

**CHALLENGES FACED BY A RURAL FET COLLEGE:
A CASE STUDY OF A FET COLLEGE IN NORTHERN KWAZULU-NATAL**

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ABSTRACT

In this study the challenges faced by a rural Further Education and Training (FET) college to deliver education are investigated. The FET sector uses the same curricula for colleges in both rural and urban settings but conditions in rural areas are very different. For example, few industries are situated in these areas, resulting in unemployment and/or the migration of youth to the urban areas. Long distances between campuses and a lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas suggest that it is difficult to manage rural colleges in the same manner as urban colleges.

The education and training sector in South Africa has experienced significant changes during the last 11 years. Since 1998, the FET sector has faced mergers, the introduction of new governance structures, curriculum changes, relationship changes with both communities and the business sector and the introduction of new funding formulae.

The FET College studied is situated in the Northern Region of KwaZulu-Natal and covers a vast area served by 11 municipalities. The campuses of this College are spread over a wide geographical area. This particular FET College is historically a state-funded merged institution of former Technical Colleges and Skills Centres. The merger was intended to deliver a better service by avoiding duplication of programmes at the colleges.

Data gained from interviews with relevant role players identified challenges such as lack of infrastructure, poverty, poorly resourced campuses, high turnover of staff, limited course offerings, lack of policies and lack of financial assistance for disadvantaged students as key challenges faced in the rural areas. Most of the challenges faced by staff at campuses are related to the centralisation of services. Poor management is blamed for most of the challenges experienced by central office staff. Challenges faced by students are poverty, lack of infrastructure, unemployment and transport.

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations are made relating to the challenges faced by the various role players.

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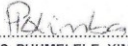
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I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

“Challenges faced by a rural FET College: A case study of a rural college in Northern KwaZulu-Natal”

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Yours faithfully


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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, ADRI ELIZABETH VAN WYK,

hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, and has not been submitted previously for any degrees at any university.

.....
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.....
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ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ASGISA	Accelerated Growth & Shared Growth Initiative or South Africa
COP	Community Outreach Programmes
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
FE	Further Education (UK)
FET	Further Education and Training (South Africa)
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISRDS	Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
JIPSA	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
NATED	National Education
NBFET	National Board for Further Education and Training
NCV	National Certificate Vocational
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPDE	National Professional Diploma Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PEACE	Planning, Education, Agriculture, Community and Environment
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SESD	Support to Education and Skills Development
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMME's	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SPERA	Society for the provision of Education in Rural Australia
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1. CHALLENGES FACED BY A RURAL COLLEGE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of a mine, that a child of a farm worker can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another. (Mandela, cited in Letsie, 2003, p. 29)

In this study the challenges faced by a rural Further Education and Training (FET) College to deliver education are investigated. The FET sector uses the same curricula for colleges in both rural and urban settings but conditions in rural areas differ greatly from those in urban areas. For example, few industries are situated in these areas, resulting in unemployment and/or the migration of youth to urban areas. Long distances between campuses and a lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas suggest that it is difficult to manage rural colleges in the same manner as urban colleges.

The education and training sector in South Africa has experienced significant changes during the last 11 years. Since 1998, the FET sector has faced mergers, the introduction of new governance structures, curriculum changes, relationship changes with both communities and the business sector and the introduction of new funding formulae.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The FET College studied is situated in the Northern Region of KwaZulu-Natal and covers a vast area served by 11 municipalities located in 4 district municipalities as listed in Table 1 below. These municipalities were served by 8 campuses in 2007 and soon three more campuses will open (Nkandla, Pongola and Nquthu). This particular FET College is historically a state-funded merged institution of former Technical Colleges and Skills centres. Watters (2008) states that there is limited access to programmes for youth living outside the main urban areas, despite the efforts of the National Qualifications Framework which aims to redress the past inequalities of the apartheid era. The FET College investigated in this case study is one of the few that serves people living outside of the main urban areas.

Table 1: Campus Locations

District	Municipality	Campus
Zululand	Abaqulusi eDumbe Nongoma Ulundi Pongola	Vryheid Vryheid Kwa-Gqikazi & Nongoma Emandleni Pongola*
Umkhanyakude	Umhlabuyalingana Jozini Big Five False Bay Hlabisa	Maputa Jozini
UMzinyathi	Nqutu	Nqutu**
UThungulu	Nkandla	Nkandla*

* Future campuses

** Nqutu Campus was handed over by the Department in the middle of 2009. Courses only start in 2010

By 2007 the College consisted of six campuses. Campus A and Campus B were the original two campuses that merged. One former Teacher Training College (Campus C) was amalgamated with these two campuses in 2002 as well as a Skills centre (Campus D). In 2003 a former Youth Centre (Campus E), was also amalgamated into the college. In July 2005 the sixth campus, Campus F, opened in a deep rural area. Campus G was a Skills Centre with no students in 2007 and was upgraded and handed over by the Department of Education in 2009. Campus H was in operation for only one semester and was temporarily closed down due to squatters occupying the premises. Planning for the establishment of further campuses is well on track. Campus I is in the process of being built at the moment and the site for Campus J has been identified and secured.

According to the strategic plan of the College (unpublished document), eleven Campuses and various Skills centres will provide training in the area. The Skills centres offer short skills courses that are mainly craft orientated. Most of the Skills centres/locations are rented for the period of the course. Once an area has reached the saturation point for the specific skill offered the facilitator is redeployed in another area. The only permanent Skills centre is situated at Campus D.

The Central Office of the College is situated in the same town as Campus A but in different premises about 5 kilometres from the Campus. The Rector, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors are all stationed at the Central Office together with their support staff. Most of the functions are centralised and the different units are run from the Central Office. All Procurement (General Administration), Human Resources, Curriculum,

Community Outreach Programmes, Finances and Student Support Services and the Quality Management System are managed by the unit managers situated at the Central Office. At the moment the enrolments are still handled at Campus level, but this function will be centralised in the near future. I am employed at the Central Office in the Research Department, and the above information was gained from my day to day involvement in the processes of the college.

Similarities in the socio-economic dynamics of the four districts can be observed: high levels of unemployment, poverty (79% in some areas), HIV/AIDS prevalence, low levels of education, lack of social development and lack of infrastructure and industry. According to Ngqulunga (2005), the total population is 1,4 million and only 45% of the economically active are employed. 7% of the population in the catchment area have grade 4 and 36% have no formal schooling experience. The lack of industry undoubtedly contributes to the above factors (Census, 2001 & Ngqulunga, 2005).

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Education in the rural areas lies at the heart of rural development. Cuts in the education budgets threaten the existence of educational institutions and rural institutions face very different challenges when compared to their urban counterparts. The role of vocational education and training in rural communities is increasingly important in the light of the persistence of poverty and the search for solutions to the problems experienced by communities. In this study, I wanted to draw attention to the challenges faced by the rural college and the people they serve on a daily basis.

Rural education lags behind educational development in the country as reported in *Emerging Voices* (2005). Rural schools, including FET Colleges are generally poorly resourced with regard to buildings, equipment, books and infrastructure such as electricity and water.

Rural education needs to be improved for the following reasons as stated in *Emerging Voices* (2005): The Constitution states that each person has the right to basic education and further education. A large number of the population lives in rural areas and they want quality education. Furthermore, human development is measured by the levels of literacy, health and general well-being of the people living in the rural areas.

Education must be at the heart of any poverty-reduction programme in the rural areas as reported by Ludman (2006) and Delius & Schirmer (2001). Education in the rural areas

must take into consideration the specific characteristics of each rural setting and the needs of that particular community as noted by Serato (2004). This applies to the rural college as well.

Looking at literature from other countries, the community colleges in America are often the leading post secondary institutions in the area and provide college opportunities to students who may not otherwise go to college (Katsinas & Moeck, 2002). The community colleges also train and retrain mid-level skilled workers and one of the advantages of community colleges is that they are geared towards local students and their needs, and the tuition fees are lower. The rural FET College is in a perfect position to address the same needs as the community colleges.

However, due to the changes in policies and legislation in South Africa, FET Colleges have moved away from the community college model. The National Education (NATED) courses provide both secondary school (N2 - N3) and post-secondary school (N4 – N6) education. The post secondary courses (N4 – N6) are being phased out by the Department of Education, leaving a huge gap for the rural student. Being situated in a poverty stricken rural area, the FET College is the only lifeline for post secondary education in the rural area. Only a few people can afford to send their children away to better their education at a University or University of Technology. The secondary (N2 – N3) NATED courses are being replaced by the National Certificate Vocational (NCV L2 – L4) courses, which only offer qualifications on the FET band and not post secondary education. The NCV, which is more in line with the secondary school curriculum, was introduced in January 2007 and according to Watters (2008), as an alternative to the more academic programmes offered at secondary schools. More detailed information on the NCV is discussed in Chapter 2.

