classroom, which lowers student morale and increases inequality. Sadly, our classrooms do not have enough chairs and tables to accommodate the students registered for the course. Even the lecturers are not provided with suitable furniture. They must use broken chairs, which not only affects teaching but also has health and safety concerns.*

Participant M2 stated that:

*I know a classroom should be equipped with projectors to allow the lecturers to share slides with the students, but none of our classes have projectors. This forces the lecturers to use the same method for teaching and learning, and what about those students who better understand the content when they visualise the learning? The TVET colleges are still way behind in providing resources.*

## **6.5. FOCUS GROUP DATA PRESENTATION**

The data presented in this section was collected through focus group discussion. In each college, a researcher conducted a focus group with a maximum of twelve (12) participants who are members of the SRC structure. Some thirty-six (36) SRC members willingly took part in this study from the Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET colleges. The focus group discussions took place on different dates, and each college had its own venue and date for the debate. Annexures K, L, and M, provide detailed information used to recruit the participants. During the interview sessions, the researcher had to ensure that research ethics were rigorously applied to maintain a high standard of confidentiality and anonymity. Each participant signed a consent form, and instead of real names, codes were given to each SRC member, ranging from SR1 to SR24. The data presented provides two sections. The first

section focuses on the biographical data, and the other section focuses on the data presentation generated by themes.

### 6.5.1. Demographical Data of SRC Participants

The demographical data of the SRC members consists of biographical information that was collected from each of the participants. During the focus group session, the participants were requested to provide information regarding their age, gender, racial group, and courses or programmes they were registered in at their respective colleges. This data contained all three focus group discussions in each college. During the interaction with the participants, the researcher requested each participant to provide basic information on the consent form, which contained biographical data as provided in Annexure J, Sec. A. Table 6.11 provides an overview of the themes generated from the focus group discussions.

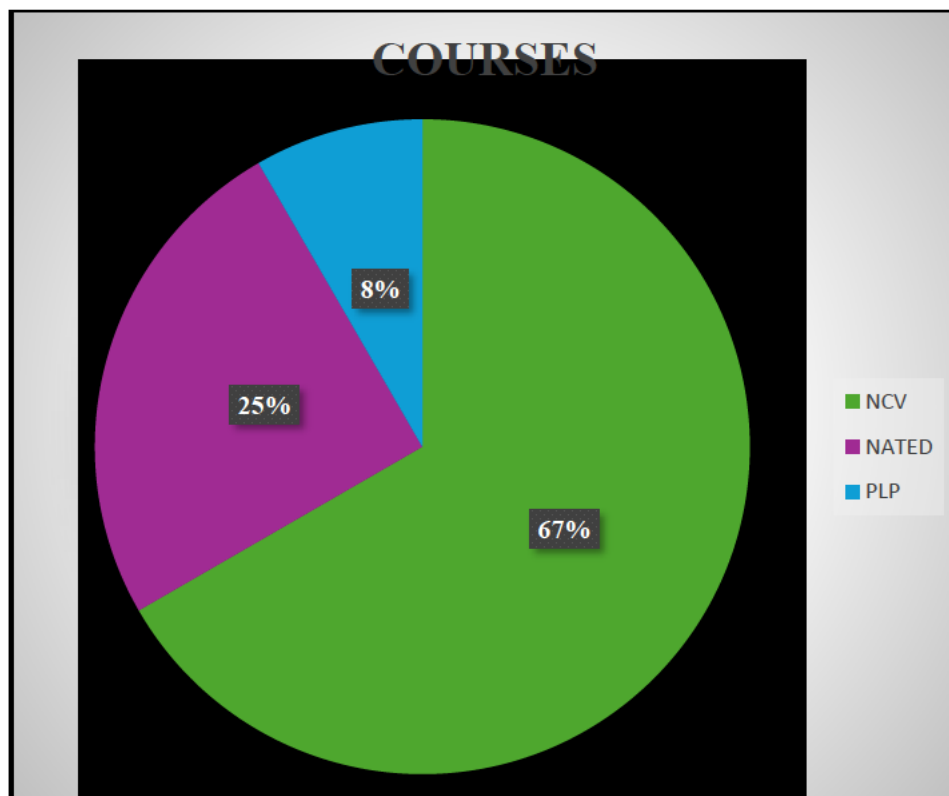
**Table 6.11. Themes Generated from a Focus Group Discussion**

Research Sub-questions	Generated Themes	Sub-themes
What factors impact the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal?	6.5.2. Reason for choosing a TVET college.	-
	6.5.3. Perception of the TVET colleges.	
What is the effectiveness of leadership in ensuring TVET management is supported by implementing managerial functions?	6.5.4. Working relations between SRC and management structure.	-
What challenges do the TVET colleges face and their impact on leadership and management structure.	6.5.6. Challenges faced by the TVET colleges.	6.5.6.1. Learning resources.
		6.5.6.2. Financial constraints.
		6.5.6.3. Infrastructure and facilities.
		6.5.6.4. Lack of technology.

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 6.5.1.1. Courses or Programmes Enrolled by SRC Participants

The data gathered from the SRC members, as presented in Figure 6.53, revealed that the highest number of the participants, sixteen (16) (67%), are enrolled in National Certificate (Vocational) (NCV) programmes. The NCV courses offered in the TVET colleges are optional for students to complete Grades 10 through 12, but the student must meet specific requirements to be awarded NCV Levels 2 and 3. Completing NCV Level 3 enables the TVET learner to be awarded NQF Level 4 certificates, equivalent to the National Senior Certificate. A total of six (6) (25%) of the participants confirmed doing the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) programmes. The NATED programme is intended for students who wish to advance their competencies in a particular occupational or vocational field and are exceptionally competent (DHET, 2023b:25). The lowest number, two (2) (8%), are participants doing the Pre-Vocational Learning Programme (PLP), which is a bridging course for entry into NCV programmes.

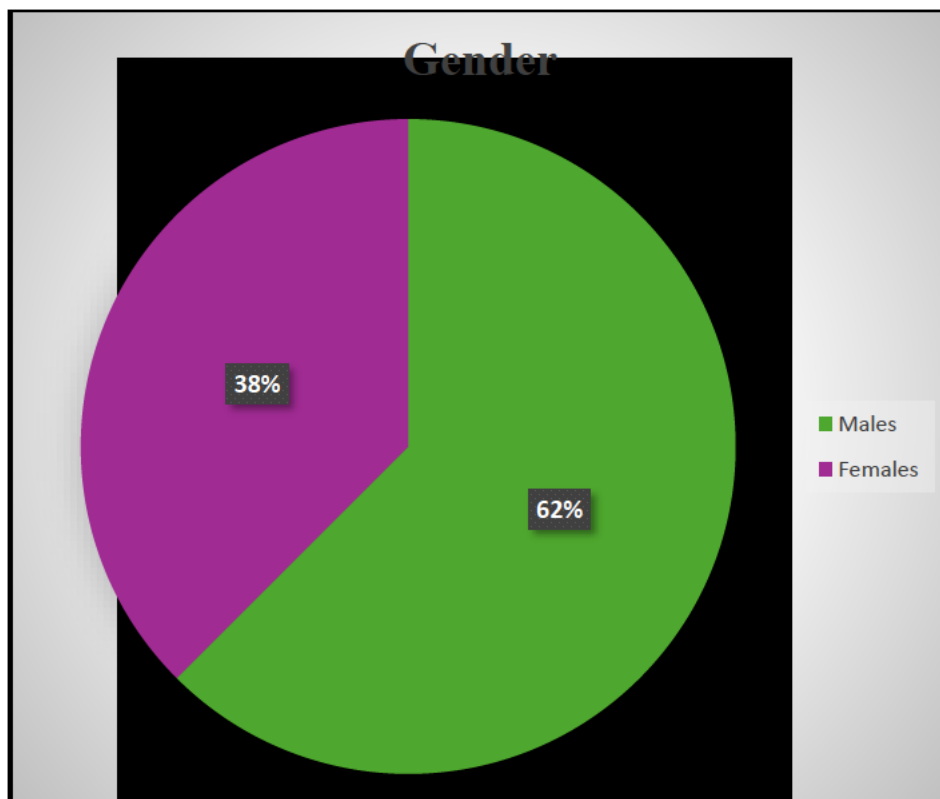


**Figure 6.53. Courses or Programmes by SRC Participants**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 6.5.1.2. Gender Distribution of SRC Participants

Figure 6.54 depicts the gender distribution of the participants serving within Student Representative Council (SRC) structures. The data revealed that the majority of the SRC participants are male, (15) (62%). At the same time, only nine (9) (38%) females are represented in SRC structures. This is mainly because SRC members are elected democratically by the students from the colleges they are registered in that particular year to serve. Depending on the annually-held SRC elections, the gender distribution changes as new members are appointed depending on the political party that succeeds in the elections.



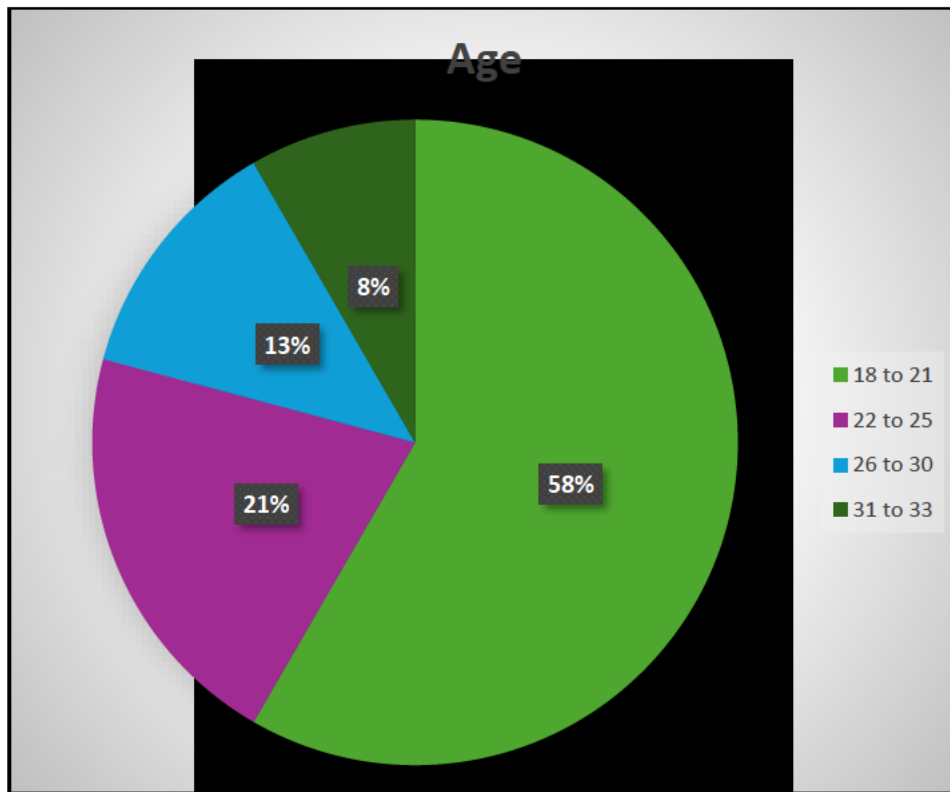
**Figure 6.54. Gender Distribution of SRC Participants**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 6.5.1.3. Age Distribution of SRC Participants

Figure 6.55 displays the data with respect to the age distribution of SRC participants taking part in the study. The highest age group was 18–21. A total of fourteen (14) 58% students were born between 2003 and 2006 who were elected into SRC positions. The second highest

age group was 22–25, which accounts for five (5) 21% of the population. The data revealed that most of the students who were elected to the SRCs in the TVET colleges in the study were below the age of 25. The lowest age group was 31–33 two (2) (8%), followed by three (3) (13%) in the age group 26–30. The reason behind these results is that most students are from the younger generation who have completed Grade 9 and have decided to study in the TVET colleges and register for NCV courses.

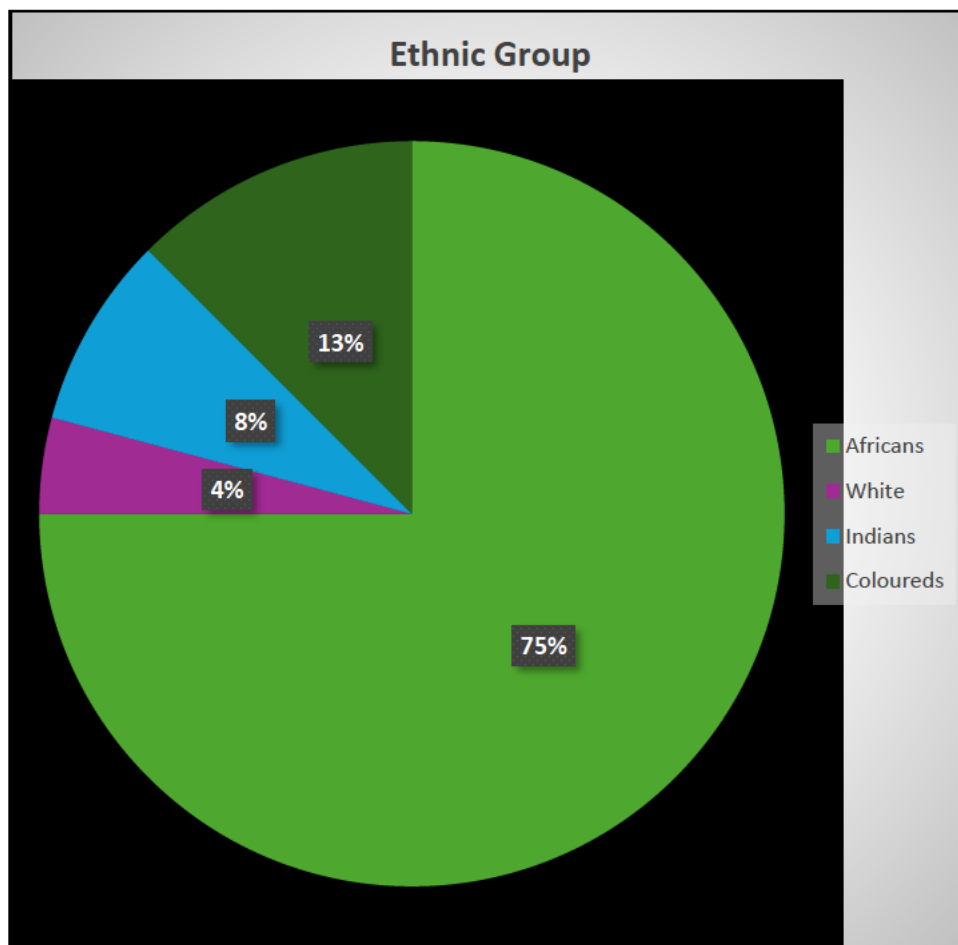


**Figure 6.55. Age Distribution of SRC Participants**

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### 6.5.1.4. Ethnic Group of SRC Members

Figure 6.56 displays data of the ethnic group of the SRC participants. The data indicates that the highest racial group is African, eighteen (18) (75%). The Coloured ethnic group follows this, with three (3) (13%) in total. The lowest racial group, the White ethnic group represented by only one participant (1) (4%), while the second lowest is the Indian ethnic group, represented by two participants (2) (8%). This data reveals that more Africans prefer to study in TVET colleges and are highly expressed in SRC structures. This is mainly because most TVET college campuses are in townships and rural areas.



**Figure 6.56 SRC Ethnic Group**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 6.5.2. Reasons for Choosing to Pursue Enrolment at a TVET College

The Literature Review in Chapter Two of this study revealed that the South African government established Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in response to the country's need for more specific skills. These institutions sought to increase the availability of recognised vocational training, particularly for formerly under-represented populations. The TVET programmes are designed to meet these demands and advance the nation's economic, social, civic, and personal growth. Their goal is to equip individuals with high-level to intermediate abilities that will serve as a basis for further study, ease the transfer from school to the workplace, and foster the growth of independent lifelong learners (Sebola, 2022). There are fifty (50) registered and accredited public TVET colleges in South Africa,

operating from approximately 364 campuses spread across the rural and urban areas of the country (DHET, 2023a). These colleges in South Africa can accommodate about 2.5 million students, but present enrolment is below half a million.

During the focus group discussions, the research participants were asked to respond to why they selected or opted to study at public TVET colleges. There were mixed responses during the ensuing discussions, some positive, others negative. A few participants showed enthusiasm for TVET colleges as a possible alternative for pursuing a post-Grade 12 education. The participants indicated that their choice for studying at a TVET college was motivated by the opportunities it provided for them to advance their skills and knowledge through vocational training courses.