The College also offers short Skills courses that are more craft orientated. These short Skills course (3 months) are not accredited courses and are offered on demand as required by the community. As soon as saturation point is reached for the skill in a specific area, the facilitator offering the course is redeployed to another area. Although Rasool (2005) argued that Learnerships are one of the best methods for the FET Colleges to take part in the National Skills Development Strategy, only a few learnerships have been offered at the College. Learnerships are very complex and the co-operation between the different role players is not that good.

Taking education to the people is of the utmost importance if we want to alleviate poverty. Nora Tager, the Director of the Planning, Education, Agriculture, Community and Environment (PEACE) Foundation, as cited in Waddington (2002), notes that addressing rural poverty and delivering quality education to rural communities are perhaps the greatest challenge facing South Africa. Tager, as cited in Waddington (2002), emphasises that it is not always a lack of resources that causes poverty, but rather the lack of information regarding the possible use of resources. Furthermore, Tager, (Waddington, 2002) argues that maximising human capital through education and providing relevant information for the sustainable use of local natural resources, will lead to sustainable development.

A similar study on rural FET Colleges was conducted in the Eastern Cape as reported in the Portfolio Committee on Education (2006). This College however is different from the Colleges studied in the Eastern Cape. The College covers a vast area with campuses as far as 350km from Central Office. This poses unique challenges for the management of the campuses and the effective delivery of teaching and learning. I hope that this study will be of great value to the FET sector. It shows which challenges the FET College faces in the light of all the changes in policies and legislation.

1.4 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to research the challenges faced by the different role players, the following main research question was posed:

What are the challenges facing a rural FET College?

The main problem was too broad to be investigated. To overcome this, the main problem was divided into sub-problems to make the research more manageable.

- What challenges do the different role players face?
- How do rural Colleges currently respond to community needs?
- What perceptions do staff and students have regarding the viability of the curricula presented by the rural Colleges?

In order to determine the challenges that are faced by a rural FET College, it was imperative that an appropriate research method and design was selected.

1.5 RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

I decided to employ a qualitative study and a case study approach. Henning, (2004, p. 3) argues that qualitative studies usually aim for depth rather than “quantity of understanding”. Qualitative research is usually associated with specific techniques for gathering and analysing data, such as participant observation and interviews. I chose to use a case study approach to investigate the challenges faced by this college because case studies are designed to give a global analysis of the situation and they provide a deeper understanding of a complex situation. This is of particular value in this study as the circumstances under which this College operates are complex (Claassen & Van Wyk, 1999). The main disadvantage of a case study is that it is not necessarily generalisable. The College studied is unique because of the vast area the college serves and the challenges experienced due to its location, therefore I was not looking to generalise the findings of the research.

I used semi-structured interviews with a number of different role players at two of the campuses (Campus F and Campus A). Role players interviewed included, Central Office Managers (5), Campus Heads (2), Lecturers (8), Current students (8) and Graduates (7). I also interviewed one member each from 4 registered Co-operatives.

I also did observations of the premises. The observations confirmed the data that was gained from the interviews. By employing both interviews and observations I increased the validity of the study.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF CONTENT

- Chapter 1: Introduction and background of the study
- Chapter 2: Literature review and conceptual framework
- Chapter 3: Research design and methodology
- Chapter 4: Findings and data analysis
- Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has the following limitations, which are worth mentioning and taking into consideration. This study is about a rural College in the Northern Region of KwaZulu-Natal and the findings may not be generalised for the rest of the rural FET Colleges. It is important to note that rural areas are not the same. Even within the campuses of the College there are major differences in the demographics and infrastructure provision in the areas. Some of the managers might have held back some critical information of value for

the fear of intimidation. Due to the fact that the respondents are known to me, they could have responded in the way they thought I wanted them to respond. My knowledge of the context of the College also could have influenced the way I interpreted the responses from the respondents.

1.8 **SUMMARY**

In this chapter, an introductory background of the study was given. The motivation for the study, the problem statement and the research methods used were outlined.

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Theories of development, and especially sustainable development, form the theoretical framework of this study. The development theories and especially sustainable development is very important for education and for this study in particular. Sustainable development calls for the improvement of the quality of life for people without exhausting the world's natural resources as noted by Watermeyer (1995). According to Watermeyer (1995) education and training are the primary agents of transformation towards sustainable development. As Gasperini (2000) argues, the productivity of small landholders and subsistence farmers can be improved by the provision of more and better basic educational services in rural areas such as primary education, literacy and basic skills training. Rural areas are different from urban areas with regards to infrastructure and industries, therefore the courses offered at rural Colleges should be geared towards the needs of the rural community they serve.

It might be important to ask if education in rural areas is presently serving the long term needs of the rural community and playing its part in long term sustainable development, or serving the individual needs of people who might be joining the trend in migrating to urban areas.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Development theories have been generated as "a form of social science to provide models of change and to give guidance for policy-making" and the "focus of development is societal change" (Youngman, 2000, p 49). Youngman (2000) and Marthinussen (2004) provide detailed descriptions of different theories of development including capacity building theory, sustainable development theory and modernisation theory. Youngman (2000) argues that there is a strong relationship between economic development and educational policy. Sustainable development theory formed the main theoretical framework in this study as I am of the opinion that this theory is the most relevant model for the rural FET colleges. Currently the model used for the management of the college sector leans more towards the neo-liberal model, which is not suitable for the rural colleges as it relies strongly on industry.

2.2.1 Capacity Building Theory

Capacity building theory refers to the strengthening of people's capacity to determine their own values and priorities and to organise them to action. The concept is parallel to the concept of sustainability as it furthers the ability of people to continue to function independently. Capacity building is linked to empowerment. Especially at the grassroots level, it is geared towards promoting and empowering the local communities in order to ensure that vulnerable and marginalised groups can gain new skills (Abiche, 2003, Marthinussen, 2004 and Youngman, 2000).

2.2.2 Neo-liberal Theory

According to Youngman (2000), neo-liberals argue that education services should be orientated to the needs of industry. Education is seen to develop human resources needed for economic growth and competition in the world market. Reduced public expenditure on education is encouraged by the neo-liberals.

2.2.3 Modernisation

According to Abiche (2004), the concept of modernisation is the response of western social sciences to the challenges faced by the third world after the Second World War. Abiche (2004) argues that the central idea of this theory is that the development logic of economic growth in general will force societies towards a specific direction of change.

2.2.4 Sustainable Development

The term "Sustainable Development" is a vague and ambiguous term which is very difficult to define and even more difficult to implement. Sustainable Development is described by Marthinussen (2004, p. 43) as a process that "fulfils present human needs without endangering the opportunities of future generations to fulfil their needs." The fulfilling of human needs and aspirations is one of the most important goals for all development efforts around the world; especially the fulfilment of the basic needs and a better quality of life. Schwabe (2002, p.11) argues that sustainable development theory can be traced back to economic development theory when he notes that "sustainable development can be seen as the improvement of economic efficiency, the protection and restoration of the environment and the enhancement of the social well-being of people." (Also see Ahlberg, 2005; De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000). According to De Beer and Swanepoel (2000, p.50), the concept of sustainable development "embodies a concern

for both social justice and ecological health and offers hope for those who are concerned with increasing poverty and inequalities of the world.”

Sustainable development calls for the improvement of the quality of life for the people without exhausting the world’s natural resources. Watermeyer (1995) views sustainable development as a self-initiated and self-sustained development process based on the needs and resources of the community to restore individual identity and dignity and to promote people’s participation in every area of the development process. Education and training are the primary agents of transformation towards sustainable development.

High levels of poverty and a history of unequal access to resources and power in South Africa have highlighted the need for sustainable development in an integrated and holistic manner, as noted by Patel (2000). According to Fourie (2003), participatory and people-centered development are necessary conditions for sustainable development. Fourie (2003) argues that sustainable development also addresses issues related to populations and their use of natural resources, as well as their impact on the environment.

From the above it is clear that all definitions of sustainable development include the following components: the achievement of lasting satisfaction of human needs; the improvement of the quality of human life; the idea of self-reliant development; the idea of cost-effective development; and the notion that people-centred initiatives are needed. Sustainable development requires a commitment in overcoming poverty through a focus on the welfare of the poorest sectors of society.

This leads to the question of the role of education in sustainable development.

According to Higgs (2002, p. 145), “education should not be regarded as the mere acquisition of knowledge and skills, but education should be seen as an activity directed at the self-empowerment of the individual.” Higgs (2002) argues that education for sustainable development involves the renewal of individual skills, labour market skills requirements and the transformation of the world of work.