The participants SR3 stated:

*I chose to study at TVET because I desired to do something very close to manual work; when I was doing matric, I heard about the opportunities to study in TVET colleges on TV and did my own research about the courses offered that related to my interests and went there and applied.*

Participants SR7 reported:

*I finished matric, and I was lucky to get a permanent job, but after some time, I wanted to go back and study while working, and I found out that TVET college has a course that I like, a Diploma in Management, which is only one and half years in duration. My employer supported my choice and gave me a long leave to study. I am doing my final semester N6 and being in college has given me opportunities.*

Participant SR7 expressed that:

*I have heard that they have real-world experience. You are expected to conduct a practical experience as part of the courses registered, which provides job employment opportunities.*

Participant SR21 stated that:

*I chose a TVET College because I did not want to spend three or four years doing a qualification; I was more interested in doing short courses.*

Participant SR16 indicated that:

*I aspired for a brighter future for myself and my children as they grew and we struggled, so I decided to take a course which is related to my talent as I am good at plumbing.*

More participants expressed their opinion that studying at a TVET college was not an option for them because the colleges offered very limited courses and careers. The responses of these participants revealed that they considered taking a course at a TVET college after they had been declined entry to traditional universities because of the minimum entrance required by universities. The responses were as follows:

Participant SR1 express that:

*Studying at TVET was not an option for me I always dreamt of going to a university, but my matric results were not impressive, and I was rejected after applying.*

Participant SR2 also agreed:

*I did not meet the minimum requirement for university, and because of the fear of not doing anything for the whole year, I took any course available at the college.*

Participant SR5 stated that:

*I have never imagined myself as a TVET student. I only took a course when a friend told me that her college was looking for students after DUT rejected me because of my matric results.*

Participant SR12 disclosed that:

*I did not want to pursue a career at a TVET college; it was never my first choice. I enrolled because my sister was getting a monthly allowance but had no passion for attending a TVET college.*

Participant SR11 reported that:

*I did not want to become a TVET student, but circumstances led me to the college. Yet, it was never an option. I have always dreamed of earning a degree and furthering my studies to attain post-graduate qualifications not offered at the TVET college. The only thing you get is N6, which is even difficult to get accreditation at the university; I was told that I would have to start in first year to get into the university.*

Two (2) participants reported that although they met the minimum entry requirement at their university of choice during registration, they were denied entry even though they were accepted

because the courses were already full. These two participants decided to take classes in the second semester at TVET colleges.

Participant SR23 disclosed that:

*I was accepted at the university but was denied registration because the university had many students who applied for my course. I decided to register for the second semester at this college rather than being at home for the whole year.*

Participant SR8 explained that:

*I applied at the university, and all the requirements were met, but my application status was pending until registrations were closed. My mother, who works in one of the TVET colleges, convinced me to take an engineering course.*

### **6.5.3. The Perception of TVET Colleges**

TVET college programmes are designed to meet skills demands and advance the nation's economic, social, civic, and personal growth. Their goal is to equip individuals with high-level to intermediate abilities that will serve as a basis for further study, ease the transfer from school to the workplace, and foster the growth of independent lifelong learners (Sebola, 2022). The literature exposed a dearth of knowledge on TVET colleges; many have avoided these establishments that grant credentials for practical trades, believing that helping students pursue a vocational path would only set them up for failure.

Unlike other educational institutions, TVET colleges usually have a bad reputation. The low academic prospects for advancement and lack of prestige of TVET colleges has led many parents and guardians to discourage and even forbid their children from enrolling in their programmes. Over the years, the TVET college has been defined on the African Continent. This issue has impacted the TVET enrolment. During the interviews, the SRC participants were asked to share their views about TVET colleges and if they could recommend people to pursue a qualification through them. Most participants shared a negative view of TVET colleges in South Africa and said they would not recommend them.

Participant SR22 expressed that:

*I am constantly compared to my siblings who qualified to get an entry at the university; I have accepted that if I had worked very hard when I was in matric,*

*I would have the same status as those who attended the university doing diplomas and degrees unlike me who is doing a certificate.*

Participant SR3 stated that:

*We do not enjoy the same status as university students, although we are told we are part of higher education. The student who attends a university is well respected in my community. We are indeed viewed as failures because we could not secure a space at the university.*

Participant SR14 explained that:

*The academic progression at a TVET college is very low; imagine you are expected to obtain a 40% pass rate for our modules. What does it tell us about the quality of education? It is poor. It is even worse that some students cannot complete their qualifications.*

Participants SR8 asserted that:

*TVET colleges are not attractive at all, and the conditions that we must learn under and endure are very disgusting; when you look around, the resources are poor, and even study materials are unavailable, but we are expected to produce good academic results.*

Participant SR21 reported that:

*The people in our communities continue to believe that TVET is only for students who did poorly in school; in the meantime, success in maths and science are prerequisites for entering a field like engineering, which I am currently doing. Thus, one of the major plots is how the TVET is seen.*

#### **6.5.4. The Tasks and Responsibilities of the SRC Structure**

The highest decision-making body in student government is the Student Representative Council (SRC), which is tasked with advocating for the needs of students, encouraging student leadership, and facilitating student involvement (RSA, 1998). The SRC serves as a conduit for student input and a voice for the college administration. The tasks and responsibilities of the SRC is to participate in the institutional decision-making framework through governance (DHET, 2019). It provides guidance and assistance in providing successful and efficient student support services and overseeing students' participation at various levels. The participants in the focus group discussion were questioned about the tasks and responsibilities of the SRC, and the researcher was interested in finding out if the SRC participants understood their responsibilities. Most of the participants shared their views without difficulty reporting

that the SRC is a statutory structure as provided for in the CET Act. The participants were able to engage in the discussion and appeared to have an understanding of the tasks and responsibilities of the SRC. The responses of the research participants were as follows:

Participant SR19 reported that:

*The SRC acts as a liaison between the student body and the college management. The work of the SRC is to guarantee the success of student affairs on TVET campuses.*

Participant SR22 expressed that:

*As a member of the SRC, part of our responsibility is to oversee a range of initiatives. We oversee and organise various events; in addition, we arrange for the establishment of student organisations, groups, and clubs to improve the student environment within the college.*

Participant SR7 asserted that:

*One of our primary responsibilities is to communicate the concerns of students to the college management and guarantee that their demands are recognised.*

Participants SR11 reported that:

*We have our own SRC Constitution, which stipulates our responsibilities as the highest authoritative body in the student community. We exist as an entity with the powers delegated by our respective college council.*

Other participants reported that the tasks and responsibilities of the SRCs are stipulated according to the legislation. Yet, in practice, the SRCs in most colleges face challenges in executing its tasks and responsibilities because of limited resources.

Participant SR1 stated that:

*The legislation stipulates that a budget for the SRC should be set aside to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of SRC are carried out effectively. We have enquired from the college principal about the availability of funds for the SRC, but we were told there was no money.*

Participant SR16 expressed that:

*We travel across the campuses within our college, and at the same time, we are expected to use our own money to travel. Even attending meetings and obtaining transport is a challenge.*

Participant SR9 reported that:

*Our duties as SRC are to create a conducive environment for students' engagement in activities, meaning that we have a mandate to coordinate sports activities and support student societies. Yet, a lack of resources, especially funds, prevents us from executing our duties effectively.*

#### **6.5.5. Working Relations between the SRC and Management**

The literature on student governance demonstrates that the SRCs remain a significant global stakeholder in educational settings and oversee student government. During the discussion, the SRC participants were asked to share their thoughts and experiences about their working relationship with college management. The responses shared presented a very negative picture. The participants revealed that the rise of student protests at the TVET colleges resulted from poor working relationships between management and the SRCs. The participants further stated that the working relations between the SRCs and college management structures have been affected by unethical behaviour, poor communication, lack of conflict resolutions, and poor cooperation.

Participant SR13 explained that:

*We are responsible for liaising with management about any matters concerning the students, but how can we achieve that if we are expected to work with management that does not listen to or communicate with us? The management speaks with us in a very disrespected manner. They forget that we are human beings and deserve to be respected.*

Participant SR4 expressed that:

*The SRC is a stakeholder, and the decisions that affect us as students should be involved at the beginning to enable us to perform our duties effectively, but this does not happen at our TVET college. We only start participating in council meetings towards the end of the first semester when several meetings have already occurred.*

Participant SR23 stated that:

*Respect is a cornerstone of good governance and cooperation amongst us, the SRC, and our college management. We find ourselves in conflict with college management because they always reject us when raising challenges, and we are always perceived as enjoying organising protests. We work against each other instead of building up the college and creating resolutions.*

The SRC participants expressed that their TVET colleges have been experiencing more student protests because of misunderstandings and the failure of college management to implement measures to resolve conflicts before they become unmanageable.

Participant SR8 stated that:

*As SRC members, we are always excited to bring issues to the management table, hoping that measures can be taken to address them. However, our college management is always dismissive and does not want to deal with issues that affect student morale.*

Participant SR24 stated that:

*We are experiencing prolonged and unresolved issues because we have weak management that cannot resolve them. The only way they start to attend to the challenges is when we shut down the college.*

Participant SR17 explained that:

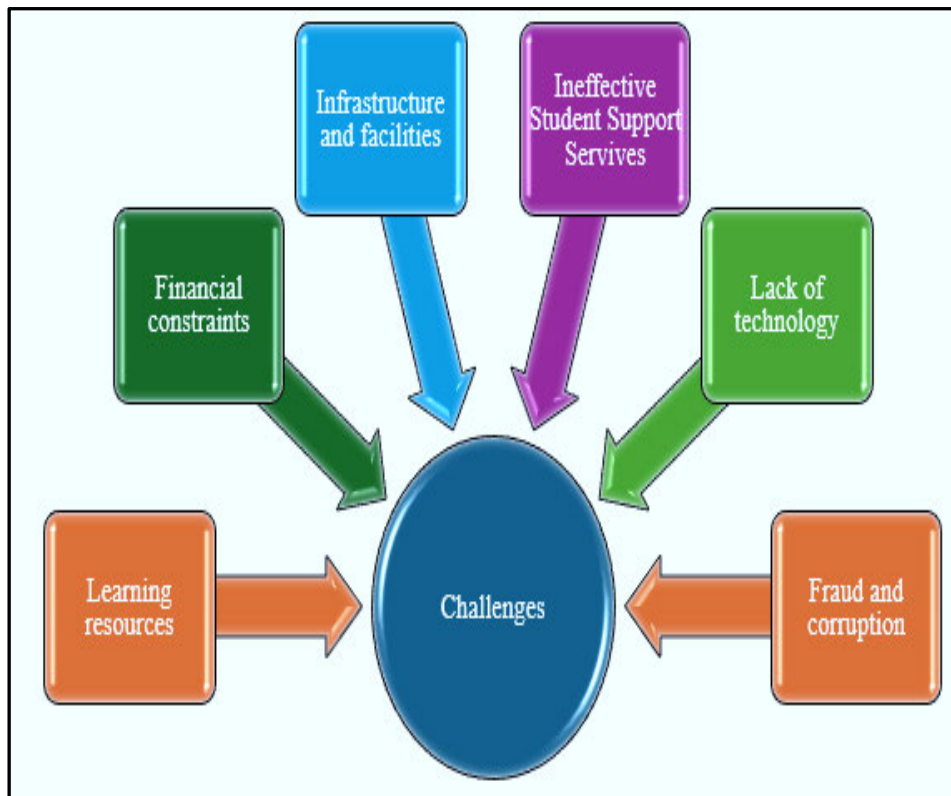
*As SRC members, we have a challenge that has destroyed the college's working relationship with management. Working with a management that does not value collaboration is difficult, leading to frustrations for us as students.*

Participant SR2 explained that there are policies that guide numerous processes that occur in the operation of the TVET college. The students must abide by the Code of Conduct to preserve discipline, and if students are disruptive, they must face consequences from the disciplinary committee. The SRC participants also stated that the rights of students should not affect and cause damage to the college infrastructure and facilities. However, during the protests, some students did inappropriate things that were against the Code of Conduct of the TVET colleges.

#### **6.5.6. Challenges Faced by Students at TVET Colleges**

Aside from misguided public perceptions, the TVET college sector faces challenges worldwide, particularly in developing countries. These include inadequate funding, subpar curricula, outdated training tools, outdated teaching and learning materials, inappropriate delivery strategies, and teaching staff who lack the requisite credentials (Sibiya, 2024). Other issues include understaffed administrative offices and understocked libraries. Teaching and learning are adversely affected by the difficulties encountered in the TVET sector. During the focus group discussion, the researcher asked about the challenges presented in the TVET colleges that affect teaching and learning. Each participant raised significant challenges, which

the researcher already observed as associated with resources, facilities, and infrastructure. South African TVET students encounter various difficulties that negatively affect their general experience and academic achievement. Figure 6.57 depicts a summary of the challenges faced by students at TVET colleges that the participants pointed out during the discussion. The views and opinions of the participants from all three colleges regarding these challenges were similar in content.



**Figure 6.57. Challenges faced by Students at TVET Colleges**

Source: Researcher (2024)

#### 6.5.6.1. Learning Resources

The participants indicated that the resources for teaching and learning are one of the most enormous problems students face daily at their colleges, namely an inadequate supply of learning resources. They confirmed that the college had insufficient resources for instruction and learning and that the textbooks have yet to be received. The participants from all three colleges reported that they had completed their final examinations without using trustworthy resources such as study guides and other relevant sources of learning. The resources available at college libraries must be more adequate to help learners with informational resources

pertinent to their coursework. In support of this, the research participants stated that the management structure was ineffective in resolving these issues:

Participant SR3 indicated that:

*Textbooks are essential resources because they cover the whole curriculum in simple language, which helps us to understand the modules better and improve our pass rate. In my college, we do not receive textbooks on time. Sometimes, we even start assessment tests without holding a textbook.*

Participation SR12 reported that:

*I did not do well in my previous academic semester because I did not receive the textbooks even though my funding covered tuition and books.*

Participants SR21 explained that:

*The issue of textbooks in our college has been an ongoing problem that management struggles to deal with. When raising this issue, we are told that the lack of textbooks in the college is caused by the students who do not return their textbooks. This is an excuse because when a student receives funding, it covers the textbooks for each student.*

#### 6.5.6.2. Financial Constraints

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), which provides loans and bursaries to students in South Africa, has been heavily criticised for failing to keep up with the increasing demand, being allegedly mismanaged and corrupt, and having problems with its systems (Albertus & Makoza, 2025). The participants indicated that almost 90% of students in their colleges are funded by NSFAS for transport, tuition, allowance, and accommodation. During the discussion, the participants confirmed that the students are experiencing challenges with receiving funds allocated to them by NSFAS. Participant SR35 stated that most students attending TVET colleges come from disadvantaged backgrounds but nevertheless strive to succeed despite experiencing financial hardships. These students depend greatly on NSFAS funding to survive in higher education, which is challenging. The views and opinions shared by the participants revealed that the students face financial constraints because of NSFAS.

Given that the majority of TVET students rely solely on NSFAS financial aid for enrolment and college attendance, the participants noted that overdue student allowance payments have

become the norm and that this is a significant factor in the substantial percentage of student dropouts that occur within the first two months of each academic year.

Participant SR13 explained that:

*I am always concerned about the impending NSFAS application process because when making an application, I feel bothered when you are bound to experience unnecessary delays, resulting in late payment.*

Participant SR9 expressed that:

*I have been in the college for years. For the first three years, I was doing NCV, and now it is my fifth year doing N6. Every year we face the same issue with NSFAS, and I believe that the flaws that have plagued the system will persist, jeopardising the student's rights to receive financial help for their education.*

Participant SR22 stated that:

*My NSFAS application was rejected. I was expected to make an appeal using an online system, and I can assure you that the process takes ages for a student to receive feedback, or one's application to be evaluated.*

Participant SR8 reported that:

*I missed a year because my NSFAS application was not approved despite having both death certificates of my parents. I appealed, and the process frustrated me to the extent that I had depression. Coming from a family where we rely only on our grandmother's pension, it isn't easy to survive in urban areas. I was kicked out of the accommodation because of non-payment.*

Two participants acknowledged that the government has made improvements to the system to address the NSFAS challenges experienced by students attending TVET colleges. The participants indicated that previously, for years, the funding, including allowances, tuition, and textbooks, had been paid into the college accounts, which were responsible for depositing the funds into the student's account. This system was characterised by fraud, corruption, and lack of accountability.

Participant SR8 reported that:

*The new system that has been recently adopted in the TVET colleges by NSFAS has made a significant improvement. Although challenges are still experienced as students, we now have more visibility and control over money because it is deposited directly in our accounts by NSFAS. We are now able to manage and keep an eye on our spending.*

Participant SR24 explained that:

*The direct payments have lessened the financial mismanagement and fraud that was very high in our college. Previously, more people handled our money, which provided opportunities for corrupt officials to steal the money. Many beneficiaries needed to receive the money.*

The participants also expressed the view that the other challenge that TVET college students face is that some students drop out without any valid reason, especially once the NSFAS has approved funding and made a lump sum deposit in their accounts. This deprived other students who need funding and had a high potential of succeeding.

Participant SR7 indicated that:

*The students are also a challenge to the government; we have records of the students who dropped out without even getting to the examination stage. The funds that should benefit those hungry for education end up being allocated to those who registered at the college because they want only the money.*

Participant SR15 stated that:

*Some students misuse NSFAS funds; they vanish until the next pay out once they receive it. They regard NSFAS as a means of surviving financially.*

Other participants reported that students become so irate over the arbitrary disparity in NSFAS allocation between first-year university students and entry-level TVET college students that they consider switching careers. The participants mentioned that the resources allocated for university students are much better than those assigned to TVET students.

Participant SR14 expressed that:

*I honestly feel that NSFAS treats us, the TVET students, unfairly because the resources allocated to university students are not the same as us. The first-year students at university receive laptops, while the first-year students at a TVET college do not enjoy the same privilege. I will move to a university after I finish NCV Level 4.*

Participant SR8 reported that:

*The allocation of study materials such as textbooks is paid to the college accounts, and we collect the books from the college, which is always a problem when they have to issue us books. At university, the students can buy the books in shops. Unlike us, who wait months to get books, they can obtain study*

*materials quickly. We are part of the DHET and funded by the same institutions, but resources are distributed unfairly.*

Participant SR11 expressed that:

*We are encouraged to consider the TVET college as our first option, but the truth must be told: our government is mistreating us.*

#### 6.5.6.3. Infrastructure and Facilities

Practical training and learning programmes depend on the TVET facilities and equipment being maintained to a high standard. Given the training and skills TVET colleges offer, modern and up-to-date equipment and workshops are essential. The literature review, Sec. 4.7, noted the need for advanced technology. Yet, old equipment and poor conditions are just a few of the infrastructure problems plaguing many TVET institutions globally, making it challenging to offer practical training that satisfies industry standards (Powell, Muronda, & Tini, 2024). The researcher conducted observations of all three TVET college infrastructures and facilities to assess whether the colleges have the necessary facilities for teaching and learning. As illustrated in Sec. 6.3, the college's infrastructure and facilities in all three colleges are poor, and some colleges do not meet the required standards for promoting quality education. However, inadequate infrastructure includes poor classrooms, workshops, sports grounds, sanitation facilities, and other damaged college amenities. These infrastructural issues in TVET colleges impact academic achievement and violate learners' and educators' entitlements to education, safety, and health.

During the focus group discussions, the participants were asked to provide information about the status of the infrastructure and facilities within their TVET college. The researcher had already obtained data on the quality and status of the infrastructure and facilities but was more interested in getting the views and opinions of the participants. In particular, the researcher was interested in how TVET college students cope with the conditions. The participants reported that TVET colleges are battling with poor infrastructure and facilities. The three colleges face similar challenges regarding infrastructure and facilities, although others are in better condition. The responses were as follows:

Participant SR4 reported that:

*In our college, we use classrooms that are very small and meant to hold forty students, but since there are more of us than that, we are obliged to share desks. This makes it difficult for us to learn in that environment because we are squashed together.*

Participant SR11 stated that:

*We used classrooms with broken windows; the management knows the conditions, but it has been a while since everything has been done for years. Our manager deals with infrastructure and facilities but is getting paid for nothing.*

Participant SR15 expressed that:

*The classrooms at the college need to be better maintained; the floors are cracked, and I have been using these classrooms for years. We always return, hoping it will be fixed, but we are still waiting for something to be done. Recently, a classmate fell and got injured because of the cracked floor.*

Participant SR2 explained that:

*The classrooms at the college are not friendly to students with disability; we have a student in the course who is struggling with climbing stairs and dependent on friends to carry him to upstairs classes. When those friends are not attending, he ends up missing classes. We have been fighting with management to adopt measures to create a conducive.*

These responses suggest that management needs to pay more attention to ensuring that the colleges' infrastructure is maintained and repaired. This not only affects teaching and learning but also poses a risk to the students. The participants doing courses that require practical learning explained that practical skills are essential to take place in laboratories or workshops. Most vocational and technical courses that require high-tech infrastructure are hampered by the sluggish rate of learning infrastructure improvement. This has far-reaching adverse effects on student performance and the industry's reputation. The participant SR7 stated the following:

*Our colleges lack the modern tools and machinery necessary for practical training. As students enrolled in particular courses we often expected to learn technical skills without access to functional and industry-standard equipment. As you can see, we have outdated equipment that does not align with what is used in the real workplace, and this makes it difficult to transition into employment effectively. Other workshops does not even meet health and safety standards because of poor maintenance*

#### 6.5.6.4. Ineffective Student Support Services

The students entering the TVET college sector mainly come from underprivileged backgrounds and are first-time post-secondary school learners. It is, therefore, essential to offer sufficient assistance so that students can adjust to the rigours of college life, particularly the curricula. The TVET colleges have been offering Student Support Services (SSS); however, because of the frequent student protests that primarily impact the industry because of allowance disbursement, the focus has been directed towards bursary management. During the discussion, the participants reported that the SSS is not implemented effectively as aligned with the policy, which prescribes the activities that should be adopted to improve the student's well-being in the college, including those with disability.

Participant SR5 explained that:

*The SSS needs to be better implemented at the college, and there needs to be more support. Student Support Services (SSS) comprise of three core pillars: pre-entry, on-course, and exit support. I am about to leave college but have struggled with academic or personal support. The college has failed to coordinate the SSS activities to ensure a conducive environment.*

Participant SR13 expressed that:

*When I joined the college, I did not receive any career counselling and orientation to ensure I became familiar with the college environment.*

Students with disabilities should receive sufficient accommodations and support in our TVET colleges equipped with the required resources (DHET, 2020b). Electronic devices and infrastructure must be provided to assist students with their unique needs. Most TVET students reported that the colleges do not have an adequate support system for students with disability and that the facilities and infrastructure were built when inclusive education was not prioritised.

Participant SR23 reported that:

*Our college does not have any support mechanism for students with a disability. Students had to deregister because the infrastructure was causing physical challenges.*

Participant SR4 indicated that:

*We have mentioned the issue of lack of support for students living with a disability, but the response that we, as SRC, get from management. But we are*

*constantly told that the infrastructure of TVET colleges was not designed to accommodate.*

Participant SR8 stated that:

*The TVET colleges lack the resources and personnel necessary to provide training to help students with disabilities. I am saying this because I have been to more than two colleges, and those students with disability are not supported.*

Three (3) participants reported that their college's staff have irrelevant qualifications for quality SSS to take place. The TVET colleges have insufficient staff numbers to implement SSS activities.

Participant SR1 stated that:

*When we have challenges requiring career counselling, we must get help from external agencies. Our college does not have SSS staff. There is only one Student Liaison Officer on each campus, and she only deals with NSFAS issues. My experience with her is that she is not friendly and is constantly shouting at students. As SRC members at the college, we have received complaints about her services, and she is not pleasant and supportive of the students' needs.*

Participant SR6 expressed that:

*It is concerning to us as students that officials dealing with SSS are not registered psychologists; they do not have qualifications relevant to offering psychotherapy, personal counselling, and academic counselling to assist us in adjusting to the college environment. These services are unavailable because no staff members have been appointed to handle such portfolios.*

Participant SR11 explained that:

*Student Support Services (SSS) services are poorly implemented, and our college does not comply with what is required by the DHET. Inadequate implementation of SSS leads to a dearth of counselling and mental health facilities, which leaves students unable to handle the demands of their studies on their own and causes more stress and anxiety.*

#### 6.5.6.5. Lack of Technology

The literature review in chapter two of this study revealed that the lack of access to technology at TVET colleges has a detrimental impact on teaching and learning. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought attention to the effects of the digital divide on students' academic achievement, especially for underprivileged populations lacking access to high-speed internet and related

tools. To improve academic performance and alleviate educational disparities, learners must have access to technology. During the interviews, most participants reported that the significant challenge that affects teaching and learning in the TVET was the lack of Information and Communication Technology (ITC). The participants were open about sharing their problems as college students regarding the lack of technology that prevented them from using technology in classrooms and libraries.

Participant SR 15 stated that:

*Technology is absent at our college. We do not have computers that we can use to search for information for our assignment. The computers are only available for the module, which is not enough. We are required to take turns to use them. We also do not receive laptops from NSFAS, making it difficult for us to practice computer work.*

Participant SR21 explained that:

*The lack of technology at the colleges affects not only us as students but also the lecturers. We do not have the necessary equipment needed for digital learning. As a student, I believe we are not receiving the training required to succeed in the present labour market if we do not have access to modern technologies. Modern industries depend significantly on technological developments, but I worry that we have fallen behind at TVET.*

The participants indicated that the TVET colleges experience problems with poor internet connectivity. The academic performance of students has been demonstrated to be negatively impacted by poor internet connectivity. Those students who experience inadequate internet connectivity find it challenging to search for information to complete their assignments or projects. The participants stated that they were compelled to put in more time and effort on assignments that would be simpler or quicker to complete with the right tools if they had access to the appropriate technology.

Participant SR6 reported that:

*In the modern era of advanced technology, the internet has become an indispensable aspect of our everyday existence. In general, society has become more interconnected and interactive since the advent of the internet, which has improved the quality of life. On the other hand, reliance on the internet has occasionally been a barrier to advancing teaching and learning in the TVET colleges. Our colleges need to catch up in terms of technology and connectivity.*

Participant SR5 explained that:

*Internet connectivity at our campus could be better to the extent that sometimes we cannot use it in class, but we must stand next to the admin building.*

Participant SR24 expressed that:

*I come from a village where wireline internet service is non-existent, and I was thrilled to register at the college in the hopes that we students would have access to free internet. However, we cannot usually connect because WIFI coverage is limited to one building.*

#### 6.5.6.6. Fraud and Corruption

A participant reported that corruption and fraud in the TVET colleges are challenges that have severely hampered the advancement of education. According to Sec. 29(1) of the South African Constitution states:

Everyone has the right –

- (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
- (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (RSA, 1996).

The fundamental tenets of South Africa's Constitution, (RSA, 1996) guarantees everyone the freedom to use educational institutions, have been violated by fraud and corruption. The participant expressed that major corruption at TVET colleges has resulted in other colleges being placed under administration for years, recovery from which will take years. The views and opinions of the participants were as follows:

Participant SR6 stated that:

*Many different forms of corruption occur in our TVET colleges, but the most common corruption takes place in procurement practices. It was reported that the management contravened the laws governing Supply Chain Management (SCM). Especially those with the power to make a final decision have been awarding tenders to the wrong people who need help delivering services and goods. Our college is in this condition because of corruption and fraud in procurement practices.*

Participant SR2 indicated that:

*I have lost the trust of management because they are committing fraud. The student hostels need to be in better condition, and a report was issued stating*

*that they should be shut down until significant renovations are completed. However, the students are still placed in these hostels regardless of their conditions, and annually, for each student, NSFAS pays an estimate of R60 000. The management needs to comply with the recommendations made in reports because they are only interested in the money rather than the best interests of the students.*

Most of the participants reported irregularities in the awarding of tenders when it comes to acquiring products and services, especially at TVET colleges. These include awarding contracts to businesses that cannot deliver the best value or quality services, in favour of those that take bribes or have business or family links to decision makers. As a result, TVET colleges receive subpar facilities, furnishings, or services.

Participant SR10 reported that:

*A tender has been awarded for the college's water supply under the false impression that the college has a water shortage crisis. We noticed that the community have water, but only the college does not have water. As the SRC, we have tried to intervene to check with the municipality about what was causing the shortage of water supply. We only find that the management of the college has switched off the water internationally because specific individuals who serve in the management are benefiting. We are not even allowed to go near the water switcher, and management has told us that if we do so, there will be consequences.*

Participant SR14 explained that:

*We have corrupt management who deplete financial resources by misrepresenting the value of contracts and accepting bribes in exchange for issuing tenders. This leads to inadequate facilities or antiquated technology in our colleges. Yes, we have challenges with the budget, but the limited resources the government provides need to be managed.*

Other participants reported that the management and leadership officials in their colleges engage in unethical behaviour that affects the functioning of the college. Participant SR8 explained that the government allocated funds to TVET colleges to upgrade facilities, supply resources, and boost student learning. When these funds are misappropriated or embezzled due to unethical behaviour, they are taken away from their intended use, resulting in vital resources like contemporary tools, materials, and equipment being depleted.

Participant SR8 expressed that:

*As SRC, we always struggle to get a vehicle to travel to campuses to deal with student issues. Still, we have management officials who use the college vehicle to conduct their activities, and this is unacceptable because the rules indicate that college properties must only be used for college activities.*

Participant SR14 indicated that:

*The Code of Conduct encourages ethics and professionalism. In my experience in this college, it needs to be better implemented. No measures are taken against the management of those involved in unethical behaviour. This is because when we report such issues, these individuals are protected by the management because of favouritism.*

Participant SR22 reported that:

*In this college, some officials were appointed because they were related to and friends of senior officials, which is an unfair practice. Nepotism is very high at the college. We had an acting manager in SSS whose competence was very experienced in this portfolio. However, when a permanent post was advertised, he was not shortlisted; instead, an outsider was appointed because she was connected to someone at the college.*

Other participants stated that TVET colleges have weak governance mechanisms that facilitate the growth of fraud and corruption. Effective supervision systems that guarantee accountability and transparency in operational and financial management practices are commonly lacking. Participant SR3 reported that there were few repercussions for individuals engaged in corrupt activities, even when such corruption was discovered. Corrupt management officials in the TVET colleges feel free to act with impunity, without any concern or fear of the legal consequences in a culture that promotes impunity fuelled by weak internal control measures.

## **6.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter dealt with a discussion of data analysis and presentation of observations that were conducted at Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET colleges. The chapter also covered the interpretation of data presentation in the form of themes that arose from the interviews and focus group discussions. Indented italic font sets were used to reflect verbatim the views and opinions of the management, leadership, and SRC members. Finally, the study revealed that TVET colleges face multiple challenges that affect their overall performance.

The final chapter will summarise the research findings, suggestions, and conclusions drawn from the data from the qualitative research study.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION**

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#### **7.1. INTRODUCTION**

This final chapter outlines the research objectives, discusses the findings, and makes recommendations. As stated in Chapter One, the study focused on the executive management, college council, and Student Representatives Council of three TVET colleges (Coastal TVET, Umfolozi TVET, and Mnambithi TVET). The findings discussed in Sec. 7.4 represents the data that was collected from twelve (12) executive management officials, irrespective of their rank, five (5) college council members, and twenty-four (24) Student Representative Council members, and these were analysed and presented in Chapter Six. The primary purpose of this closing chapter is to provide recommendations and measures to address the massive challenges presented in the TVET colleges and to improve management and leadership practices. These are followed by an in-house model proposed to enhance management and leadership practices at the TVET colleges.

#### **7.2. RETRIEVING RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES**

The National Development Plan (RSA, 2012) states that the government intends to increase the number of public-owned colleges while concentrating on raising their overall standard of education. The government believes higher quality will boost the sector's trust and attract more students. The South African government must address the college industry issues and enhance what is already inadequate to meet the enrolment goals outlined in the NDP. While the government intends to strengthen the TVET college sector to increase enrolment, addressing current difficulties is critical to meeting the NDP's enrolment targets.

This study was guided by the leading research objectives of evaluating the management and leadership systems of TVET colleges to enhance management practices and address the challenges present in the colleges. It has sought to provide alternatives to improve management and leadership practices. Further, it was designed to assist the structures involved in the TVET

college sector, including the Executive Management, college councils, and SRCs, in responding effectively to the problems presented in the TVET colleges.

The primary research question that guided the study was as follows:

***How can the management and leadership structures of the TVET colleges enhance their management systems to address the current challenges?***

To investigate the research problem thoroughly, Table 7.1 presents the research questions and objectives that were pursued.

**Table 7.1. The Research Questions and Objectives**

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Research Objectives</b>
<b>RQ#1:</b> What challenges do the TVET colleges face, and their impact on leadership and management structure?	<b>RO#1:</b> Identify the challenges faced by TVET colleges and their impact on leadership and management structure.
<b>RQ#2:</b> What are the roles and responsibilities of leadership and management in the TVET colleges?	<b>RO#2:</b> Assess the roles and responsibilities of the TVET leadership in promoting effective management practices in the colleges.
<b>RQ#3:</b> What leadership tools and management strategies have been adopted in the TVET colleges to ensure a well-managed institution?	<b>RO#3:</b> Evaluate the leadership tools and management strategies adopted in TVET colleges to ensure a well-managed institution.
<b>RQ#4:</b> What is the effectiveness of leadership in ensuring TVET management is supported by implementing managerial functions?	<b>RO#4:</b> Examine the effectiveness of TVET leadership in ensuring that the management is supported in implementing managerial functions.
<b>RQ#5:</b> What factors impact the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal?	<b>RO#5:</b> Examine the factors affecting the performance of the TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal.
<b>RQ#6:</b> What measures can be implemented to improve TVET management and leadership practices in KwaZulu-Natal?	<b>RO#6:</b> Determine measures the TVET colleges can adopt to improve management and leadership practices.