According to Gasperini (2000), sustainable development policies should consider education essential for empowering the poor. Basic education affects the production of small landholders and subsistence farmers. According to Gasperini (2000) the productivity of small landholders and subsistence farmers can be improved by the provision of more and better basic educational services in rural areas such as primary

education, literacy and basic skills training. Gasperini (2000) argues that the focus of the education and training in the rural areas should be on redefining the strategies and responsibilities to address rural development, sustainable natural resource management and poverty reduction.

2.3 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Neo-liberalism and globalisation have influenced skills development all over the globe. The impact of globalisation within the education system cannot be overlooked. Endwick (2006) describes globalisation as the trend towards a single, integrated and interdependent world, by breaking down traditional barriers between countries allowing the movement of goods, capital and people.

Torres and Rhoads (2006) identified different kinds of globalisation, namely globalisation from above, globalisation from below, globalisation of culture, globalisation of human rights and globalisation of the international war against terrorism. Globalisation from above is described as neo-liberalism. Neo-liberals call for an opening of national borders for increased commodity and capital exchange. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have promoted privatisation and decentralisation of public forms of education. According to Torres and Rhoads (2006) globalisation from below is described as anti-globalisation, which manifests in individuals, institutions and social movements whose aim it is to challenge the neo-liberal versions of globalisation. With the privatisation of institutions came higher fees and this led to student protests all around the world including South Africa.

Scoones and Wolmer (2003) argue that Africa did not gain from economic reforms and globalisation. Torres and Rhoads (2006) argue that globalisation is affecting our lives in complex ways. The impact of globalisation on colleges and universities can be direct or indirect. The effects of globalisation on educational policy are discussed by Dale (1999). Educational policies and practices are “borrowed” from other countries without taking into account the cultural context. Priestley (2002) argues that globalisation has clearly had a major impact on education systems; this can be seen in the new vocabulary of education and the withdrawal of governments from the responsibility of administration of these services, while maintaining control from a distance.

The implication of the neo-liberal perspective on education is that education should be orientated to the needs of the industry as noted by Youngman (2000). Education and

Training are seen in terms of developing the human resources needed for growth and competition in the world market. According to Lopez (2000), neo-liberals believe that the quality of teaching is not affected by a reduction in the education budget. The reduction in the education budget results in more students per classroom, demands for a reduction in teachers' pay and an increase in productivity by increasing the work day of teachers. Neo-liberals also call for the decentralisation of education to reduce the governments' financial and administrative responsibilities for education as noted by Lopez (2000).

According to Lopez (2000), the World Bank calls for the separation of teachers' salaries from general public sector pay scales. The World Bank also promotes the hiring of less well-educated teachers at lower salaries and offers financial incentives to take on the job training aimed at improving their productivity. This aspect is clearly seen at the moment in the public FET sector. Underqualified or unqualified teachers are replacing qualified teachers leaving the sector. The National Professional Diploma Education (NPDE) training is then offered to these "teachers". Most of them, however, cannot keep up the pace by studying and following a new "career" at the same time.

Mayer and Altman (2005) argue that skills development initiatives in South Africa must reduce unemployment and poverty. The skills development issues should at the same time promote growth and international competitiveness. South Africa's skills development policies are based on neoliberal views of skills development. The South African government has made a commitment to halve unemployment by 2014 (Mayer and Altman, 2005). If they want to achieve this, millions of jobs need to be created. Akoojee (2008) states that national attention focused on the role of FET Colleges in providing the necessary skills needed to implement the South African national skills development challenge. According to Akoojee (2008), skills development has been given a boost with the introduction of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) in 2006. The Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA), the skills development component of ASGISA, provides the importance of skills development and the role of colleges within these to respond to key skill deficits. In this regard FET colleges play a crucial role in skills development challenge of South Africa.

2.4 PROBLEMS IN RURAL AREAS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Squire (2000) reports that the youth identified the following problems facing them in rural areas: lack of educational facilities; lack of employment security; lack of recreational facilities; lack of health education; lack of decision-making opportunities, and lack of access to land. According to the Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Strategy

(ISRDS, 2000), the cost of living is higher in rural areas due to the higher cost of basic social services such as food and water, shelter, energy, health and education. Transport and communications services also cost more.

South Africa is characterised by high levels of poverty, especially in rural areas. According to the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (2000), 70% of South Africa's poor people live in rural areas. The rural people appear to regard poverty as part of their heritage. Barnes (2004) argues that some people are marked by the process of marginalisation, so that their whole life is dominated by forces that they have no or little control over. The rural areas have poor infrastructure, limited services provision and are far from the centres of power and decision-making (Scoones and Wolmer, 2003). Barnes (2004) argues that the incidence of poverty in South Africa is unacceptably high and poverty is most common amongst the black communities, where poverty indicators such as low literacy rates, poor health status and malnutrition are high.

Rural households resort to a different strategy to ensure their survival because of their vulnerability and poverty. Instead of jobs or employment, they rely on livelihood strategies as described in the next section as their main economic activity.

2.5 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Livelihood strategies refer to the combination of activities that people undertake to achieve livelihood outcomes. Most rural households employ multiple strategies to make ends meet. Ryan (2006) argues that it is generally accepted that opportunities for income generation are the most direct route out of poverty.

Chambers and Conway as cited in Brown (2001, p.11) define sustainable livelihoods as “the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. For a livelihood to be sustainable, it should cope and recover from stress and shock, maintain its capabilities and assets, and provide opportunities for the future generation.” Scoones and Wolmer (2003, p. 4) argue that the concept of sustainable livelihoods focus on assets, human, social and economic “capitals” as the basis on which people construct complex livelihood strategies and focuses on institutions and policies as mediating the process by which livelihoods are “played out and outcomes realised”.

To ensure a sustainable livelihood, Adelzadeh, Alvillar & Mather (2001) argue that people were forced to adopt diverse income generating strategies due to the low

absorption capacity of the formal economy. Eight income-generating activities have been identified by Adelzadeh, Alvillar & Mather (2001, p. 231) namely:

- agricultural production,
- sale of food and manufactured products,
- petty commodity production like clothing, beadwork,
- services like back yard mechanics, child minding etc,
- wage labour,
- pensions disability grants and child grants (state claims),
- claims against relatives, community members etc. and,
- unpaid domestic labour.

This FET College is currently involved directly in livelihoods through skills training in the form of training of Co-operatives. Co-operative training can assist rural people to manage and plan different strategies to gain maximum benefits and become self-sustainable. Currently the FET Colleges train the co-operatives for a week. They then go back to communities, work on a business plan and then come back to present the business plan. In the second week of training the business plans are discussed, changes recommended and they are assisted to complete the loan applications to Ithala Bank. As soon as the loan is granted the co-operative can run their businesses. The first four income generating activities as identified by Adelzadeh, Alvillar & Mather (2001) (namely agricultural production, sale of food and manufactured products, petty commodity production like clothing, beadwork, and services like back yard mechanics, child minding etc.), are ideally suited to be run by co-operatives.

2.5.1 What is a Co-operative?

“A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise.” (Ortmann & King, 2007a, p. 41). According to Philip (2003, p. 7), co-operatives are based on the “values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.”

Ortmann and King (2007a) describe some of the characteristics of co-operatives. Co-operatives are owned and democratically controlled by their members; co-operatives return surplus income to members; they are motivated by providing affordable and quality goods or services; they exist solely to serve their members and they pay taxes on income.

The Co-operative Act No. 14 of 2005 (RSA, 2005) came into law in South Africa in August 2005. This Act views co-operatives as promoting economic and social development by creating employment, generating income, facilitating broad-based black economic empowerment and eradicating poverty. The training of co-operatives is intended to empower people with the necessary skills for economic activity.

According to Trollip (2001, p 45) failures in co-operatives can be linked to the fact that “members seemed to lack product development skills like the identification of target markets and marketable products, product design and quality control” In a study conducted on agricultural co-operatives in South Africa, Ortmann and King (2007b, p.230) found that “agricultural co-operatives have generally not been successful in promoting agricultural development and members’ economic welfare.” The failures can be linked to poor management, lack of training, conflict amongst members, poor service delivery and lack of funds. In the study conducted by Ortmann and King (2007b) it become clear that co-operative members did not understand the purpose of a co-operative, how it functions, and what the members’ rights are. This is an area where the FET College can deliver much needed skills to the community through skills training/development. Co-operative training can assist providing the skills needed.

2.6 RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is a process of betterment of rural population welfare, while recognising the contribution of rural areas to the welfare of the whole society (Haines & Robino, 2006). According to Nkomo and Sehoole (2007) rural development includes the improved provision of services, opportunities for income generation and local economic development, improved infrastructure, social unity and physical security within rural communities, representation in local political processes and effective provision for the weak.

The Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) (2000), was unveiled in 2000, and the strategy explains the concepts “rural development” and “sustainability” as follows:

According to the ISRDS (2000, p. vi), rural development is “much broader than poverty alleviation” and rural development “enables poor people to earn more, invest in themselves and their communities and contribute towards maintenance of infrastructure.”

Sustainability is where rural people care about success and are able to access resources to keep the strategy going, by effectively participating in projects and activities (Nkomo and Sehoole, 2007).

The ISRDS (2000, p. iv) is designed to realise a vision that will “attain socially cohesive and stable rural communities with viable institutions, sustainable economies and accessible social amenities, able to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable people who can contribute to growth and development.”

According to the ISRDS (2000), rural areas throughout the world have similar characteristics. In rural areas, populations are spatially dispersed, which causes difficulty in providing services to the rural areas and at the same time it increases the cost of providing any services to the rural areas. The income of the people in rural areas is less due to limited industries and opportunities. The tax base of the area, being limited, results in rural areas not being able to fund their own development programmes. Agriculture is dominant and in some of the rural areas agriculture is the only economic sector.

Gasparini (2000, p. 3) argues that the “agriculture-only model of rural development has proven inadequate to address poverty reduction, rural development and sustainable natural resources management.” According to Gasparini (2000), the starting point should be the empowerment of poor people as well as policy and institutional reforms that will lead to participation of role players in rural development.

2.6.1 Education and rural development

Mrs Ina Cronje, former MEC for Education in KwaZulu-Natal, stated in a speech delivered on 24 March 2007 at the inauguration of 108 FET Council Members, that FET Colleges are about the acquisition of skills that our country is in desperate need of. Without the necessary skills the country cannot grow the economy, and the FET Colleges can help to build the country by providing the training for skills needed. Mrs Ina Cronje indicated that poverty and unemployment are the enemies of a better life for all.

In *Emerging Voices* (2005), it is reported that rural education stayed behind educational development in other parts of the country. Many people living in rural areas were denied educational opportunities. Many rural schools are poorly resourced with regard to buildings, equipment, books and access to infrastructure such as electricity and water.

Emerging Voices (2005) indicated why it is important to improve rural education. Firstly, the Constitution requires that everybody have the right to basic education as well as further education. Secondly, a large number of the population still lives in rural areas. Thirdly, the people living in rural areas believe in education and they want more quality education. Finally, human development is measured by levels of literacy, health and general well-being of the people staying in South African rural areas.

Ludman (2006) and Delius & Schirmer (2001) report that education must be the centre of any poverty-reduction programmes in the rural areas. Serato (2004) argues that education in the rural areas should not be the same as the urban model, but rather take into consideration the specific characteristics of each rural setting and the needs of that particular community.

Akoojee & McGrath (2005, p.6) argue that “there is a strong relationship between basic education and poverty reduction. There is widespread agreement that skills development is crucial for success of the development strategy.”

The role of the FET College in developing education for sustainable development is discussed below.

2.7 FET COLLEGES

It is important to give a brief overview of the FET College sector to understand the role of a College in a rural area. Fisher et al. (2003) indicate that the college sector is still a new phenomenon. The FET sector comprises 50 merged institutions declared FET institutions in terms of the FET Act of 1998 and formally constituted in 2002 (Barnes, 2004).

According to Fisher et al. (2003) the history of technical and vocational education is linked to the development of the South African economy, which was brought on by the discovery of minerals. Fisher et al. (2003, p. 328) noted that the location of these minerals required “the development of railways, use of heavy equipment, the development of power supplies, new urban areas and the growth of commercial farming and manufacturing”, which in return resulted in the establishment of classes for apprenticeships at railway workshops in Natal in 1884 and in the Cape in 1890, followed by programmes for mining engineers at the South African College in Cape Town in 1894. This led to the

establishment of technical institutes in 1903 in the Witwatersrand, and in 1907 in Durban and Cape Town.

The fast growing industrialisation of South Africa in the period leading up to the Second World War was accompanied by a growth in technical college enrolments by white South Africans. This was a result of the Apprentice Act of 1922, which required apprentices to attend technical classes (Badroodien, 2004).

From 1935 to 1955 the full-time technical college enrolments grew from 4 000 to 9 000 and the part-time enrolments from 16 000 to 55 000, which were mostly linked to apprenticeships. The Transvaal Technical Institute had 14 centres across the Witwatersrand and was the largest institution in the country. Enrolment was still very high among whites, with few enrolments among Indian and Coloureds. Africans were largely excluded (Barnes, 2004 & Fisher et al., 2003).

The Higher Education Act of 1923 (RSA, 1923), incorporated technical colleges into higher education under the Union (Barnes, 2004 & Fisher et al., 2003). This led to colleges' autonomy and active support from local business and community leaders, which in turn led to responsiveness to the local labour market demands and to demands for adult, continuing and leisure education. Malherbe, as cited in Fisher et al. (2003, p. 329) argues that the technical colleges became the "people's university". The technical colleges were flexible and adaptable to "readily meet the educational needs of all ages and all levels" in the white community. According to Barnes (2004), however, the technical colleges were not always aware of manpower needs of the country, and the government then decided to declare technical colleges state institutions.

According to Fisher et al. (2003, p. 329), the technical colleges "declined in importance" under National Party rule, after 1948, partly due to the promotion of school-based technical and vocational education in the Afrikaans rural areas. The Witwatersrand Technical College with 35 000 students, was broken up into separate English and Afrikaans medium institutions under Act No. 70 of 1955. This brought the colleges under direct control of central government and thereby reduced the influence of local college councils and local business communities. State investment dropped and this resulted in severe financial constraints, which led to a fall in enrolments.

The Advanced Technical Education Act of 1967 removed the leading urban technical colleges from the sector to form Colleges for Advanced Technical Education (later

“Technikons”) with an enrolment of 23 000 students in the six institutions by 1969. According to Raju (2004), the Van Wyk De Vries commission recommended that the Colleges for Advanced Technical Education should enjoy free vertical development, the same as the Universities. The Advanced Technical Education Amendment Act (Act 34 of 1979), changed the name of the Colleges for Advanced Technical Education to “Technikon”. Technikons therefore have their roots in technical colleges as stated by Raju (2004). Technical Colleges’ responsibility was to attend to the theoretical aspects of apprentice education and training while Technikons “main educational task is to provide education and training for middle and high level personnel with skills, technological and practical knowledge that ensures that they practice their occupations effectively and productively” as stated by Raju (2004, p. 3). The 1970’s and 80’s were marked by political conflict and declining economic growth. After the Soweto uprising in 1976, education and training became important. The Education and Training Act of 1979 replaced the Bantu Special Education Act of 1953 and the Bantu Special Education Act of 1964.

In the early 1990’s 123 racially exclusive technical colleges existed (67 White colleges, 3 Indian colleges, 8 Coloured colleges and 22 African colleges in the Republic and 23 in the TBVC (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) states (former homelands). Two thirds of the 76 435 students enrolled in 1991 in technical colleges were white. According to Fisher et al. (2003) new policy frameworks were put into place after the first democratic election in 1994. The Department of Education and Department of Labour published a national Human Resources Development (HRD) strategy entitled “A nation at work for a better life for all” in 2001.

Bischoff and Nkoe (2005) argue that the provision of vocational training under apartheid was characterised by unequal access to learning opportunities based on race, a division between theory and practice, and an unequal allocation of funding between historically white institutions (state-aided colleges) and historically black colleges (state colleges) (DoE, 2001). The new legislation that governs the FET sector is intended to remove the shortcomings created by the old apartheid technical education. The merging of the FET Colleges, according to Bischoff and Nkoe (2005) has taken place for the following reasons: the re-integration of resources (both human and material); the determination of the best, efficient and effective use of resources; to avoid duplication of resources; the introduction of effective management by detecting and utilising resources; the improvement and upliftment of the standard of education to meet the challenges of the labour market, and the enhancement of co-operative governance.

According to Akoojee et al. (2005), the Further Education and Training Sector has achieved much over the last few years. Racial discrimination legislation has been removed, the 17 separate education departments formed into one national education department and 152 former technical colleges merged into 50 further education and training colleges.

2.7.1 The role of the FET colleges

According to Gewer (2001) & Akoojee et al. (2005), the FET sector comprises a diverse group of education and training providers, both public and private. The majority of further education and training takes place in secondary schools, grade 10-12 and the rest takes place in the FET colleges (NCV L2 - 4). FET is therefore a complex system, located between general education and higher education, as well as providing access to the world of work.

Former Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor (2005), in an address delivered at the inauguration of the second National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) at the Birchwood Conference Centre on 11 August 2005, stated that in the past FET Colleges was treated like special schools with no recognition for the potential they had to contribute to skills development, or achieving the national goals of access to lifelong learning and widening education and training opportunities. To address the problem Minister Pandor identified the following objectives:

- To position the FET Colleges to offer modern intermediate skills programmes;
- To increase the participation and success rates of the age group 16 to 24;
- To focus on the development and employment needs and opportunities related to development projects;

According to Fisher et al. (2003) much depends on the FET Colleges to produce the intermediate to high-level skills required in a changing global and national economic environment. The sector should also play a role in expanding access, widening participation and promoting social inclusion in a society characterised by poverty, highly unequal distribution of income and high unemployment. In a paper presented at the 48th International Conference on Education in 2008, it was stated that the main role of FET

Colleges is to provide artisan and vocational training programmes to youth and adults who have completed Grade 9 or higher. The FET Colleges provide education at the post-compulsory but pre-higher education levels.

Jacobsz (2005) argues that South Africa's FET institutions are faced with a dual imperative: they are expected to become globally competitive and to deliver quality and responsive programmes and to become responsive to the social, economical and political needs of mostly under-developed domestic communities. Gill, Fluitman and Dar (2000, p.1) argue that "governments often called upon VET systems to help unemployed young people and older workers to get jobs, to reduce the burden on higher education and to reduce the inequality of earnings between the rich and poor." According to Jacobsz (2005), FET institutions should undertake a survey of all community-based activities, and identify certain areas into which individuals and organisations in the local community can join or form partnerships with. All of this is not possible without an effective FET system. Jacobsz (2005) argues that it is increasingly expected that FET colleges should contribute to regional economic development with appropriate educational programmes.

Mbola (2007) reported that the former KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Sibusiso Ndebele had advised that FET Colleges need to offer skills that keep pace with changing national and provincial needs. Programmes offered at FET Colleges must be properly aligned towards the skills requirements of our country or province and remain fully responsive to the changing needs. By giving people skills FET Colleges provide them with employment opportunities. FET Colleges play a vital role in educating and training people in relevant skills so they can participate in the economy (Mbolo, 2007).

Gamble (2004) and Daniels (2007), argue that the FET is intended to provide both initial and second-chance opportunities for young people and adults, to empower them through education and training to reduce (if not eliminate) unemployment, income inequality and poverty.

According to Rhodes, in Squire (2000, par. 12), vocational education gives "definite purpose and meaning to education by relating education to occupational goals, provides the technical knowledge and work skills necessary for employment, and develops abilities, attitudes, work habits and appreciation which contribute to a satisfying and productive life." Squire (2000) argues that vocational education has an important role to play in the development of the majority of the rural youth, and will reflect a positive development in rural areas that are undergoing substantial socio-economic changes.

Rasool (2005) argues that the Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998 (RSA, 1998) presented opportunities for FET colleges. FET Colleges can visit companies to determine their training needs, engage with learnerships, assist them to complete their WSP (Workplace Skills Plan) and offer them skills programmes as the need arises from the workplace skills programme.

To understand the role that the FET Colleges should play in South Africa I looked at the community college system in the United States of America and Australia. Community colleges serve the needs of society by providing college opportunities to students, who may not otherwise go to college.

2.8 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

FET Colleges are known as community colleges in USA and Australia. (Letsie, 2003).

According to Killacky and Valadez (1995) rural community colleges play a dominant role in the educational, cultural and social aspects of rural life. Community colleges are often the centre of rural and economic development by improving the quality of rural life.

Laanan (2003, p. 757) states that “community colleges are open-access institutions and provide students with educational opportunities.” The community college plays a unique role in serving older adults. Cohen and Brawer as cited in Laanan (2003, p. 758), states that community colleges “will teach anyone, anywhere, anything, at any time whenever there are enough people interested in the programme.” Some of the reasons why older adults are choosing community colleges include low tuition fees, location, course offerings and flexible schedules. The community colleges provide educational access to all interested (Laanan, 2003).

Reichard (1995) argues that rural colleges are stressed as they face the emerging global society. The challenges facing rural areas in the United States and Australia are similar to challenges experienced in South Africa; poverty, illiteracy, dying small towns, shortages of trained workers, inadequate housing, high unemployment, school dropouts and the lack of adequate child and health care.

Miller and Tuttle (2006) argue that community colleges provide job training and remedial education, transfer education opportunities, provide entertainment and cultural enrichment, and serve economic development functions. They also provide opportunities

for local residents to get the education and job training necessary to keep on living in the areas they grow up in. Drury (2001) argues that community colleges are bridging the gap between existing workplace skills and employer-required skills. By offering programmes on a contractual basis for public and private employers, they can become providers of workplace training.

2.9 CHALLENGES FACED BY RURAL COLLEGES / COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Present day rural colleges all over the globe are faced with huge challenges, according to Rosenfeld (2001). New competition from other providers, expanding student diversity in terms of race, ethnicity and academic achievement, rising credential requirements and the digital divide, increasing reliance on global connections and low skill and literacy levels among applicants.

Roberts and Lean (2005) delivered a paper at the SPERA conference held in Australia in 2005. They identified the following challenges faced by the rural Colleges. One of the challenges is the provision of quality staff (attracting and retaining quality staff in rural areas is a problem). High turnover, underqualified, unqualified and beginner teachers are common in the rural colleges. Munsch and Boylan (2005) indicated that Alaska also experienced the same problems. The rural districts find it difficult to recruit qualified teachers and to fill all their vacancies in the rural areas. According to Hyland and Miller (2003) the majority of FE(T) colleges are inefficient, disorganised and use more and more lecturers who are no more qualified in the subject areas than the students. The lecturers' expertise is also out-of-date or not applicable to the subjects they teach (Reichard, 1995; Murray, 2005).

Munsch and Boylan (2005) and Murray (2005), also reported that a lack of teaching supplies and resources are challenges faced by the rural educator. Student motivation and attendance are also poor.

Christie (2005) identified more challenges facing the rural colleges, for example the limited curriculum offered at the colleges and the inability of students to explore their interests. Reichard (1995), Murray (2005) and Friedel and Lapin (1995) argue that the challenge for rural community colleges is to identify the particular trends, events, and emerging issues that will affect them, and to use this information to adjust their curriculum and responsiveness. According to Friedel and Lapin (1995) community colleges are the

major locus for change and development in their areas and they should be the centrepiece for community planning and service. Hyland and Merrill (2003) argue that colleges do not respond adequately to the needs of the community and the employers. Employers expressed the necessity for colleges to take into account the local economic structure, context and needs by offering vocational qualifications relevant to the local industry (Murray, 2005).

Rural youth have considerably less access to post-secondary education and training programmes than urban dwellers. Katsinas, Alexander & Opp (2003) identified a number of challenges that rural (community) colleges face in providing education to the rural youth. Providing access to post-secondary education is part of the core mission of community colleges. This is done through open door admission policies and affordable tuition that is geographically accessible throughout the college's service area. Low-income students which are concentrated in rural areas face unique barriers to access, including transportation. The funding of rural colleges relies heavily on state funding, as is the case in South Africa. Rural colleges are highly vulnerable to economic downturns, and they face major barriers to launching new programmes. This can be attributed to the higher operating cost per student because of the smaller budget base over which to spread programme costs as noted by Katsinas, Alexander & Opp (2003). State funding formulae do not take into consideration the higher costs of just keeping the doors open at rural institutions. To offer high cost technical curricula, which could contribute to local economic development is often unaffordable for rural colleges (Katsinas, Alexander & Opp, 2003). Reichard (1995) argues that the smaller student base results in smaller classes and this means less income for the rural college.

In the next section I shall look at the challenges faced by rural colleges in South Africa.

2.10 CHALLENGES FACED BY RURAL COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

In the previous section the challenges faced by community and rural colleges in other countries was discussed.

The challenges faced by rural colleges in South Africa, specifically in the Eastern Cape, have been reported by the Portfolio Committee on Education. The following observations were made by the Portfolio Committee on Education on Oversight visit to Further Education and training Colleges (2001):

- The committee observed that some FET campuses are situated far away from residential areas, thus making it difficult for learners to reach the institution of learning due to lack of transport in these areas. It was recommended that the DoE should collaborate its efforts with the Department of Public Works and Transport to ensure that FET Colleges are accessible for effective learning to take place.
- Some of the FET colleges do not have relevant teaching equipment suitable for the realisation of effective learning. It was recommended that the colleges should be equipped with good infrastructure and sophisticated equipment.
- The committee noted that FET Colleges do not have staffing norms and guidelines for appointment of temporary staff. Due to this insecurity, a high turnover of staff is experienced.
- There was a concern that Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) had not been given serious attention in the FET Colleges. This might give the perception within surrounding communities that the FET colleges are not providing a service they might require. RPL may result in people who do not have the necessary qualifications to further their studies at the FET College.