Source: Researcher (2024)

### 7.3. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

To evaluate the management and leadership structure of TVET colleges and enhance management practices and address the challenges present in the colleges, the study involved the following:

- i. Chapter One introduced the study. It provided essential background information and highlighted the significance of the research and its range.
- ii. Chapter Two explored the concepts of management, leadership and the TVET college sector. The theories underpinning management and leadership were discussed from the perspective of the TVET sector, followed by the management models utilised in the TVET sector.
- iii. Chapter Three provided an overview of the international perspective of the TVET sector, focusing on the importance of TVET colleges, followed by the types of TVET models: the German Dual TVET Model, the State-regulated Bureaucratic Model, and the Liberal Market TVET Model.
- iv. Chapter Four explored the historical foundation of the TVET sector in South Africa, concentrating on the legislative instruments, the TVET college system, the organisational structure, and the role players in ensuring effective TVET management and leadership practices.
- v. Chapter Five concentrates on the research methodology adopted to investigate management and leadership practices in the TVET sector. This chapter presented and argued the qualitative research and phenomenology strategy approaches employed in the study.
- vi. Chapter Six analysed and interpreted data concurrently through semi-structured interviews, focus group discuss, and observations. The chapter also presented the outcome of the data obtained from the participant's views and opinions.
- vii. Chapter seven contains a summary of the chapters, a synthesis of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and an overview of the recommendations and possible topics for future research.

#### **7.4. A SYNTHESIS OF THE FINDINGS I**

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are critical in equipping students with skills necessary for employment and entrepreneurship. However, the poor infrastructure in many South African TVET colleges has become a significant barrier to achieving their intended purpose. The findings on the facilities in three TVET colleges found that the infrastructure was not in good condition. The poor state of buildings, lack of modern equipment, and overcrowding were common issues across all institutions. These findings align with research by Powell, Muronda, and Tini (2024), who identified inadequate infrastructure as a significant impediment to effective teaching and learning in TVET colleges. Furthermore, practical training, crucial for vocational education, is severely compromised due to the lack of well-equipped laboratories and workshops (DHET, 2024). TVET colleges operate in dilapidated conditions, with crumbling walls, leaking roofs, and broken furniture. These unsafe and uncomfortable learning environments demotivate students and create health and safety risks (Powell et al., 2024).

TVET colleges were initially built to accommodate smaller student populations and outdated training needs. Over time, the demand for technical skills has grown, but the infrastructure has not kept pace. These challenges hinder the college's ability to provide adequate technical and vocational training, ultimately affecting student employability and skills development. If these conditions persist, the country will struggle to produce enough skilled artisans and technical professionals. The study finds that South Africa's goal of increasing TVET enrolment as part of the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2030 will likely not be achieved due to multiple systemic challenges. These challenges hinder the ability of TVET colleges to attract, retain, and adequately train students. The observation confirms that in the TVET colleges, there is an absence of transformational leadership, which is attributed to several systematic challenges that hinder the effectiveness, growth, and long-term success of these institutions.

Transformational leaders are pivotal in revitalising TVET colleges and can foster innovation and collaboration and drive positive change. Embracing transformational leadership within these institutions can benefit their effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability. There is a strong need for transformational leadership in the TVET to address the challenges and transform TVET into an institution of excellence. Leaders who can create a dynamic and future-ready TVET sector that effectively contributes to economic development and youth employment.

The need for transformational leadership in TVET is driven by the sector's demand for visionary leaders to craft a forward-looking strategy, ethically uphold the institution's integrity, and adapt to the rapidly changing educational and economic landscape (Gasel, 2022). Leaders who model ethical behaviour foster an institutional culture where decisions are made based on fairness, equity, and the long-term well-being of students, staff, and the wider community.

Integrating ethical theories into management and leadership practices can significantly enhance the performance, culture, and long-term success of TVET institutions. The corruption within TVET in South Africa is a significant challenge that affects the quality of education, the integrity of the system, and the overall reputation of the education sector (Mahlangu & Mtshali, 2024). Corruption is primarily attributed to poor ethics in managerial and leadership practices. When ethical principles such as transparency, accountability, and integrity are not embedded into the leadership culture. The consequences are far-reaching, leading to systemic issues that undermine the primary objectives of TVET institutions (Nkambule & Ngubane, 2021). TVET colleges are more susceptible to corruption without a clear and enforced ethical framework. TVET leaders do not prioritise ethical standards in their day-to-day operations, it sets a tone where unethical behaviour is tolerated and sometimes even normalised.

A robust Consequence Management Framework is essential to promoting accountability, transparency, and ethical conduct at all levels of the TVET (Department of National Treasury, 2022). It provides clear and consistent outcomes for actions within the institution that involves unethical behaviour it also emphasises the recognition of rewarding positive behaviours. This includes applying positive consequences for desirable behaviours and corrective measures for unacceptable actions. A well-established consequence management system helps deter corruption, negligence, and other unethical behaviours by ensuring that those who engage in such actions face appropriate sanctions (du Plessis, 2020). To help prevent fraud, favouritism in recruitment, and mismanagement of TVET institutions.

Improving the quality of education, infrastructure, and overall institutional performance is often be traced back to leadership and management weaknesses. Integrating transformational leadership, ethical principles, and consequence management is crucial to overcoming these challenges and building more efficient, effective, and moral institutions. Together, these

components are fundamental in enhancing leadership and management systems in TVET institutions.

#### **7.4.1. College A**

The findings of College A showed that the college operates under an ageing infrastructure and outdated buildings that must be appropriately renovated, upgraded, or replaced. The college buildings must be more conducive to modern teaching and learning needs. Many college campuses operate in poorly maintained buildings, and safety concerns have been reported due to deteriorating conditions. The college needs more classroom space. Students are crowded into classrooms, which compromises the learning environment. Furthermore, the college needs funding to provide adequate workshop facilities and laboratories with industry-standard equipment. The participants also reported needing more hands-on training due to the need for more adequately maintained or updated practical training spaces. The college also needs more computers and internet access, where this digital divide makes it difficult for students to engage in e-learning and other ICT-based educational activities.

The basic facilities, such as ablution and classroom fixtures, need to be better maintained. The college has broken windows, damaged infrastructure, and malfunctioning toilets. These issues pose safety risks to both students and staff. The student's on-campus accommodation is not safe. It is overcrowded and needs basic amenities like water, electricity, and sanitation. The DHET has provided funding for the college to expand its facilities, but the pace of implementation could be faster. The delays in upgrading facilities and building new campus facilities continue to affect the college's ability to meet the growing demand for vocational education.

The need for more human capacity and the prevalence of acting positions at the college, including the challenges related to staffing, have been significant obstacles to the efficient operations of the college. These issues affect leadership stability, teaching quality and overall college performance. The college has a high turnover among its senior management and administrative staff, and the frequent appointment of individuals to acting positions leads to an instability in leadership. The acting positions come with unclear authority and limit decision-making power, which affects the college's long-term strategic planning. The plans initiated by acting individuals need to be followed up, as the college has struggled for too long to achieve

its long-term goals and those of the DHET. In the short term, the existing staff must take on additional workloads and teach more classes until new positions are available. Increasing the compliments of the college staff should be a priority, as taking on heavier workloads will affect the ability of the existing staff to deliver quality education, as they will have less time to prepare and engage with a large volume of students.

#### **7.4.2. College B**

As with many other TVET colleges, College B faces similar challenges, such as deteriorating and ageing, insufficient infrastructure, and strains on human capacity. The observation at the college revealed that the infrastructure and facilities were not as inadequate as found in College A and College C. In one respect, the classrooms of College A were not designed to meet modern educational needs. Despite the efforts made with recent renovations, facilities such as the library show signs of neglect because of the lack of space and resources required for a functional, twenty-first-century library. The equipment used in the college's workshops and laboratories was found to be outdated and not fully operational. The ICT infrastructure was also found to limit teaching and learning, preventing students from using the facilities for further internet-based research. The students are encouraged to use the Resource Centre to access computer technology. However, the college faces challenges due to a shortage of human capacity. There is also a shortage of academic staff and Student Support Services officials to handle students' challenges effectively. The principal of the college and the Student Support Services (SSS) manager are both in acting capacities. Acting positions negatively affect the college because of limited authority concerning decision-making. The student hostel accommodations are off-campus, and the sports facilities are in good condition. Despite room for improvement, the infrastructure and facilities of College B are much better than those of College A and C.

#### **7.4.3. College C**

College C was not initially designed to accommodate the needs of modern vocational and skills training. The college infrastructure must be aligned with the technical and practical demands of engineering, construction, and other hands-on vocational subjects. This lack of alignment affects the quality of education provided to the students. The college classrooms and workshops must be more substantial to comfortably accommodate the growing student

enrolment population. In particular, the college needs more seminar rooms and laboratories. The workshop equipment must also be updated, and the machinery for practical vocational training skills needs to be repaired or replaced. The college needs an ICT infrastructure that meets current industry standards. Despite having a computer LAN, most computers are old and are not functional. In addition, Internet access is very limited to certain areas, which limits the accessibility of students and lecturers.

The outdated and inadequate buildings, lack of specialised training spaces, poor maintenance, and insufficient ICT resources hinder the college's ability to perform according to the required DHET standards and thereby deliver quality vocational and skills training. The college has minimal resources, and as with College A and College B, does not have an adequate, working library. There is an urgent need for investment in TVET infrastructure improvements to ensure that the colleges can meet the demands of students and the industries they are being trained to enter. Until these issues are addressed, colleges will continue to struggle to attract youth and increase enrolment. The status of these colleges will remain the same unless infrastructure, facilities, and human capacity are provided.

## **7.5. A SYNTHESIS OF THE FINDINGS II**

### **7.5.1. Objective #01: Identify the Challenges Faced by TVET Colleges and their Impact on Leadership and Management Structures**

TVET colleges face several challenges that significantly impact their leadership and management practices. These challenges affect how TVET colleges operate, make decisions, and interact with their students and communities (DHET, 2021). TVET Leaders must be adaptable, innovative, and proactive in addressing these challenges. Effective leadership require a combination of strategic vision, strong governance, industry partnerships, and a commitment to providing high-quality education. That meets the needs of both students and employers. The ability to manage limited resources, embrace technological changes, and improve student outcomes is the key factor in the future success and sustainability of TVET institutions. The findings reveal that the challenges presented in the TVET are poor infrastructure and facilities, access to learning materials, digital technology, centralised management systems, ineffective Student Support Services, unethical behaviour because of corruption, and negative perceptions. These challenges are affecting the ability of TVET to

provide high-quality education and result in poor performance and completely dysfunctional colleges. The findings on challenges faced by TVET are as follows:

- i. An antiquated infrastructure, limited facilities, and a deficiency of modern technology have crippled the TVET colleges, and this makes it challenging to deliver practical training that satisfies current industrial standards. The vocational and technical courses that require high-tech infrastructure are hampered by the sluggish rate of learning infrastructure improvement, which has far-reaching adverse effects on student performance and the industry's reputation. The findings in College A are affected the worst by poor infrastructure; the building is ancient, the toilets are broken, and there is no running water. The college library was discovered to be in poor condition and requires extensive maintenance. While College C does not have a library structure, the students use the local municipal library, which is not adequately focused on the needs of TVET students. The college's facilities are not disability friendly. There is no ramp access for wheelchairs and lifts to promote accessibility. Students with physical challenges are battling to attend classes, and others rely on the students to carry them to the upper-storey classes. Despite the policies stipulating that TVET colleges must create a conducive environment for inclusive education, the infrastructure and facilities present a significant barrier (DHET, 2023d). The ongoing power struggles, lack of accountability, and bureaucratic delays in TVET leadership prevent effective infrastructure and facilities management decision-making. Without strong, unified leadership that prioritises institutional development over internal conflicts, TVET colleges will continue to struggle with poor infrastructure, outdated facilities, and an inability to meet the growing demand for vocational education.
- ii. One major issue impeding the efficiency of vocational education at South Africa's TVET colleges is the lack of adequate learning tools. Learning resources are crucial for students to gain academic and practical abilities in their fields of study. Unfortunately, many TVET colleges have resource constraints or obsolescence, negatively affecting instruction quality. The findings revealed that students at TVET colleges lack access to current study guides, course notes, and textbooks. This hinders their capacity for independent study, which is essential for comprehending complex aspects of the curriculum and being ready for tests. The textbooks are not delivered on time. In some instances, students must commence assessments without the requisite

study materials. Fewer resources are available to lecturers to improve the learning experience when they lack projectors, smartboards, or instructional software. This makes it harder for them to explain complicated subjects more excitingly or explicitly. The absence of library facilities makes the situation even worse for students. The tools used in laboratories, workshops, and hands-on training sessions are often old or damaged on TVET campuses. Using outdated equipment diminishes the value of the training received by students majoring in engineering, electrical work, or automobile mechanics. Insufficient laboratories, workshop areas, or technical rooms compromise experiential learning. Vocational education is primarily focused on practical training, and student's ability to develop their skills is jeopardised if they cannot practise with the appropriate tools and equipment.

- iii. The quality of education and students' preparedness for the workforce is affected by the need for more technology in South Africa's TVET colleges. Students in TVET colleges are disadvantaged because of the lack of modern technological infrastructure, resources, and digital tools in a world where technology is integral to almost every industry. The findings disclose that TVET colleges need more computers, up-to-date software, and dependable internet connections. Students find it challenging to complete assignments, participate in digital learning, or acquire the technical skills they need because of this technological divide, particularly in fields where technology is becoming increasingly important. TVET colleges do not have Learning Management Systems (LMS) or e-learning platforms that enable students to take courses remotely, participate in virtual learning, or access resources online. This lack of infrastructure restricts students' flexibility in studying in an increasingly digital environment where online and blended learning are the standard.
- iv. The TVET colleges in South Africa face many challenges due to their bureaucratic and centralised management procedures. These management systems frequently inhibit the ability of TVET colleges to be flexible, responsive, and innovative, which limits its ability to provide high-quality instruction and training that satisfies industry demands. The findings revealed that critical decision-making is often delayed due to the various layers of approval necessary. This causes further delays in crucial choices for TVET colleges, such as curricula revision and the procurement of essential resources, such as equipment and learning materials. This lack of agility in a continuously changing employment market makes it difficult for TVET colleges to meet new industry

standards. A one-size-fits-all strategy is frequently enforced by centralised management, which might not be appropriate for the demands of TVET campuses spread over various geographic areas. For instance, rural TVET colleges are subject to the same policies and processes as their urban counterparts, but their goals may differ. This inflexibility makes it difficult for institutions to adapt to the needs of their students or the demands of the local labour market. TVET colleges need more influence over essential business areas, such as employing personnel, developing curricula, managing finances, and providing student support services. Instead, the nationally-based DHET make the decisions. Because of this lack of autonomy, TVET colleges cannot make changes to increase their effectiveness and academic results. The performance of TVET colleges needs to improve; its daily operational inefficiencies being brought on by the rigid and slow-moving character of bureaucratic management. Delays in essential decisions like staff management, resource allocation, and academic programmes have a negative impact on both staff and students.

- v. Poor student outcomes have a detrimental impact on the overall success of TVET colleges in South Africa. These are often made worse by ineffective Student Support Services (SSS). These services are crucial for students' academic and personal growth since they help them overcome obstacles while studying in college. The findings revealed that ineffective SSS characterises TVET colleges. The key issues are lack of academic support, poor career guidance and absence of counselling services to assist students with psychological problems and emotional support. The findings further revealed that TVET students need more career counselling to make well-informed choices on their course of study or desired careers. This frequently results in students selecting courses without a thorough awareness of the labour market or their interests and abilities, which harms their career and job placement. The students face other difficulties such as mental health disorders, family conflicts, and poverty. These difficulties affect their academic achievement and the general well-being of students because of the absence of emotional support. These problems are made worse by the need for more human capacity to handle psychological services. Students with disabilities frequently lack critical adjustments or assistance, such as accessibility to quality learning materials. This restricts their ability to engage in academic programmes and excel in their studies actively. The current model introduced by the

DHET to assist TVET colleges in implementing SSS programmes has not been fully implemented because of insufficient personnel.