A lack of resources and industry in the rural setting are some of the challenges facing the rural Colleges. Without money, resources and industry the rural Colleges cannot survive. *Emerging Voices*, (2005, p. 2) stated that “being in a rural area is different, it is not romantic. To be there is to be engaged in a struggle to live. Money and jobs are scarce; the land itself is harsh and demanding, the schools are often ill-equipped, under-resourced and poorly staffed.”

Factors that contribute to the challenges faced by the rural colleges include the following as mentioned in *Emerging Voices* (2005):

- Geographical/spatial distribution: the areas where these colleges are situated are characterized by high unemployment rate and few work opportunities because of the lack of industries in the area. Prospective students cannot afford the tuition and even if they better their qualifications, work opportunities still remain few.

- Community orientation: colleges are expected to be “community colleges” offering short courses related to the community needs. The colleges, however, lack the capacity to develop and register these courses.
- Curriculum apathy: colleges still offer NATED courses, using outdated teaching methods and mostly theory. The DoE tries to address this issue with the implementation of the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) courses. The NCV courses were supposed to replace the old out-dated curriculum of the Department of Education. The new curriculum is more vocational. See paragraph 2.11 for a more in depth discussion of the NCV.

Another challenge identified in *Emerging Voices* (2005) is the lack of appropriate management and leadership skills amongst college management which can be linked to the lack of planning and focus at Colleges.

The collapse of apprenticeships was another challenge identified in *Emerging Voices* (2005). Learnerships are the alternative, but this is a very complex system, and co-operation between the different role players is not good. With learnerships, the Department of Labour, the Department of Education, and the Sector and Education Training Authorities (SETA), and employers are involved, each with their own set of rules and regulations.

Emerging Voices (2005) also indicates that the learners’ poor performance in English contributes to their poor performance in the classroom. Watters (2008) confirms this and states that lecturers interviewed are concerned about the open access policy used by the Department of Education. They say that the students’ skills in language and mathematics are very weak and entrance tests are recommended.

Challenges faced specifically by the College used as the case study were documented in a study conducted by Garisch (2007). According to his study, the type of student enrolled since 2007 through the NCV stream is immature, irresponsible, unmotivated, difficult, demanding, disruptive in the classrooms and in most cases lacking in powers of concentration. The students are very young and lack discipline, resulting in very high levels of absenteeism and late arrival for classes (Garisch, 2007).

Another challenge and major area of concern identified by Garisch (2007) was the centralisation of all key management and administrative functions. This caused strained

relationships from the start between campuses and Central Office Managers which worsened over time. Campus Heads felt that the Central Office Managers were using a top-down approach in their interactions with the campuses and thereby undermining the authority of the Campus Heads. Campus Heads also felt that the wrong people were appointed in the positions at Central Office resulting in them (managers) operating in crisis mode due to their inexperience. Consequently, this resulted in resentment towards the Central Office Management because of their attitudes. Poor communication on the part of Central Office regarding new policies and procedures resulted in confusion and lack of responsiveness on the part of the Campus Heads. From the Central Office Managers' point of view, the Campus Heads did not understand the "official" position with regard to the centralisation of the functions which resulted in campus heads feeling threatened and undermined. This resulted in power struggles and resistance to central office initiatives, which in turn leads to the checking up on Campus Heads on the actual status of processes and developments at campuses. Campus Heads also failed in their duties to accurately convey information distributed at college management meetings which they attend, or to pass on formal instructions to relevant operational staff.

2.11 CURRICULUM REFORM

According to Gewer (2001, p.143), curriculum reform provides a "key lever to achieving transformation in FET Colleges." For Colleges, this means developing programmes in line with the NQF which requires a total mind-shift on the part of the College management. Colleges should identify clear programme needs and align the programmes being offered to the target learners. For the College to achieve this, it is essential that the imbalances between theory and practice should be overcome. For the learners to be prepared for the workplace, practical experience is necessary as noted by Gewer (2001).

It is clear that Colleges need to be proactive in transforming the curriculum in line with Outcomes Based Education (OBE). Gewer (2001, p.141) argues that the "range of programmes offered in colleges has been limited by outdated syllabi, overemphasis on theory in isolation from practical experience, and a preoccupation with enrolling as many students as possible regardless of the learner's aptitude or interests."

Gamble (2004) argues that a successful FET system will provide diversified programmes offering knowledge, skill, attitudes and values. The range of programmes offered in 2004 by technical colleges (FET Colleges) was limited to national programmes examined by

the DoE. Gamble (2004) argues that in terms of the education and training required, the routes to employment and self-employment are moving closer together. Preparation for employability requires a strong combination of practice and theory. Practical training and experience are crucial for both employment and self-employment.

2.12 NATIONAL CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL AS ALTERNATIVE TO NATED PROGRAMMES

The approval of the phasing out of N4 - N6 was published in the Government Gazette 31711 dated 12 December 2008. According to the Government Gazette the last enrolment for N4 was in January 2009, the last enrolment for N5 in January 2010 and the last enrolment for N6 in January 2011. No replacement courses were introduced for the old NATED N4 – N6 courses (post-school courses).

The new National Certificate Vocational (NCV) was introduced into the FET Colleges in January 2007. This certificate is more in line with the secondary school curriculum and replaces the old NATED (N1-N3) programmes. The NCV is an alternative to the more academic programme offered at secondary schools, as noted by Watters (2008). According to the South Africa National Report on the Development of Education (2008, p. 19), the NCV “is intended to address both the development of cognitive and practical skills as well as an integrated approach to learning.” The programme consists of three compulsory subjects – Language, Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation and four vocational subjects in a specific field/area chosen by the student. Currently the following programmes are offered at FET Colleges:

- Civil Engineering and Building Construction
- Electrical Infrastructure Construction
- Engineering and Related Design
- Finance, Economics and Accounting
- Hospitality
- Information Technology and Computer Science
- Management
- Marketing
- Office Administration
- Primary Agriculture
- Tourism
- Safety in Society since 2009 and
- Education and Development since 2009

The NCV is intended to equip students with trade and vocation skills to ensure that students can be employed or become self-employed (South Africa National Report on the Development of Education, 2008).

In general the standard of the new curriculum is very high and the learners struggle to keep up with the standard. Blaine (2009) reported that the overall pass rate for the NCV in 2007 was about 50%. In 2007 only 9,2% of the students enrolled passed all seven subjects to qualify for the Level 2 NCV certificate. The overall pass rate for the NCV Level 2 in 2008 was 55% and for Level 3, 66%. The overall pass rate for four of the individual subjects was below 30%. On Level 2 the following subjects obtained less than a 30% pass rate: Electrical Systems and Construction (28%), Electronics (24%), Fitting and Turning (27%) and Mathematics (28%). On Level 3 the following subjects obtained a pass rate of less than 30%: Electrical Control and Digital (15%), Engineering Fabrication (12%), Engineering (23%) and Engineering Sheet Metal (10%). As cited in Blaine (2009), the Deputy Director-General of FET, Penny Vinjevold, said that the department has to ask the question whether the colleges have the capacity to teach the subjects.

The main difference between NATED and NCV is that NATED serves both FET (N2 - N3) and post school education (N4 - N6). With the NATED courses, the students get the opportunity to obtain a National Diploma in their field of study. For a N6 Management Assistant student to obtain a National Diploma in Management Assistant, a graduate has to be employed in their field of study for 18 months. After the completion of the 18 months the employer submits a letter to the Department of Education stating the duties the graduate performed. If the duties performed are applicable to the field of study the student completed, the N6 Management Assistant Certificate is then converted into a National Diploma, which is equal to M+3 for employment purposes. NCV only serves the FET band (L2 - L4). No provision is made for post-school qualifications. According to McGrath and Akoojee (2009) the implementation of NCV should be regarded as a massive experiment of which the impact is not clear at this stage. The funding formula of the Colleges is linked to NCV and the FET colleges are forced to focus on the younger student. McGrath and Akojee (2009) argue that the move to NCV undermines the previous policy direction of opening up colleges to older learners. College management still argues for the need to continue offering the NATED courses which are post-school qualifications and which cater for the older learners.

Asmal as cited in Letsie (2003), argues that further education and training is a bridge between general education and higher education or employment. The FET sector is an important sector for young people and adults whose formal education has been interrupted. According to Asmal it is essential for the FET sector to be as accessible as possible to adult learners who were unable to continue their education because of poverty or lack of opportunity. With the phasing out of the NATED courses for post matric students will result in a lack of opportunities for a larger group of the population, specially rural people who can not afford to travel and stay in big cities to pursue post matric courses.

The phasing out of the NATED courses is a major of concern for all the staff members at the Colleges. As can be seen in Table 7 in Chapter 4, a very high percentage of the enrolments currently at the Colleges are for the NATED courses. All the respondents in Graph 1 in Chapter 4 indicated that the location and affordability is why they chose the College to further their studies. Most of these respondents live in poverty stricken areas and the parents cannot afford to send the children away to further their studies. Respondents in both Campus A and Campus F are at least 300 km away from the closest university. What about transport, accommodation?