- vi. The study found that a substantial challenge facing TVET colleges was the need for better finance. Budgetary limitations frequently make it more difficult for colleges to maintain their facilities, give competitive staff wages, and deliver high-quality instruction. Another important issue the study identified were delays in the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) allowance payments. Students' academic experiences are disrupted by these delays, which often spark student demonstrations and make it difficult for them to concentrate on their studies. The processing of student financial aid applications is further complicated by poor integration between the information systems of TVET colleges and the NSFAS. The participants stated that this fragmentation resulted in delays and difficulties in obtaining necessary financial help for students.
- vii. Unethical behaviour in TVET colleges in South Africa poses serious problems that affect student performance, educational quality, and the institutions' general integrity. The findings revealed that mismanagement and corruption were more prevalent in procurement practices. Indeed, the study revealed instances where management officials intentionally contravened the regulations governing Supply Chain Management (SCM) practices. This leads to irregularities in the tendering process. This is a waste of money that could be used to improve student support services and educational infrastructure. Unfair hiring practices and nepotism are other challenges associated with unethical conduct. Employees are appointed based on personal and business ties rather than qualifications and experience. As a result, underqualified people end up in critical positions, which harms the standard of instruction and management in TVET colleges. The research participants reported that staff members had accepted bribes in return for student admittance to the colleges, raising concerns about the validity and impartiality of the educational process. If ethics and morality are absent from TVET institutions, the overall purpose of education and training cannot be achieved. The findings indicate that fraud and corruption in the TVET colleges are challenges that have led to a dysfunctional college sector. The officials entrusted with college resources are misusing the college vehicle for personal gain, which is against the ethical code of conduct governing public servants.

- viii. The study finds that personnel in the TVET are often appointed to permanent positions because they are connected to senior management. The executive management in TVET colleges also creates a platform of favouritism through cadre deployment. Because of these circumstances, some personnel who see such favouritism around them feel demoralised, disillusioned, dissatisfied, and resigned. There have also been cases where financial help or bursaries for students have been delayed, undermining the students' interests, which has kept many from completing their education. These challenges have damaged the reputation of the TVET colleges and, with it, the public trust. Unethical tactics jeopardise educational quality, resulting in underprepared graduates who struggle in the job market.
- ix. The presence and persistence of negative perceptions still affect the image and status of the TVET colleges, which is a leading cause of lower enrolment figures (. TVET colleges encounter a variety of attitudes and stigmas that impact their reputation and appeal as educational options for young people. Although TVET institutions play an essential role in training skills for the labour market, they frequently need help to overcome unfavourable preconceptions. The findings disclosed that TVET colleges are seen as a choice for students who do not meet the minimum academic requirements for university admission. This impression causes many people to perceive TVET education as less prestigious than university-obtained degrees. A frequent cultural perception is that TVET colleges are for those who have failed in school or cannot afford to attend university. This approach undermines the importance of vocational education and prevents students from seeing TVET colleges as a realistic and legitimate alternative. Parents' influence also contributes negatively to the TVET status. To this point, the participants reported that some parents prefer and advise their children to attend universities, believing that their qualifications are superior and the only pathway to success. As a result, the students are pressured to avoid TVET colleges even when their career goals are more closely aligned with vocational skills training courses.

#### **7.5.2. Objective #02: Assess the Roles and Responsibilities of the College Council in Promoting Effective Management Practices in TVET Colleges**

The findings reveal that the roles and responsibilities of leadership in the TVET are performed by the college council as prescribed by the CET Act, 2006. In line with industry-standard management practices, the council should promote good governance and oversight, as outlined

in Sec. 10(1) of the CET Act (RSA, 2006). The CET Act, and any other relevant state, national, or provincial legislation, thus mandates the council of a public college to carry out all its duties, such as creating a college statute, developing policies, and overseeing the public college (DHET, 2023). The college council in the TVET thus plays an essential role in promoting sound management practices. Their responsibilities extend across the educational system, ensuring that colleges meet the demands of students, industries, and communities. Overseeing adherence to academic policies, regulations, and standards (Basi, 2021). This oversight is essential to ensure that TVET colleges provide high-quality, industry-relevant education and contribute effectively to national economic and workforce development. The TVET College Council plays a vital role in shaping efficient, accountable, and industry-responsive institutions by upholding policies, ensuring responsible governance, and fostering visionary leadership (Madwe et al., 2020). Their efforts contribute to producing skilled graduates, strengthening national economies, and ensuring that TVET remains a pillar of sustainable development.

- i. Developing and approving policies that direct the college's activities while guaranteeing compliance with provincial and federal laws and rules about education. Setting the college's priorities and strategic direction, including its purpose, vision, and long-term objectives.
- ii. Examining and approving the college's yearly budget while ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently, and that the college is financially stable.
- iii. Performing financial oversight that involves monitoring the college's economic performance, ensuring it stays within its allocated budget, and resolving any risks or disparities.
- iv. Guarantees that the college upholds strict academic standards and complies with regulations imposed by pertinent authorities for accreditation.
- v. Oversees the assessment of educational initiatives and the college's overall performance, by encouraging an ongoing improvement culture.
- vi. Ensuring transparent decision-making procedures and holding management responsible for the college's performance.
- vii. Encourages stakeholder engagement through interacting with various stakeholders to get feedback and promote cooperation, such as students, lecturers, business representatives, and the local community and serving as the college's representative in discussions with the authorities, business partners, and other academic institutions.

- viii. Ensures that the college abides by all applicable laws, such as the Continuing Education and Training Act (CET) and reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and other regulatory agencies with updates on the college's performance and strategic initiatives.
- ix. Provides effective monitoring and evaluation by reviewing the college's performance regularly, considering academic results, satisfaction with education, and institutional efficacy.
- x. Implements systems for gathering input from stakeholders, educators, and students to guide decisions and make changes.
- xi. Identifies potential risks that could negatively impact college functionality, establish crisis management procedures, and ensure the college can handle unforeseen difficulties or emergencies.

The study finds that TVET leadership in all three colleges are struggling to perform its duties as required and stipulated by TVET rules and regulations. The contributing factors are political interference, unclear roles, and inadequate decision-making processes, which complicate the leadership of TVET colleges. The findings indicate a lack of coordination and poor communication between the college's three structures: college council, operational management, and Student Representative Council. The study reveals that in TVET, decisions are made without conserving the perspective and needs of all stakeholders, resulting in policies and initiatives that do not address the real issues students face in TVET. It also creates fragmented efforts that do not support a unified vision for the college. This lack of a cohesive strategy undermines the institution's ability to fulfil its mission effectively.

The findings reveal that despite the CET Act only prescribing the roles and responsibilities and they are not well articulated to make it easy for TVET leaders and managers to understand them clearly. There is an overlap between the functions of the college council, which typically handles strategic oversight and the operational management responsible for day-to-day administration. As a result, this creates ambiguity and breeds tension between the college council and management, as each structure seeks to assert authority over certain decisions. This led to power struggles and undermined effective governance. Both these structures are not explicitly differentiated in their duties, and college councils find it difficult to discern between their executive and advisory responsibilities. This causes disagreements over who has the last word on important matters like hiring, curricular modifications, and budget approval. The study

also found that most TVET leaders and managers lack the qualifications to develop and execute long-term strategic plans. This indicates more profound systemic challenges within the leadership and management structures of TVET institutions. This issue is attributed to several interrelated factors, each of which affects the ability of these leaders to guide the institution toward its educational and developmental goals.

TVET leaders and managers are disconnected from the core mission of TVET education. They are motivated by personal interests and political agendas, which is a significant barrier to the adequate performance of leadership and the success of TVET institutions. The study finds that leaders in TVET prioritise their own political ambitions, personal benefits, and external interests over the primary goals of vocational education, and this severely hinders the institution's growth, educational quality, and organisational effectiveness.

### **7.5.3. Objective #03: Evaluate the Leadership Tools and Management Strategies Adopted in TVET Colleges to Ensure a Well-Managed Institution**

Enhancing management and leadership practices in the TVET sector requires effective managerial strategies and tools that colleges can use to ensure a functional college. In pursuing this objective, the study found that the TVET colleges implement management strategies prescribed by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The management strategies used in the TVET sector include: Management Information Systems (MIS), Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) to ensure that management practices adhere to good managerial practices. These three programmes offer a robust management framework that improves the TVET sector's productivity, sustainability, and performance. Each has a distinct function towards enhancing and monitoring the performance of the TVET sector, thereby ensuring that each member institution can function efficiently, provide excellent instruction, and respond positively and quickly to the changing requirements of the industries it seeks to serve and its learners. These management strategies reflect the bureaucratic and centralised management practices the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) instilled. These strategies are designed to ensure adherence to standardised management practices but also have positive and negative implications.

Hierarchical decision-making, rigid policies, and standardised processes characterise DHET's control over the TVET sector. The implementation of MIS, IQMS, and CPTD aligns with bureaucratic principles. MIS centralises data collection, reporting, and decision-making, ensuring uniformity and compliance across all TVET institutions. It enhances accountability, efficiency, and informed decision-making by providing real-time data on student performance, financial records, and institutional effectiveness (DHET, 2020). IQMS standardises performance evaluation, ensuring teaching and management practices align with DHET's regulatory frameworks. Promotes quality assurance, professional development, and institutional accountability, leading to improved teaching standards. CPTD is mandated by DHET to ensure that educators continuously upgrade their skills and comply with national standards. Enhances professional competence, career progression, and standardisation of teaching methodologies across institutions.

Bureaucratic and centralised management practices, while aimed at ensuring standardisation and accountability within the TVET sector, the findings reveal that are creating significant challenges for TVET colleges. These challenges include limited autonomy, slow decision-making, excessive administrative burdens, and a lack of responsiveness to local and industry needs. TVET Campus managers, responsible for the daily operations at different campuses, often find themselves in situations where they cannot make timely or appropriate decisions because they lack the authority to act independently. Decisions about program offerings, curriculum changes, staffing issues, and local resource allocation are often made by the TVET Central Office, and campus managers must wait for approvals to make changes that could enhance their campuses' performance. This removes the capacity for managers at the ground level to adapt quickly to the needs of their campuses, which in turn affects their ability to ensure smooth and effective daily operations.

The study finds that in the TVET colleges, there are multiple layers of approval and rigid communication channels. When campus managers must submit requests for decisions and wait for approval from higher levels within the central office, decision-making slows down considerably. This slow decision-making affects daily operations, strategic planning, and resource allocation. The study found that centralised management processes sometimes create administrative bottlenecks that delay critical processes, such as securing funds to resolve immediate problems. It also creates frustration among staff and students, who feel that the system is unresponsive to their needs and challenges.

Leadership tools in the context of TVET are the frameworks, strategies, and resources that leaders use to guide and manage institutions effectively. These tools include management software, leadership development programs, and decision-making frameworks that facilitate the implementation of strategies. Transformational leaders use leadership tools to inspire and motivate staff and students to align with the institution's vision and goals. These tools enable leaders to proactively identify challenges, develop solutions, and guide the college toward success. A transformational leader fosters collaboration, innovation, and empowerment, which leadership tools support by offering resources for transparent decision-making, shared goals, and staff development. The study finds that leadership tools adopted by college councils are TVET- Assessment Tool, Whole School Evaluation, Communication, and strategic planning, which are integral to the success and effectiveness of the institution. These elements are strongly aligned with transformational leadership as they foster a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement. Using these tools, transformational leaders can inspire, motivate, and empower staff and students, creating an environment responsive to the needs of the local community, the workforce, and the broader educational landscape. This alignment ensures that TVET institutions maintain high standards and evolve in response to changing educational and economic demands.

The study found that college council members often lack the necessary leadership skills, knowledge, and experience to implement advanced leadership tools. These competencies are critical for managing educational institutions effectively, particularly in the context of TVET, where the demands are constantly changing due to technological advancements, industry needs, and government policies. The lack of competencies within the council results in poor decision-making, ineffective strategic planning, and weak execution of leadership initiatives. College councils struggle to adopt and adapt leadership tools such as Whole School without the requisite knowledge in strategic management and educational leadership. This contributes to a failed to align the institution's objectives with industry needs and the college's long-term goals, leaving the administration directionless and inefficient. TVET colleges are composed of individuals who are not actively involved in the daily operations of the TVET institutions they oversee; the council members are entirely disconnected with a poor understanding of the context within which leadership tools need to be implemented.

TVET colleges often face budgetary constraints, insufficient funding, and lack of access to technological resources. Implementing leadership tools such as assessment requires significant

financial investment, skilled personnel, and technological infrastructure. The findings reveal that a lack of resources prevents the effective implementation of leadership tools in the TVET. For instance, without adequate funding, TVET College cannot acquire the necessary software for data management, which is essential for implementing tools. Inadequate technological infrastructure also led to inefficiencies in managing student records, tracking performance, and monitoring progress. Consequently, the administration struggles to make informed decisions, and the institution misses opportunities to improve performance or adapt to changing industry needs. The findings suggest that without sufficient financial resources, councils may also be unable to support the ongoing development of leadership tools, resulting in their eventual failure. This resource gap in TVET stifles innovation, restricts professional development, and stagnates the college's ability to improve its services and programs.

The study finds that the power struggles between leadership and management have created a toxic environment that undermines the authority of the college council and disrupts the implementation of leadership tools in the TVET. When individuals or departments vie for control over decision-making, it can result in conflicting priorities, delays in decision-making, and confusion within the administration. For example, a college council might approve a new strategy, but departmental leaders might resist its implementation if it undermines their authority and contradicts their interests. This lack of alignment prevents effective leadership and leads to inconsistent policies that confuse staff and students.

Implementing leadership tools in TVET colleges presents several interconnected problems, the most pressing of which are opposition to change, technological gaps, and financial constraints. To overcome these obstacles, it will take deliberate investments in technology infrastructure, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and improved alignment with national policy. The TVET colleges also need to foster a culture of continuous development in which faculty, staff, and administration are dedicated to adopting fresh approaches and techniques to enhance academic results, resource management, and governance.

#### **7.5.4. Objective #04: Examine the Effectiveness of TVET Leadership in Ensuring that the Management is Supported in Implementing Managerial Functions**

Effective leadership in TVET ensures that the management is adequately supported, guided, held accountable, and empowered to perform their duties. Strong leadership provides direction,

fosters a positive organisational culture, and ensures management is equipped with the necessary resources, training, and guidance to achieve institutional goals. Effective leadership is determined by how sound leaders provide strategic direction, governance oversight, and essential resources to enhance institutional performance, which defines leadership effectiveness. The study finds that the effectiveness of TVET leadership in supporting management is compromised by leadership instability, weak policy enforcement, financial mismanagement, poor collaboration, and resistance to change (DHET, 2020). These challenges prevent colleges from achieving their full potential, ultimately affecting student outcomes, staff morale, and institutional sustainability.

Department of Higher Education and Training (2023) reported that the most pressing concern raised in the TVET is the lack of compliance with financial regulations. Specifically, TVET colleges have struggled to adhere to Section 25(1)(b) of the Continuing Education and Training (CET) Act, which mandates proper financial reporting. The findings indicate that only 21% of TVET colleges obtained an unqualified audit opinion, underscoring widespread financial mismanagement. The Auditor-General's findings reveal significant financial processing and reconciliation weaknesses, highlighting that many institutions operate without sufficient internal controls to ensure accountability and transparency (DHET, 2024).

Insufficient implementation of internal controls in financial processing exacerbates the deficiencies in financial oversight in TVET. The lack of practical reconciliation of financial transactions leads to inaccurate financial statements, increasing the risk of financial mismanagement and fraud (DHET, 2023). These weaknesses indicate that TVET colleges lack the necessary capacity and expertise in financial administration, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of their financial operations. The study found that TVET colleges appoint leaders based on personal connections and political influence. As a result, these leaders lack the expertise to establish and enforce appropriate internal control systems.

The Department of Higher Education and Training acknowledges that while some improvements have been made in monitoring and evaluation, the persistent issue of vacant critical positions continues to undermine governance structures (DHET, 2021). The inability to fill key positions affects decision-making processes, reduces institutional efficiency, and limits the capacity of colleges to implement and enforce governance policies effectively. The study reveals that in colleges A & B, the senior management positions, including the principals,

are filled by temporary employees, particularly near retirement. Appointing temporary principals in TVET institutions, particularly those nearing retirement, creates challenges that undermine leadership effectiveness, institutional stability, and long-term growth.

Despite these systemic challenges, the study points to cases where effective leadership has driven institutional improvements. One particular TVET reported that its financial and governance performance had improved due to the presence of a transformational leader with the necessary qualifications and extensive experience in the TVET sector. This leader's deep understanding of institutional challenges and strong professional networks enabled the college to navigate governance complexities more effectively. This is evidence that in TVET colleges, transformational leadership plays a critical role in driving institutional improvement, improving teaching and learning, and aligning the college with the demands of the labour market. However, the absence and inadequacy of transformational leadership in many TVET colleges creates several challenges that negatively impact the effectiveness and performance of these institutions. The findings reveal that:

- i. The primary responsibility of the college council is to promote good governance and oversight, ensuring that the college is managed effectively and in line with policies and regulations (RSA, 1998). The findings indicate that TVET are experiencing unnecessary conflicts due to unclear roles and responsibilities, causing friction between the council and administrators and affecting decision-making. Unclear roles lead to fragmented decision-making, where decisions are made by individuals who do not have the full context and expertise needed. This results in poor choices that are not aligned with the overall strategic goals of TVET colleges. Another contributing factor to ineffective roles and responsibilities is the deployment of leaders in TVET colleges without consideration of the merit and competencies needed to transform the colleges. The study finds that conflict in the TVET is also caused by unqualified politicians. As a result, these short-sighted decisions do not align with the long-term strategic goals of the TVET college. These unskilled leaders make decisions based on limited information and political consideration rather than sound institutional objectives
- ii. The findings indicate that corruption and unethical behaviour in the TVET often involve misappropriating and diversifying financial and material resources for personal gain. Leaders who engage in corrupt practices may prioritise personal benefits, such as

awarding contracts to family members or associates, over the institution's needs. TVET institutions suffer from weak governance structures where leaders are not held accountable for their actions. The absence of effective monitoring and regulatory frameworks allows unethical practices to proliferate in TVET. The procurement process in TVET colleges is ripe for corruption because managers can decide who wins contracts. As a result, the managers award contracts to companies they have personal ties with, bypassing competitive bidding processes.

- iii. The absence of ethics opens the door for corruption in TVET colleges. The management and college council engage in practices such as nepotism, bribery, and misallocating funds. The study also finds that unqualified individuals are appointed to key operational management positions due to unethical practices. Management is intentionally bypassing human resource policies, and as a result, dishonest recruitment practices tarnish the college's public image and undermine educational quality.
- iv. The lack of accountability undermines the effectiveness of leadership in performing oversight. The study finds that TVET management is not held accountable for their actions, which creates a struggle for college councils to intervene in situations where oversight is needed. When management can operate without checks and balances, it becomes harder for leaders to fulfil their oversight responsibilities. College councils have limited authority and cannot act directly against those engaging in unethical behaviour. The findings reveal that TVET leaders and managers are forced to tolerate unethical behaviour that undermines their credibility and ability to lead effectively.
- v. TVET leadership and management don't have access to necessary resources, making it difficult to maintain, implement changes, and meet basic institutional needs. This impacts performance and staff morale, leading to inefficiencies and poor outcomes.

Effective leadership and management ensure that TVET colleges run smoothly, meet strategic objectives, and foster a culture of excellence. Strong leadership sets the tone for institutional priorities and motivates staff and students to achieve high performance. Poor leadership can lead to disorganisation, lack of direction, and low morale, ultimately affecting the quality of education and training provided.

### **7.5.5. Objective #05: Examine the Factors Affecting the Performance of the TVET Colleges in KwaZulu-Natal**

The performance of TVET colleges in KZN is influenced by a range of factors, many of which are interrelated. According to the literature, about 60% of public TVET colleges must be more functional and perform according to the required standards to produce qualified and employable graduates. The findings of this present study revealed that the most pressing factors that caused poor performance in the TVET colleges under review were as follows:

- i. A shortage of skilled lecturers has been identified as a significant factor affecting the performance of TVET colleges. The courses require lecturers who are up to date with current industry standards and technologies. The study found that the lack of skilled academic instructors limited the TVET college's ability to provide quality education and thereby hindering students from learning. Existing staff are overworked, leading to burnout and reduced teaching effectiveness. All three TVET colleges identified the shortage of academic staff as a barrier leading to poor performance. Sec. 20 of the CET Act introduced a Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) policy to address the shortage of lecturers. Yet, the PPN system creates more issues as student enrolment fluctuates every financial year, making it difficult for colleges to retain lectures. This is further complicated by the DHET's failure to replace lectures on time when the enrolment changes.
- ii. The lack of academic support in the TVET sector is a critical factor that negatively affects performance. The findings revealed that TVET students need more educational support. The TVET colleges must offer tutoring, mentoring, and other essential academic support strategies to help students succeed. A lack of support is the reason behind dropouts, especially students from disadvantaged communities where limited opportunities are experienced the most. These students need help understanding the content of the courses, and the absence of academic support leads to poor performance.
- iii. Extensive absenteeism results in graduates not being adequately trained or equipped with the necessary skills, damaging the college's credibility with industry partners and affecting graduate employability. The study found that TVET colleges face extensive absenteeism rates due to various socio-economic and personal factors that significantly impact students' performance and overall college outcomes. Students in the TVET sector come from low-income backgrounds and face severe financial challenges in

covering their tuition, transportation, meals, and accommodation costs. The financial strain often forces students to miss classes to work part-time.

- iv. Inadequate career advice has far-reaching consequences on TVET performance. The study found that it contributes to mismatched course enrolments and low student motivation. In the TVET colleges, career advice is absent, and the students enrol in programmes that do not match their interests or career aspirations. This misalignment led to disengagement, frustration, and lack of motivation. Consequently, students lacking career guidance choose courses that do not provide solid employment opportunities. The lack of adequate career counselling leads to fewer students securing meaningful employment after graduation, and this negatively impacts the TVET's reputation as high employment rates are used as a key indicator of its lack of success.
- v. TVET libraries have outdated and insufficient resources, such as textbooks, journals, and industry-related materials. Students in vocational programs need access to the most current information and learning resources, particularly in fast-evolving fields like technology and engineering. The lack of up-to-date materials limits students' access to relevant knowledge, affecting the quality of education. TVET students find it challenging to keep up with industry trends, reducing their competitiveness in the job market.
  - i. A lack of resources significantly affects TVET performance, leading to inadequate infrastructure, outdated equipment, underfunded programmes, and poor staff retention. This results in diminished teaching quality, limited practical experience for students, and poor alignment with industry needs. The study found that TVET colleges need more resources, forcing TVET colleges to limit the number of courses or programmes they can offer. This restricts students' options and can lead to overcrowded classes in available programmes, which reduces the quality of learning. A shortage of resources makes it difficult for TVET colleges to incorporate work-integrated learning opportunities into their programmes, which are critical for providing students with hands-on experience in real-world settings.

#### **7.5.6. Objective #06: Determine Measures the TVET Colleges Can Adopt to Improve Management and Leadership Practices**

To address TVET challenges effectively, colleges can adopt various measures to improve governance, enhance student support, and foster a positive institutional culture. To improve

management and leadership practices, TVET colleges, particularly those in resource-constrained areas like KZN, can adopt several key measures. These strategies can strengthen governance, enhance operational efficiency, and improve educational outcomes.

- i. There is a strong need to strengthen governance and leadership structures. Develop and implement governance frameworks and define all stakeholders' roles, responsibilities, and accountability, including management, college council, and student representatives. Provide training and development programmes for leaders and managers in ethical leadership, decision-making, and conflict resolution to enhance their leadership capacity.
- ii. Enhance SRC engagement and participation in college affairs by strengthening their role to ensure student voices are integrated into decision-making processes within the TVET colleges. This can be achieved by ensuring that SRC elections occur towards the end of every academic year. This will ensure that the SRC participates in college affairs at the beginning of the new academic year.
- iii. Enhance Student Support Services (SSS) by developing a comprehensive set of programmes that includes academic support, mental health services, and career counselling to address the diverse needs of students. Establish mentorship programmes that connect students with faculty, industry professionals, and alums to support their career development and personal growth and ensure there is a capacity to handle SSS.
- iv. Improving infrastructure and facilities is essential for enhancing the quality of education and training in TVET colleges. Adequate infrastructure not only supports effective teaching and learning, but also creates an environment that is conducive to student success and effective administration. The management and leadership of TVET colleges should perform comprehensive assessments of existing facilities to identify gaps, deficiencies, and areas that require upgrading or maintenance. Establish regular maintenance schedules to address wear and tear on facilities, ensuring that equipment and infrastructure remain in good condition.
- v. The South African Government through DHET is responsible for providing funding to improve the infrastructure and facilities, to address the issue of poor infrastructure should prioritise more resources to improve the lack of human capacity, resources and the poor infrastructure

- vi. To enhance the accountability of TVET college principals, it is essential to empower college councils and strengthen their authority. This can be achieved by advocating for legislative reforms that enhance the authority of college councils and provide them with the necessary legal backing to hold principals accountable. Ensure that regulations governing TVET institutions explicitly outline the roles and powers of college councils concerning principal accountability. Create independent review committees that can assess complaints or concerns about the principal's performance, providing an avenue for accountability beyond the college council.
- vii. Addressing the negative perceptions of TVET colleges is essential for enhancing its reputation and attracting more students. Colleges in the TVET sector need to strengthen communication and marketing and form partnership with external agencies to attract more investments, which can also benefit the sector in terms of resources.

## **7.6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.6.1. Recommendation #01: Foster a Culture of Accountability and Established Independent Oversight Body**

A culture of accountability within TVET institutions can significantly improve management and leadership practices, leading to greater efficiency, transparency, and positive educational outcomes. Fostering accountability in the TVET can be achieved by establishing an independent oversight body to address the unethical behaviour and corruption undermining the TVET. This body should be empowered to investigate matters and take proper actions against those involved in corruption. When management and college council members are held accountable for budgetary decisions, funds are more likely to be directed toward priority areas like facilities upgrades, equipment, and student services, directly addressing infrastructure and quality issues. The South African Government must legislate the establishment of an independent TVET oversight body with full investigative and disciplinary powers. To encourage the TVET stakeholders, managers, and students to report corruption, it is also recommended that a confidential reporting system be created. By implementing strict monitoring mechanisms and disciplinary actions, TVET institutions can operate more transparently, ensuring that resources are utilised effectively to improve education and skill development.

There is a strong need to reform the recruitment and appointment of TVET leaders and managers to address the weak and unqualified leadership and incompetent management, leading to ineffective decision-making, lack of accountability, and poor governance structures. It is recommended that DHET adopt a competency-based recruitment system to ensure that qualified potential candidates are appointed to serve in structures. This will promote a culture where TVET colleges have strong, visionary leaders who can drive policy implementation, strategic planning, and institutional development. Attracting and retaining highly qualified professionals with finance, human resources, and strategic management expertise is crucial. Recruitment of expert individuals will help strengthen financial oversight, ensure efficient resource management, and improve institutional planning in the TVET.

To foster a culture of accountability in the TVET sector, the roles and responsibilities of management, leadership, and staff members, from administrators to academics and other stakeholders, must be clearly defined in policy documents. This will help individuals understand their specific contributions to the institution's success and ensure there is a basis for performance evaluation. Encourage open-line communication and feedback between management, college council staff, and students to create an environment where accountability is part of the culture. Encourage input from all stakeholders, including students, to understand areas where management practices need adjustment or staff may require additional support. Establish consequences for unmet expectations that are fair, clearly communicated, and consistently enforced, helping to ensure that all staff understand the importance of their responsibilities and the impact of their actions.

### **7.6.2. Recommendation #02: Upgrade Infrastructure and Facilities**

Quality, first-rate infrastructure and facilities in the TVET sector are vital for enhancing vocational and training skills, boosting enrolment, ensuring health and safety, and meeting industry standards. Upgrading the infrastructure and facilities of TVET institutions requires a strategic approach involving planning, funding, and industry partnerships. Vocational education relies heavily on hands-on training. Modern equipment, labs, and workshop spaces help students gain real-world skills, which are challenging to master with outdated or inadequate facilities. Upgrading infrastructure will allow the TVET colleges to replicate industry conditions and make training more relevant. The TVET sector won't be able to attract students if the infrastructure and facilities are poor. Adopting measures that ensure well-

equipped and modern campuses will create an appealing learning environment that attracts and retains students in the TVET sector. Improved facilities will significantly reduce student dropout rates by providing a more conducive space for students to learn and feel motivated.

The South African government should prioritise increasing funding to TVET institutions in the national budget. Allocating a higher percentage of the budget to infrastructure development, maintenance, and upgrades will allow TVET colleges to modernise their facilities. This will enable TVET to secure financial support from national and provincial governments. The management and leadership of TVET colleges need to promote collaboration with private companies that can provide additional funding and resources. Attracting companies willing to invest in the TVET will not only assist with infrastructure and facilities. Some industries benefit directly from skilled graduates, so they may be willing to invest in facilities, equipment, and technology that align with their industry standards.

TVET needs to adopt measures to promote effective regular maintenance and timely repairs, which are crucial in extending the operational life of equipment and facilities. If equipment is left to deteriorate without proper care, it can break down and become outdated, disrupting learning activities. It is recommended that TVET establish a team focused on maintenance to ensure that all equipment, such as computers and machinery, are serviced regularly and that infrastructure such as classrooms, workshops, and laboratory maintenance will help to ensure that they function optimally for a longer period. By establishing a dedicated team responsible for the upkeep of TVET college equipment and facilities, the institution can ensure that its infrastructure remains functional, safe, and conducive to high-quality education. TVET institutions can increase enrolment numbers, boost their reputation, and strengthen industry partnerships by improving infrastructure. Furthermore, a well-resourced TVET college is more likely to provide a better learning experience, which enhances student satisfaction and leads to better student retention rates.

### **7.6.3. Recommendation #03: Expand Access to Technology and Digital Learning**

Expanding access to digital learning and technology in the TVET sector is essential to enhance accessibility and make learning more flexible, especially for students in remote or underserved areas. Access to technology can contribute positively by ensuring that TVET students have access to digital learning. The TVET colleges must invest in digital infrastructure promoting

e-learning platforms like Moodle, Blackboard Learn, and Edmodo. These platforms help centralise course materials, assignments, and student progress tracking, making it easier for instructors to deliver online content. Ensure that all online materials, such as course modules, multimedia content, and assessments, are mobile-compatible. This is especially key for students in remote areas who primarily access content on mobile devices. To achieve this, the college must establish programmes where students can borrow or hire devices such as laptops, tablets, or mobile hotspots to ensure they have the tools necessary for online learning. The TVET management and leadership can also promote partnering with tech companies to help secure donations or subsidies for these devices.

Incorporating technology into the curriculum can also foster innovation and entrepreneurship among students. Many TVET graduates establish small businesses or work in industries where digital tools can enhance productivity, efficiency, and profitability. TVET colleges can contribute to a more dynamic and entrepreneurial economy by teaching students how to leverage technology for innovation. Furthermore, digital communication tools like email, discussion boards, and video conferencing can facilitate better communication between students and instructors, enabling more effective and timely feedback. Virtual office hours and online consultation sessions can ensure active communication between the three TVET structures: the college council, operational management, and SRC. This flexibility in communication will contribute to a more responsive and effective TVET administration. Technology can be harnessed to automate and streamline various administrative functions in TVET colleges, reducing the time spent on routine tasks and allowing leadership to focus on strategic initiatives. To enhance management and leadership in the TVET, cloud-based platforms need to be adopted to enable real-time collaboration among staff and streamline communication between departments. Technology will also support the digitalisation of records and files, making it easier for TVET structures to store, retrieve, and update institutional data. Furthermore, budgeting and financial management software can help administrators track expenses, generate reports, and allocate resources more efficiently.

#### **7.6.4. Recommendation #04: Address TVET Student Funding**

Addressing TVET students' funding issues is critical for increasing access to education, reducing dropout rates, and ensuring students can complete their vocational training without encountering financial barriers. There is a strong need to improve the accessibility and

efficiency of the NSFAS funding model to improve student funding in the TVET sector. Collaborate closely with NSFAS to set and maintain strict deadlines for fund disbursements, ensuring students receive their funds at the beginning of each academic term. Streamlining processes between TVET institutions and NSFAS can reduce administrative bottlenecks. There is also a need to establish an emergency fund within the TVET sector to provide temporary financial support for students facing unexpected challenges, such as illness or family emergencies. Such funds can prevent students from dropping out due to short-term economic stress. The funding models for TVET and universities are structured differently, often leading to unequal access to financial aid. The allocation of resources must adequately meet the unique needs of TVET students, negating the disparities in funding availability. To address the disparities in funding availability for TVET students compared to university students. Developing and implementing more equitable funding models for TVET students. Create a separate fund within NSFAS specifically for TVET colleges to address their unique financial needs and challenges and ensure funding for vocational training is prioritised. Enhance financial aid packages for TVET students. Provide additional stipends or allowances for TVET students to cover the costs of learning materials such as books, tools, equipment, and other materials necessary for their training. Reduce the financial burden on students caused by delays in receiving learning materials.

#### **7.6.5. Recommendation #05: Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Tools**

The TVET college sector need new Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools to keep pace with the rapidly changing demands of the job market, evolving educational standards, and greater transparency and accountability. The traditional M&E methods, such as IQMS and MIS, often need more flexibility, depth, and real-time feedback to support modern vocational training. The TVET colleges are experiencing massive challenges because of a lack of M&E tools that focus on the infrastructure and facilities and SSS. Improve TVET colleges by driving better performance, enhancing programme relevance, increasing accountability, and optimising resources. The management and leadership of TVET colleges need to foster regular evaluations that encourage continuous improvements, development, and growth. Implementing robust M&E tools in TVET colleges can address many challenges by providing the data and insights needed to improve effectiveness, accountability, and alignment with student and industry needs. It provides real-time data on college performance, helping leaders

make evidence-based decisions. Data obtained by tracking student attendance, pass rates, and job placement rates can reveal areas where support is needed.