The respondents in both areas can still stay at schools to gain matric, but where do they go to if the want to improve their qualifications? This will result in higher unemployment.

2.13 LEARNERSHIPS

Learnerships (Gewer, 2001, p. 146) are controlled by the Skills Development Act of 1998 to “include a complex contractual agreement for a fixed period between the learner, the provider and the employer, and provide a framework for formalising the relationship between these parties in realising the qualification.” Very few learnerships are offered by the FET Colleges because of the accreditation required by the SETAs. The SETAs are responsible for registration and funding of learnerships. Private providers need to be accredited by the individual SETAs to deliver a learnership. The SETAs insist that the public FET Colleges register as well, despite the fact that each provincial education department is registered by Umalusi as the relevant quality assurance body. Stemmers (2005) argues that in a learnership the learners will spend more time working under the guidance of skilled people but they will also receive theoretical instruction. Learnerships (Gewer, 2001 & Akoojee et al., 2005) are part of the Department of Labour’s macro-strategy for skills development.

Rasool (2005) argues that the best opportunities for FET Colleges in the skills development strategy lies in the provision of learnerships. Learnerships are seen as an important method to upskill the workforce on a large scale. According to Gewer (2001) learnerships provide an ideal model for colleges to deliver qualifications that contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation. When implementing learnerships, Colleges are forced to become creative in the design and management of such programmes.

The implementation of learnerships has some challenges as identified by Gewer (2001). The learnership must be in response to an identified need, they should cater for learners who may not have had exposure to educational opportunities. Many learnerships could be offered in areas of the country where there is jobless growth, equipping the learner to create and sustain employment. The introduction of learnerships into colleges may force colleges to move away from a time-led curriculum and will require college personnel to work outside normal hours and to offer different modules at different times. However, Stemmers (2005) argues that learnerships should not be seen as the magic solution to the unemployment problems because the cost of learnerships is much higher than the costs involved in the traditional education system.

2.14 CONCLUSION

As can be seen in the literature review, Colleges are placed at the centre of the national skills agenda. In the latest National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS II), FET Colleges have been earmarked to be the preferred providers for the delivery of skills (DoL, 2005).

When people in rural areas think of education, their first thought should be of the local community college. In the South African context it should be the FET College (Cavan, 1995). The FET College should be the centre of all educational and cultural experiences. Cavan (1995) argues that it is the responsibility of the college to let the surrounding communities know about its mission and achievements. This awareness, will in the end, lead the community to support the college. Valadez and Killacky (1995) argue that the community college (FET College) should be or is in a position to provide wide-ranging support and educational services. Colleges are in the ideal position to address social problems such as literacy, poverty, and education in rural communities.

Letsie (2003) argues that the major reason for the introduction of community colleges in the American education system was to broaden the educational opportunities for the

community. These colleges became a doorway to educational opportunities by serving the rural areas, inexpensively offering a variety of programmes and by adhering to an open-door admissions policy that allows anybody to enrol – not a policy of exclusion. This is also part of the FET Colleges mission.

With the implementation of the NCV, Colleges are forced to focus on the younger student as the funding provided by the Department is tightly tied to the NCV courses. No provision has been made for post-school qualifications. As argued by McGrath and Akoojee (2009), the implementation of NCV should be regarded as a massive experiment, the impact of which is uncertain. This has the potential of threatening the existence of the FET Colleges in the rural areas, and undermines the previous policy direction of opening up colleges to older learners. Colleges still argue for the need to continue their tradition of offering the NATED courses which are post-school qualifications and which cater for the older learners.

According to Letsie (2003) educational opportunities of many citizens have been limited and this led to many South Africans being uneducated, unskilled, unemployed and living in poverty. The establishment of community colleges (FET colleges in rural areas) should assist in alleviating poverty and unemployment.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of the discussion of the research design developed; the data collection methods used in the study as well as the research instruments. Finally, a discussion on how the data was analysed is included.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design can be seen as a plan or framework of how you intend conducting the research process in order to solve the research problem (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

To conduct my research I decided on a qualitative approach. Henning, (2004, p. 3) argues that qualitative studies usually aim for depth rather than “quantity of understanding”. Ferguson (1993) describes qualitative research as a set of methods for conducting research and as a set of beliefs about our knowledge of the world. Qualitative research is usually associated with specific techniques for gathering and analysing data, such as participant observation and interviews. De Vos (1998, p. 240) describes qualitative research as a “multi-perspective approach” (using different qualitative techniques and data collection methods) to “social interaction aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that the subjects attach to it.”

Merriam (cited in Creswell, 1998, p. 145) mentions six assumptions of qualitative design. The first assumption is that qualitative design is concerned with process. The second assumption is that qualitative design is “interested in meaning; how people make sense of their lives, experiences and structures” of life. The third assumption is that in qualitative design the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. The fourth assumption is that in qualitative design the research is descriptive. The fifth assumption is that qualitative research involves fieldwork, and the final assumption is that qualitative design is inductive as the researcher builds abstractions, concepts and theories from details.

According to Kaplan and Duchon (1988) interpretive researchers attempt to understand the ways others construe, conceptualise and understand events, concepts and categories. Qualitative methods are characterised by detailed observation of the researcher in the natural setting in which the study occurred and attempt to avoid prior

commitment to theoretical constructs or to hypotheses formulated before gathering any data.

Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 270) describe the difference between quantitative and qualitative research in the following table:

Table 2: Quantitative and Qualitative Research

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Approach to the setting	Research takes place in a controlled setting	Research takes place in natural settings
Aims of research	Quantitative descriptions Explanation and prediction	Thick (rich) descriptions Interpretive understanding
Research Strategy	Hypothetic – deductive Generalizing	Inductive Contextualising
Notion of objectivity	Natural science definition: maximum control over extraneous factors	Intersubjectivity: gaining trust and rapport in order to get as close as possible to subjects' trustworthiness and credibility

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Ferguson (1993), argues that the interpretivist paradigm seems to be emerging as a broadly acceptable umbrella term for related conceptual schemes. Ferguson (ibid) argues that two things about interpretivist research make it particularly challenging to learn and use well. Interpretivism encompasses a wide variety of methodological approaches and also supports a range of purposes. De Vos (1998) indicates that the term “interpretative” refers to the fact that the aim of research is to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions of everyday human interaction. Interpretative social science is related to hermeneutics. Hermeneutics emphasises a detailed reading or examination of text. Text can refer to a conversation, written words or pictures. The researcher conducts a “reading” to discover the meaning that is embedded in the text (Neumann, 2000). The interpretative approach is generally seen as “the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds” (Neumann, 2000, p. 71).

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

3.3.1 Case Studies

I believe that a case study was the best way to investigate the topic.

Hamersley and Gomm (2000) argue that all research is in one sense a case study. The term “case study” is employed to identify a specific form of inquiry. The term “case study” is also often taken to carry implications for the kind of data that are collected, and perhaps also for how these are analysed. The aim of case study research should be to capture cases in their uniqueness. I used structured data that I gained from interviews and observations. The main reason why I decided to use the case study method is that the College is unique in the vast area it covers and a case study would show the uniqueness and challenges faced. This College serves the people in deep rural areas and is still expanding. I concentrated the study on two campuses namely Campus A that is close to the Central Office and the first campus established, and Campus F that was the most recent campus (at the time when the research was conducted) and situated 350 km away from the Central Office. The two campuses were chosen due to the fact that Campus A was the first Campus established in 1949 and Campus F, the latest campus, established in June 2005. Campus A is situated in a residential area in a rural town and Campus F is situated on the outskirts of a very small rural “town”. The two campuses are also the most “urban” and most rural of the campuses. More detailed information on the Campuses can be found in Chapter 4. The research was conducted at Campus A and Campus F during June and July 2008.

Yin (1994) defines a case study as a strategy (approach) for doing research, which involves an empirical investigation (to find out what is going on) of a particular (specific) contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources (methods of collecting evidence) of evidence. Welman and Kruger (2001) argue that the term “case study” relates to the fact that a limited number of units of analysis, such as an individual, a group or, as was the case with my research, an institution are studied intensively. Case studies according to Burton (2000) are one of the most popular methods to conduct social science research. According to Burton (2000) there are three different types of case studies – exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Hakim, cited in Burton (2000), provides another classification of case studies namely descriptive, selective and experimental. Babbie and Mouton (2001) provide yet another classification of case studies namely: individual case studies, community studies, social group studies, studies of organisations and institutions, studies of events, roles and relationships and studies of

countries and nations. This research falls under studies of organisations and institutions because it is an institution and my research focuses on many different issues and different role players in the institution.