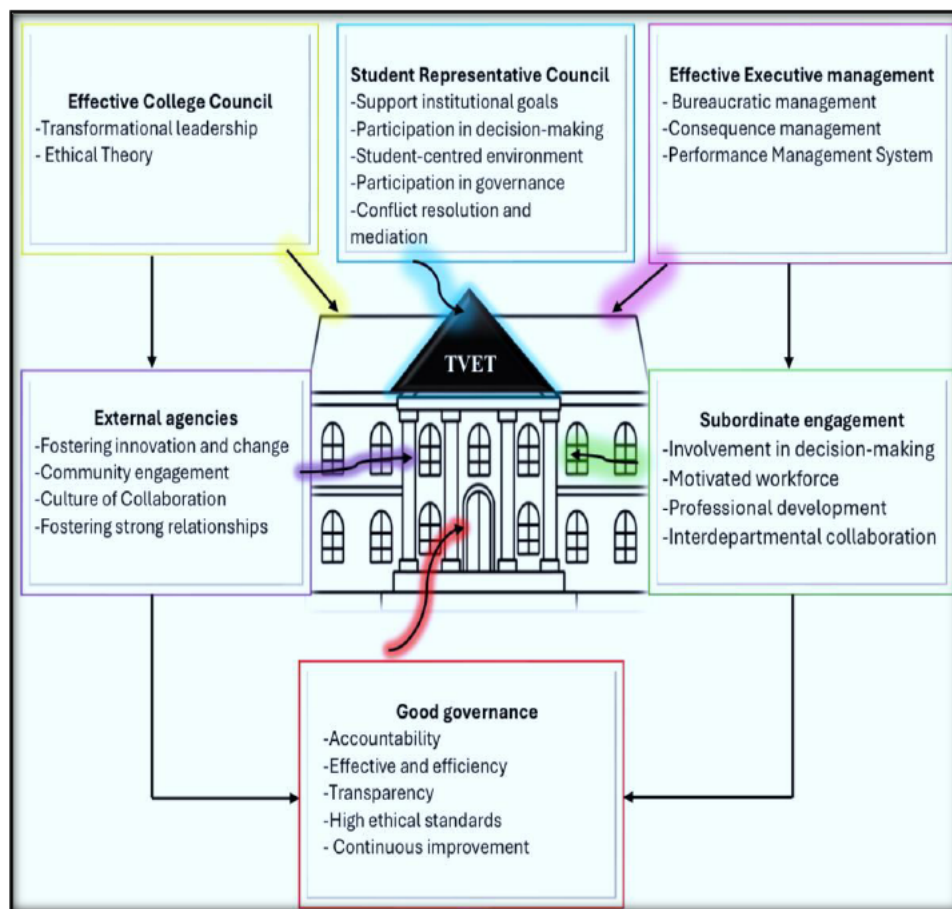
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools bring structure and insight to management practices, making TVET colleges more accountable, efficient, and responsive to their mission of providing practical, market-relevant education. By facilitating continuous improvement, these tools ensure that TVET institutions remain valuable to students and the workforce. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools are also crucial for infrastructure and facilities to ensure that physical resources support quality education, safety, and functionality. The methods that focus on maintaining and optimising infrastructure and facilities that can be adopted in the TVET sector include Facility Condition Assessment, Safety and Compliance Inspections, and Cost-benefit Analysis for Infrastructure Upgrades. Incorporating these M&E tools will help TVET institutions maintain high-quality infrastructure and facilities, optimise resource use, and improve safety and functionality.

### **7.7. A PROPOSED IN-HOUSE MODEL FOR TVET MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

A single, specific solution can only partially alleviate the challenges within the TVET sector because they are multi-dimensional, involving diverse factors such as infrastructure, curricula design, industry-relevant funding, and societal perceptions. As discussed in Chapter Two, the theories of leadership and management are from the perspective of the TVET sector. Because of the shortcomings associated with these solitary solutions, the present researcher believes that only an integrated in-house model can enhance managerial and leadership practices within the sector. Figure 8.1 illustrates such a proposed in-house model to strengthen management and leadership in TVET colleges. This proposed model seeks to foster more effective governance, transparency, and responsiveness to students, staff, and stakeholders' needs.

By implementing a new in-house model for effective TVET management and college council governance, numerous benefits will emerge that can enhance responsiveness, adaptability, and alignment with institutional goals. With management and the college council working within the institution, communication will flow more efficiently. This allows for real-time feedback and quicker decision-making. Furthermore, this model can closely monitor financial,

infrastructure, and human resources, ensuring they are allocated in ways that directly benefit the institution’s key objectives.



**Figure 8.1. An Integrated Management and Leadership Model for TVET**

Source: (Researcher:2024)

### 7.7.1. An Effective College Council

The model in Figure 8.1 illustrates that effectual college councils are at the centre of each successful TVET institution. An engaged and effective college council provides the strategic leadership necessary to ensure that a TVET college remains relevant, accountable, and aligned with industry and community needs. Such a college council promotes transparent decision-making, strengthens partnerships, and focuses on quality and sustainability. It can empower the college to offer robust, future-ready training programmes and support student success.

An organisation's protection also depends on strong leadership that promotes an excellent ethos and overall success. In this sense, effective leadership adopts transformational leadership and ethical theory. The integration of ethical theories significantly strengthens transformational leadership in TVET colleges. Leaders who embrace ethical principles inspire their followers and create an environment that values integrity, respect, and collaboration. This alignment of transformational leadership with ethical theory ultimately leads to improved educational outcomes and enhanced student experiences. It engenders a positive impact on the broader community, fulfilling the mission of TVET institutions to prepare its students for successful careers and active citizenship.

### **7.7.2. An Effective Executive Management**

Effective management is illustrated as the roof of the in-house model. Effective management in a TVET College is essential to create a responsive, well-functioning college that provides relevant, high-quality training aligned with industry needs. Effective governance in a TVET institution involves balancing strategic vision with operational detail, ensuring that resources, curriculum, facilities, and support systems are aligned to meet student needs and industry demands. Effective management ensures that all activities and processes are carefully regulated and aligned with institutional goals. This regulation supports streamlined operations, accountability, and consistency across departments. Bureaucratic Theory, developed by Max Weber, emphasises a structured, hierarchical approach to management that relies on standardised rules, roles, and procedures. Consequence Management Theory emphasises the importance of linking actions with appropriate consequences to promote desired behaviours and discourage undesirable ones.

### **7.7.3. An Effective Student Representative Council**

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is illustrated as the vertex point of an isosceles triangle. The new model depicts that the SRC plays an essential role in management and leadership, acting as a bridge between the student body and the institution's administration. Involving the SRC in managing and leading a TVET institution's decision-making process is essential to creating a responsive, student-centred environment. The SRC's participation ensures that the perspectives of the student body are equally considered, fostering policies and practices that align with the needs and aspirations of the student body as a whole. Involving

the SRC in managing and leading a TVET institution's decision-making process strengthens the college's ability to serve its students effectively. By incorporating the SRC's perspective, management can create policies and practices that align with student needs and foster a culture of transparency, trust, and mutual respect. The SRC can mediate conflicts between students and the administration, helping to find mutually acceptable solutions. Finally, it provides a safe space for students to voice grievances and concerns, contributing to a positive and supportive institutional culture.

#### **7.7.4. The Engagement of Subordinates**

The windows of the new model are depicted as the engagements of the various subordinates. These windows are essential to the TVET structure as they keep the building structure intact. Subordinate engagement in TVET management and leadership practices is necessary to create a collaborative, effective, and inclusive, institutional environment. When all college employees actively participate in management and leadership practices, they become more committed to the institutional goals and contribute positively to its development. By involving staff at all levels, the institution creates a culture of shared responsibility, where each person feels like an integral part of the team. Engaging subordinates in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and accountability in their roles, leading to greater attention to quality and responsibility for outcomes. The subordinates often have firsthand knowledge of day-to-day operations and student interactions. Engaging them allows management to leverage this valuable insight for practical, effective solutions.

#### **7.7.5. Partnership with External Agencies**

The model depicts partnerships with external agencies as the concrete pillars of the model. These concrete pillars symbolise the significance of external agencies in the TVET colleges and the role of college councils in fostering partnerships to improve management and leadership practices. The college council at TVET institutions plays a pivotal role in promoting partnerships with external agencies, significantly enhancing management and leadership. The council can create a more responsive and effective educational environment by fostering collaboration, optimising resources, and engaging stakeholders. This collaborative approach strengthens the institution's governance and accountability and contributes to developing a skilled workforce that meets the needs of both the larger community and the economy. This

engagement enhances the institution's relevance, ensures programmes meet labour market needs, and strengthens resources and support systems.

#### **7.7.6. Good Governance Practices**

The model depicts good governance as the door of the model. The door symbolises that the college council and management are essential for effective governance. The council provides guidance, support, and oversight while management executes these directives at the operational level. This collaborative relationship ensures that the institution remains accountable to its stakeholders and operates efficiently, transparently, and in alignment with national educational and workforce development goals. By fulfilling these roles, the college council and management team collectively contribute to building a sustainable, accountable, and responsive TVET institution that provides quality education and skills training aligned with community and industry needs. These pillars of good governance form a foundation for creating functional, transparent, and high-performing TVET institutions responsive to stakeholder needs and committed to delivering quality vocational and technical education. In brief, these can be outlined as follows:

- i. Establishing a framework where management, staff, and council members are responsible for their actions and the outcomes of their decisions. Accountability mechanisms can include performance reviews, regular audits, and adherence to regulations and policies.
- ii. Striving for optimal resource use to deliver quality education and skills training. This includes effectively managing financial, human, and physical resources to achieve educational goals. Efficient resource utilisation also helps ensure that funds are appropriately allocated to enhance teaching, infrastructure, and student support.
- iii. It proactively addresses the evolving needs of students, industry, and society. This includes adapting the curricula and course components, teaching methods, and infrastructure to match labour market demands and technological advancements. A responsive institution prepares students with relevant skills for current and future employment opportunities.
- iv. Ensuring clear and open communication about decision-making processes, budget allocations, policies, and institutional performance. Transparency allows stakeholders,

including students, staff, and industry partners, to understand how resources are allocated, and decisions are made, fostering trust and accountability.

- v. Encourages continuous improvement, fostering a culture where students, faculty, and administrators strive for better outcomes. This shared commitment enhances the institution's environment and contributes to a positive reputation, attracting further support and engagement.

## **7.8. FUTURE POTENTIAL RESEARCH AREAS**

Future research into TVET management and leadership will be essential for understanding how to improve institutional governance, foster innovation, and ensure the responsiveness of TVET systems to changing economic and social needs. By focusing on leadership models, change management, staff development, financial oversight, and cross-sector collaboration, researchers can strengthen TVET leadership and, ultimately, enhance the quality and relevance of vocational education in a rapidly developing world. The recommended future research areas are as follows:

- i. Explore the role of leadership in fostering staff engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction. This area would examine leadership practices that promote a positive organisational culture, professional development opportunities, and recognition of staff achievements.
- ii. Investigate how TVET colleges can build leadership pipelines by identifying and nurturing future leaders. This includes studying effective models of succession planning and mentorship programmes to ensure continuity in leadership.
- iii. Examine the leadership challenges in attracting qualified professionals with academic and industry expertise and the role of leadership in staff performance management.
- iv. Assess how leadership establishes performance measurement systems that hold management accountable. This would include looking at how leaders track institutional performance, student outcomes, staff effectiveness, and how they use this data to inform decision-making.
- v. Investigate how TVET colleges support students with physical, sensory, and cognitive impairments. This could include assessing the suitability of hostel accommodation, assistive devices, technologies, and specialised services in ensuring that students living with disabilities have equal access to education and training.

- vi. Examine the role of career counselling in helping students align their vocational training with their chosen career goals. This could include studying the impact of career guidance services on student employability, job placement, and long-term career success.
- vii. Identify and analyse barriers preventing students from effectively utilising Student Support Services (SSS) in TVET institutions.
- viii. Explore how SRCs can contribute to the governance of TVET institutions, including their role in decision-making processes related to student affairs, academic policies, and campus development. Studies could also assess the SRC's influence on institutional policies and practices.

## **7.9. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, enhancing management and leadership systems within the TVET institutions is crucial for operational efficiency and fulfilling the institution's mission to equip students with skills directly relevant to today's labour market. Effective management and leadership practices can address many systemic challenges presented in the TVET sector, including resource allocation, infrastructure, performance, curriculum relevance, ineffective Student Support Services, lack of accountability, and industry alignment. This research study has demonstrated that by adopting strategic frameworks, implementing robust monitoring and evaluation tools, and fostering collaborative and responsive leadership practices, TVET colleges can create a resilient management structure that drives continuous improvement and boosts performance.

Building a culture of accountability, transparency, and stakeholder involvement empowers staff and students, enhancing institutional effectiveness and adaptability. A well-structured and adaptive management system is essential to achieving sustainable growth, improving student outcomes, and enhancing the institution's reputation and impact on the community. By prioritising management and leadership enhancements, TVET institutions can position themselves as centres of excellence in vocational education, effectively contributing to workforce development and economic growth.

The proposed in-house management model is essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges that TVET colleges face. This model recognises that effective management and

leadership is not a standalone function, but rather an interconnected system that influences various aspects of institutional performance, including academic quality, resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and community partnerships. As TVET colleges navigate an increasingly complex educational landscape, implementing this model will enable TVET management and leadership to overcome current challenges and thrive in the future, ultimately fulfilling their mission to prepare skilled and capable individuals for the workforce.

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## **ANNEXURES**

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31 March 2025

**Mandisa Dargricia Sithole (211541029)**  
School of Man Info Tech & Gov  
Westville Campus

Dear MD Sithole,

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00006705/2024

**Project title:** Enhancing management and leadership systems in technical vocational education and training sector at selected colleges in KwaZulu-Natal

**Amended title:** Enhancing management and leadership systems in technical vocational education and training at selected colleges in KwaZulu-Natal

**Degree:** PhD

### **Approval Notification – Amendment Application**

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 31 March 2025 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

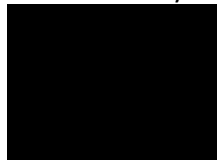
**Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully








.....  
**Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)**

/nng



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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587  
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

## ANNEXURE B

### GATE KEEPER LETTER (COASTAL TVET COLLEGE)

 <p>higher education &amp; training Department: Higher Education and Training REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA</p>	<p>CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE 50351 Mkhondo Mngadi Drive, KwaMakhutha - P.O Box 1795, Amanzimtoti, 4120 Tel: (031) 905 7002/1 • Fax: (031) 905 3393 • www.coastal.gov.za</p>	 <p>COASTAL TVET COLLEGE New Frontier Centre of Excellence</p>
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ENQUIRES: Mr RK Ramdev 09 June 2023

MD Sithole  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
College of Law and Management Studies  
School of Management, IT and Governance  
Westville  
Durban  
3629

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY**

Dear: Madam


Your application dated 04 May 2023 to conduct a research study as part of your doctoral degree requirement was received by the college. I trust that your study will assist us to enhance our leadership skills and improve our practices in governance.

I therefore grant you permission to conduct the study subject to the conditions that;

- a. Further consent is sought from the participants listed in paragraph 4.2&4.3
- b. Your final report be shared with the college

I wish you all the best in your studies and future endeavors.

Yours in Higher Education.





Mr JM Zwane  
Acting Principal




09/06/2023  
Date

## ANNEXURE C

### GATE KEEPER LETTER (UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE)

	<b>higher education &amp; training</b> Department: Higher Education and Training REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	 <i>Let the future be known</i>
<p>22 June 2023</p> <p><b>TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:</b></p> <p>The purpose of this letter is to grant permission to: Mandisa D. Sithole</p> <p>As per the request to conduct the research project at : Umfolozi TVET College</p> <p><b>Research Project Title:</b> : Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in the TVET sector at selected tvet colleges in kwazulu natal</p> <p><b>Aim of the Research:</b></p> <p>The aim of this research is to assess the management and leadership structures of a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal to increase its efficiency through better management practices.</p> <p><b>Tertiary Insitution :</b> University of KwaZulu-Natal</p> <p><b>Faculty or School :</b> College of Law and Management Science</p> <p><b>Qualification:</b> Doctor of Administration</p> <p><b>Name of Supervisor :</b> Prof Henry Wissink</p> <p><b>Study Site Location:</b> Umfolozi TVET College Central Office</p> <p><b>Consent of participants :</b> Consent to participate in the study will be obtained</p> <p><b>Confidentiality :</b> Confidentiality and anonymity will be assured by researcher</p> <p><b>Permission granted by:</b></p> <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 40px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> <p>Mrs EPL du Toit</p> <p>Acting Principal</p>		
<p>Private Bag X5023, Richards Bay 3900, Tel: +27 (35) 902 9501, Fax: +27 (35) 789 2585, <a href="http://www.umfolozicollege.co.za">www.umfolozicollege.co.za</a> SERVING COMMUNITIES IN ILEMBE, UTHUNGULU &amp; UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICTS</p>		

**ANNEXURE D**  
**GATKEEPER LETTER**  
**(MNAMBITHI TVET COLLEGE)**

	<p><b>higher education &amp; training</b></p> <p>Department: Higher Education and Training REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA</p>	
<p>NO. 77 Murchison St. Ladysmith, 3370   Private Bag X9903 Ladysmith, 3370 Tel: +27 36 638 3800    Fax: +27 36 631 4146</p>		
<p><b>ENQUIRIES:</b> Ms N Ngema (<a href="mailto:ntokozi.ngema@kzntvet.edu.za">ntokozi.ngema@kzntvet.edu.za</a>)</p>		<p>22 May 2023</p>
<p>MD Sithole University of KwaZulu-Natal College of Law and Management Studies School of Management, IT and Governance Westville Durban 3629</p>		
<p><b>PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY</b></p>		
<p>Dear Madam</p>		
<p>Your letter dated 22 March 2023 to conduct a research study as part of your doctoral degree requirements was received by the college. I trust that your study will assist us to enhance our leadership skills and improve our practices in governance.</p>		
<p>I therefore grant you permission to conduct the study subject to the conditions that;</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Further consent is sought from the participants listed in paragraph 4.2&amp;4.3</li><li>b. Your final report be shared with the college</li></ul>		
<p>I wish you all the best in your studies and future endeavors</p>		
<p>Kind Regards</p>		
		<p>24   05   2023 Date</p>
<p>Mr. CJ Ndlela College Principal</p>		

## ANNEXURE E

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY (COASTAL TVET COLLEGE)

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University of KwaZulu-Natal  
College of Law and Management Studies  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Westville, Durban  
KZN 3629

22 April 2023

Coastal TVET College Central Administration Office  
50051 Mfundi Mngadi Drive  
PO Box 1795  
KwaMakhutha  
Amanzimtoti  
4126 KZN

Dear Principal / Mr J. M. Zwane

#### **RE: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY**

I am a registered Doctor of Public Administration candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and I am expected to conduct a research study as a requirement for the degree. I therefore respectfully request your permission to conduct this study at Coastal TVET College.

The title of my research study is: "Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in the TVET Sector at Selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu Natal."

This is a qualitative research study that entails collecting data with semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and visual photographs that I will take to identify the factors that impact the management of TVET College. The target population for this study is the leadership, management, and Student Representatives. I intend to conduct my research in 2023 should permission be granted.

I trust that this request will be considered favourably.

Yours Sincerely

M D SITHOLE

## ANNEXURE F

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY (UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE)

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University of KwaZulu-Natal  
College of Law and Management Studies  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Westville, Durban  
KZN 3629

05 May 2023

Umfolozi TVET College Central Administration Office  
Naboomnek Street  
Arboretum  
Richards Bay  
3900 KZN

Dear Principal / Mr J Jacobs

#### **RE: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY**

I am a registered Doctor of Public Administration candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and I am expected to conduct a research study as a requirement for the degree. I therefore respectfully request your permission to conduct this study at Umfolozi TVET College.

The title of my research study is: “Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in the TVET Sector at Selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu Natal.”

This qualitative research study entails collecting data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and visual photographs, which I will take to identify the factors that impact the management of TVET College. The target population for this study is the leadership, management, and Student Representatives. I intend to conduct my research in 2023 should permission be granted.

I trust that this request will be considered favourably.

Yours Sincerely

M D SITHOLE

## ANNEXURE G

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY (MNAMBITHI TVET COLLEGE)

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Law and Management Studies  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Westville, Durban  
3629

22 April 2023

Mnambithi TVET College Central Administration Office  
77 Murchison St  
Ladysmith  
3370

Dear Principal / Mr C J Ndlela

#### **RE: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY**

I am a registered Doctor of Public Administration candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and I am expected to conduct a research study as a requirement for the degree. I therefore respectfully request your permission to conduct this study at Mnambithi TVET College.

The title of my research study is “Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in the TVET Sector at Selected TVET colleges in KwaZulu Natal.”

This qualitative research study entails collecting data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and visual photographs, which I will take to identify the factors that impact the management of TVET College. The target population for this study is the leadership, management, and Student Representatives. I intend to conduct my research in 2024 should permission be granted.

I trust that this application will be considered favourably.

Yours Sincerely

M D SITHOLE

**ANNEXURE H**

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MANAGEMENT**

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**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

The interview will begin with the following questions to put the participants at ease.

<b>Name and Surname:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Qualification/s:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Years at the College:</b>	
<b>Home Language:</b>	

**SECTION B: MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS****INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What is your understanding of management, and how is it defined in your organisation?
2. What is the significance of management in ensuring that the college operates accordingly to meet its goals and objectives?
3. What are the systems and tools used for the implementation of management practices?
4. What are the skills and competencies required to manage the TVET college?
5. What is the current state of leadership in the TVET college? Does the college have a leadership that can transform it to meet its goals and objectives?
6. What is your role in the management structure of the TVET college?
7. What is the role of the management structure in ensuring that the college functions to the required standards?
8. What are the challenges facing the campus, and how do they impact the management of the college?
9. How can the challenges be addressed to ensure the campus performs according to the required standards?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION!**

**ANNEXURE I**

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LEADERSHIP**

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**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

The interview will begin with the following questions to put the participants at ease.

<b>Name and Surname:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Qualification/s:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Years at the College:</b>	
<b>Home Language:</b>	

**SECTION B: LEADERSHIP****INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What is your understanding of leadership, and how is it defined in your organisation?
2. What is the significance of leadership structure in ensuring that the college operates accordingly to meet its goals and objectives?
3. What are the functions of the TVET leadership, and how do you implement them?
4. As an official responsible for leadership, what leadership styles are used within your college to ensure effective institutional leadership?
5. What are the procedures and practices guiding the leadership structure within the college?
6. What is the role and relationship between management and leadership in ensuring effective management practices within the college?
7. What are the challenges facing the leadership structure at a TVET College?
8. How can the challenges be addressed to improve leadership within a TVET College?
9. Is there any other information you wish to furnish regarding the leadership structure of the TVET college?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION!**

**ANNEXURE J**

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SRC FOCUS GROUP**

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I will start the focus group interview with the following questions to put all the participants at ease and feeling comfortable: Introduce yourself; tell me about your position / status in the college. If the participant leaves out any of the following information, I will specifically ask the questions.

**SECTION A**

<b>Name and Surname:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>What are you studying?</b>	
<b>Qualification:</b>	
<b>Position / SRC:</b>	
<b>Years at the College:</b>	
<b>Home Language:</b>	

**SECTION B**

1. What are the choices that made you study at a TVET College?
2. How would you describe the college's available resources and equipment to serve your interests?
3. Does the college have competent administration staff who can quickly handle your inquiries? Share your experience.
4. What are your opinions and views about the current leadership structure in the college? Does the college have a leadership and management structure to help it achieve a well-functioning college?
5. How would you describe your experience with the Student Support Staff in the college?
6. How would you describe the skills and capabilities of interaction, whether face-to-face or electronically (email and telephone), with the administration and management?

7. What are the challenges faced by the (*Name of Institution*) TVET College?
  - a. Does the college have a well-equipped library?
  - b. Computer labs?
  - c. Student hostels?
  - d. Technology (Internet)?
  - e. Lecturers?
8. What should be done to resolve the challenges and enable a conducive environment for the students in the college?
9. How do you see this college in the next five years?
10. What do you think about the management of the college? Are they able to resolve students' issues raised by the SRC?
11. How long does it take the management to solve the problems arising in the college?
12. What are the factors that affect you as a student at this college?
13. What changes would you like to see in this college?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION!**

## ANNEXURE K

### INVITATION TO A FOCUS GROUP COASTAL TVET COLLEGE

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR A  
RESEARCH STUDY**



**FOCUS  
GROUP**

*Let Your Voice Be Heard on TVET Challenges and Experience!*

*We are looking for a combination of SRC Members to share information on the following:*

- Management and leadership
- Availability of resources
- Challenges facing the student
- Improving the conditions of the TVET
- Student Support Services

**MONDAY  
29 APRIL 2024**

**VENUE: COASTAL TVET COLLEGE  
CENTRAL OFFICE**

**TIME: 09h00 to 12h00**

**Limited Seat Available RSVP NOW!**


**RESPOND BY 12 APRIL 2024**  
**Miss MANDISA SITHOLE (PhD Candidate)**  
**Email [REDACTED]**  
**Cell Number: [REDACTED]**

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## ANNEXURE L

### INVITATION TO A FOCUS GROUP UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR A RESEARCH STUDY**



# FOCUS GROUP

*Let Your Voice Be Heard on TVET Challenges and Experience!*

*We are looking for a combination of SRC members to share information on the following:*

- **Management and leadership**
- **Availability of resources**
- **Challenges facing the students**
- **Improving the conditions of the TVET**
- **Student Support Services**

**THURSDAY  
23 MAY 2024**

**VENUE: UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE  
CENTRAL OFFICE**

**TIME: 09H00 to 12H00**

**Limited Seat Available RSVP NOW!**

**RESPOND BY 12 APRIL 2024**  
**MISS MANDISA SITHOLE (PhD Candidate)**  
**EMAIL [REDACTED]**  
**CELL NUMBER [REDACTED]**

## ANNEXURE M

### INVITATION TO A FOCUS GROUP MNAMBITHI TVET COLLEGE

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR A RESEARCH STUDY**



**FOCUS GROUP**

*Let your Voice Be Heard on TVET Challenges and Experience*

*We are looking for a combination of SRC members to share information on the following:*

- Management and leadership
- Availability of resources
- Challenges facing the student
- Improving the conditions of the TVET
- Student Support Services

**WEDNESDAY**

**DATE: 12-JUNE- 2024**

**VENUE: MNAMBITHI TVET CENTRAL OFFICE**

**TIME: 09H00 -12H00**

**LIMITED SEAT AVAILABLE RSVP NOW!**

**RESPOND BY 15 MAY 2024**

**MISS MANDISA SITHOLE (PhD Candidate)**

**EMAIL [REDACTED]**

**CELL NO. [REDACTED]**

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**ANNEXURE N**  
**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**  
**OBSERVATION SHEET**

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<b>LABOUR STAFF AND STUDENTS</b>				
<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>COASTAL TVET</b>	<b>UMFOLOZI TVET</b>	<b>MNAMBITHI TVET</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Number of Campuses				
Management Head of Department (HOD) Senior lecturers				
<b>Academic Staff</b> DHET College				
<b>Administrators</b> SLO NSFAS/Bursary Officer Librarian Exam Officer Stock Controller				
<b>General Worker</b> DHET cleaners Outsourced Cleaners				
Security				
Students				

<b>AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES</b>				
<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>CAMPUS A</b>	<b>CAMPUS B</b>	<b>CAMPUS C</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Computers for Students				
Internet Access				
Photocopying Machines				
Library Materials				

<b>INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES</b>				
<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>CAMPUS A</b>	<b>CAMPUS B</b>	<b>CAMPUS C</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Classroom				
Computer LAN				
Student's Hostel				
<b>Ablution Facilities</b> Female Students Male Students				
Workshops				

<b>Recreation/Sports</b> Soccer Ground Basketball/Netball Courts				
Security Fence				
Cafeteria				

## ANNEXURE O

### INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

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#### SECTION A: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Date: 01 April 2024

Greetings

I am Mandisa Sithole, a Doctor of Administration candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Management, IT and Governance.

You are invited to consider participating in a study that involves the research title: **Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in Technical Vocational Education and Training Sector at Selected Colleges in KwaZulu Natal.**

This research aims to assess the management and leadership structures of a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal to increase its efficiency through better management practices. The study is expected to enrol 17 participants who are part of the leadership and management from three selected TVET colleges (Coastal TVET College, Umfolozi TVET College, and Mnambithi TVET College). Three focus group discussions will also be conducted with at least 8 to 12 students. In total, the study will involve 41 participants.

The duration of your participation if you choose to enrol and remain in the study is expected to be 45 minutes for individual interviews and 90 minutes for focus group discussions. All the interviews will be recorded to ensure the accuracy of the information, and the participant will be allowed to verify their responses. The study will provide no direct benefits to participants. Still, it hopes to assist TVET colleges in enhancing their management and leadership structures to overcome the immense challenges presented in the TVET sector.

No potential risk is involved in this study, and all the interview questions are based on the research problem. The researcher will maintain a high standard of “Confidentiality and anonymity” of the participants. The names of participants will be hidden and not disclosed.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (**HSSREC/00006705/2024**). In the event of any problems or concerns / questions, you may contact the researcher at [REDACTED] cell number: [REDACTED] or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X54001

Durban KZN 4000

Tel: +27 (0)31 2604557 Fax: +27 (0)31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Participation in this research is voluntary. Any participant may withdraw from participation at any point. In the event of refusal or withdrawal from participation, the participant will not incur penalty or loss of treatment or other benefit to which they usually are entitled.

An email can be sent to the researcher to withdraw from participating in this research study, followed by a confirmation or acknowledgement of withdrawal. When withdrawing from the study, the participant should let the researcher know they wish to cancel their involvement. A participant may provide the researcher with the reason(s) for leaving the study, but it is optional to provide their reason. The researcher may terminate the participant's participation in the study regardless of the participant's consent, maintain the integrity of the data, and protect a participant from excessive risk or risk with a demonstrated lack of benefits, but the researcher will inform the participants. There are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study.

The researcher will maintain a high standard of confidentiality and anonymity toward all the participants. The names of the participants will be hidden and will not be disclosed. All the information gathered from participants will be kept strictly private and confidential.

Access to information collected will be limited. Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the electronic data storage, which will be stored on the researcher's own computer, protected by a password. After the completion of the study, the raw data and transcripts will be stored in a secure location for at least five years.

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**SECTION B: CONSENT FORM**

I, ....., have been informed about the study entitled: **Enhancing Management and Leadership Systems in Technical Vocational Education and Training Sector at Selected Colleges in KwaZulu-Natal** by Mandisa Sithole.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been allowed 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 without affecting any of the benefits I am usually entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me because of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at: [REDACTED]

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 researchers, then I may contact:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus  
Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X54001  
Durban KZN 4000  
Tel: +27 (0)31 2604557 Fax: +27 (0)31 2604609  
Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Additional consent (where applicable)

I....., at this moment, provide consent to the following:

- Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion: YES / NO
- Video-record my interview / focus group discussion: YES / NO
- Use of my photographs for research purposes: YES / NO

<b>Signature of Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>
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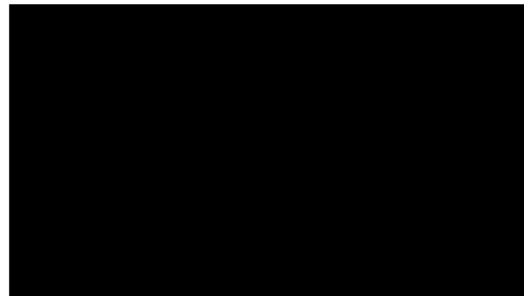
<b>Signature of Witness</b> (Where applicable)	<b>Date</b>
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<b>Signature of Translator</b> (Where applicable)	<b>Date</b>
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**ANNEXURE P**  
**LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE**

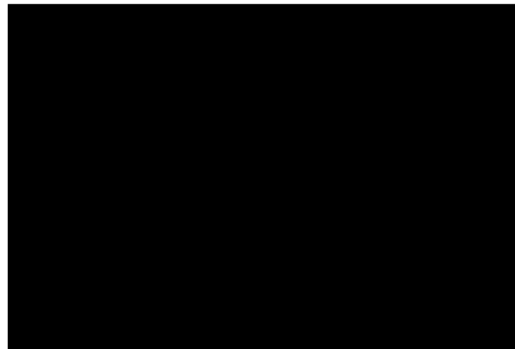
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We, the undersigned, do solemnly declare that we have abided by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's policy on language editing. The thesis was professionally edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall academic style. All original electronic forms of the text have been retained should they be required.



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**GARY STUART DAVID LEONARD**  
UKZN Higher Degrees Certified Language Editor  
Commissioner of Oaths V3358  
29 November 2024



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**MANDISA SITHOLE**  
Student No. 211541029  
29 November 2024