The main disadvantage of a case study is that it is not necessarily generalisable. Burton (2000) argues that in social science research the main objection against case studies is the issue of representativeness, which raises the question of generalisability of the findings. In this research I was not looking to generalise the findings. The set-up of this college is also very unique due to the different sites of delivery and the distance between the delivery sites.

Case studies are a flexible method of gathering data but are by no means an easy way to gather data. According to Burton (2000) data collection procedures in case studies are frequently not routinised, and the premium is placed upon question and listening skills. Case studies often require the interviewing of “key informants” such as professionals, public officials and other power holders. This interviewing requires a great deal of preparation on the part of researchers, not to mention confidence in interviewing individuals with a higher status than oneself. Researchers require a high degree of research expertise where a wide range of methods have been used. According to Berg (2001, p.212), “case study methods involve systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how it operates or functions.” In my research, I wanted to find out what challenges the rural colleges face. To understand this I needed to know the student and staff profile and what kind of programmes are offered at the college.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS/METHODOLOGY

Babbie and Mouton (2001) describe research methodology as the methods, techniques and procedures that one uses in the process of implementing the research design. In my dissertation I decided to employ interviews as the main method supplemented by observations.

3.4.1 Data Collection

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the term data refers to the rough materials researchers collect from the world they are studying. Data is both the evidence and the clues.

3.4.2 Interviews

Interviewing as a research method involves the researcher asking questions and receiving answers. According to Burton (2000) interviews should try to be made into conversations. It is important to ask open-ended questions that demand long answers. Time is the main constraint with interviews. The conducting of the interview is time consuming, but the analysis and transcribing of the interview can also take a very long time. Recruiting the interviewees can also take a long time. Holstein and Gubrium (1997) describe interviews as a special form of conversation and claims that all interviews are interactional. Babbie and Mouton (2001) see the interview as an interaction between an interviewer and respondent. Essentially an interview is a conversation that pursues specific topics. Bell (2005) argues that the major advantage of the interview is its adaptability. The interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings. The major disadvantage is that it is time-consuming and there is always the danger of bias.

The preparation for the interview is very important. According to Bell (2005) the preparation is almost the same as for the questionnaire. You need to select the topic, questions need to be devised, methods of analysis considered and a schedule should be prepared and piloted.

Interviews are very widely used in social research and there are many different types like structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Robson, 2002). According to De Vos (1998) the fully structured interview has pre-determined questions with fixed wording in a pre-set order. Semi-structured interviews have pre-determined questions, but the order and wording of the questions can be changed. Additional questions can even be added. In my study I made use of semi-structured interviews. I chose this because it was then possible to change the wording and sequence of the questions. The unstructured interview has a general area of interest and concern, but the interviewer lets the conversation develop within this area and the interview can be completely informal.

Creswell (1998, p. 150) identified the following advantages and limitations of interviews:

Table 3: Advantages and limitations of interviews

	Advantages	Limitations
Interviews	<p>Useful in cases where informants cannot be directly observed.</p> <p>Informants can provide historical information</p> <p>The researcher has “control” over the line of questioning</p>	<p>Provides “indirect” information filtered through the views of interviewees</p> <p>Provides information in a designated “place”, rather than the natural field setting.</p> <p>Researcher’s presence may bias responses</p> <p>Not all people are equally articulate and perceptive.</p>

Interviews demand skills. The interviewer must attempt to motivate the interviewees to talk freely and openly. The behaviour of the interviewer has a major influence on the willingness of the interviewee to do this. Robson (2002) identified some skills that the interviewer needs to have: listen more than you speak; be straightforward and clear when questioning, without being threatening, and eliminate cues which lead interviewees to respond in a particular manner; and enjoy the interview. Robson (2002) advises that you should always make sure that you take a full recording of the interview. This can be done by audio taping and taking notes.

Robson (2002) argues that the interview consists of: a set of questions and alternative subsequent items depending on the responses obtained from the interviewees; suggestions for prompts or probes; and a proposed sequence of questions that might change during the interview.

An interview schedule is necessary to focus questions on what is important and needs to be addressed in the study, and most importantly to prevent the omission of important information during the interview according to Barnes (2004). My interview schedule consists of various open-ended questions. It is divided into a general section, which was applicable to all interviewees and then specific questions aimed at the different role players of the FET College. (See Appendix A for interview schedules).

Open-ended questions in an interview have the following advantages according to Robson (2002). Open-ended questions are flexible, they allow you to go into more depth or clear up understandings, enable one to test the limits of a respondent’s knowledge, encourage co-operation and rapport, allow one to make more accurate assessment of

what the participant believes and open-ended questions can produce unexpected or expected answers. A probe can be used to get an interviewee to expand on a response (Robson, 2002). Prompts suggest to the interviewee the range or set of possible answers that the interviewer expects. Robson (2002) argues that the prompts must be used in a consistent manner with different interviewees and form part of the interview record.

The interview usually follows a certain sequence: Robson (2002) describes the sequence as follows: the introduction, the “warm-up” questions that consist of non-threatening questions to set both at ease; the main body of the interview, followed by the closure. Sometimes participants can come up with interesting contributions once the tape is switched off. Robson (2002) indicates that there are various possible ways of dealing with this like switching the recorder on again, making notes or forgetting about it. The key here is to be consistent in your approach and indicate how you dealt with the situation.

Semi-structured interviews have pre-determined questions, but the order can be adapted based upon the interviewer’s perception of what is the most appropriate. Questions can be changed and explained, and questions can also be added (Robson, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews were used as the main method of collecting the data. I interviewed the following role players: 5 Central Office Managers, 2 Campus Heads, 8 Lecturers (4 from each campus), 8 current students (4 from each campus), 7 graduates (4 from Campus A and 3 from Campus F), 4 members from co-operatives (1 from each co-operative). The interviews took place during June and July 2008 and each interview lasted between 15 to 40 minutes depending on the respondents. The interviews with the Campus Heads lasted between 30 to 60 minutes.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982) some researchers rely on their recall rather than on a tape to record the interview. This involves intensive field notes during and after the interview. This can be extremely difficult and valuable data can be lost, especially during lengthy interviews. Tape recorders can, however, create the illusion that research is effortless. The transcribing of the data, however, takes a long time and this should be taken into consideration when interviews are recorded. Bogdan & Biklen (ibid) state that good recording equipment is invaluable. The equipment should be easy to operate, and capable of making clear tapes. In my study I recorded all the interviews with the students (current and graduates) as well as the interviews with the lecturers. The interviews with the Central Office Managers and Campus Heads were however not recorded. The students and lecturers did not have any objections against the recording of the interviews.

The Central Office Managers and Campus Heads preferred not to have the interviews recorded.

3.4.3 Observations

Silverman (1993) argues that social science observation is fundamentally about understanding the routine rather than what appears to be exciting. Henning (2004) describes the structured, standardised observation as a research tool. This tool is used when the researcher observes a site without real participation. The researcher explores issues that will reveal more about the data that they acquired through interviews or in documents. With the observation schedule or checklist the researcher will be able to standardise the observation of different sites. The researcher may note extra information as field notes. Henning (2004) argues that field notes will compliment the instrument of observation and will explain some of the data and can shed some light on parts of the inquiry. Bogdan & Biklen (1982) argue that the notes a researcher makes after returning from a research session, are called field notes. The researcher writes down any noteworthy observations that can help with the analysis of the data. This is in addition to what has already been recorded during the interview or during observations.

The advantages of observation, according to Creswell (1998), are that the researcher has first-hand experience with the informant, information can be recorded as it occurs, unusual aspects can be noticed during observation and it can be very useful when exploring topics (like resources, competency) that may be uncomfortable to discuss.

Observations of the premises and classrooms were conducted. Using observations increased the validity of the research. I compiled an observation checklist to assist me when I did the observations at the campuses. The observations included staffing, students and infrastructure. See Appendix B.

3.5 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The research consisted of conducting semi-structured interviews with a number of different role players on the two campuses (Campus F and Campus A);

- Managers:
 - Curriculum Manager
 - Community Outreach Manager
 - Student Support Manager

- Marketing Manager and the
- Registrar
- The Campus Heads of Campus A and Campus F
- 4 lecturers from Campus A and 4 lecturers from Campus F
- 4 current students from Campus A and 4 current students from Campus F
- 4 graduates from Campus A and 3 graduates from Campus F and
- 4 members of 4 different registered co-operatives that trained at the College.

Purposive sampling was used for selecting the Managers at Central Office. With my knowledge of the College structure I selected participants that might shed light on the challenges faced by the rural Colleges. All management participants were purposefully selected because of the positions they fill at the Central Office.

The lecturers were selected on a voluntary basis. I requested a timeslot in the morning meetings at Campuses A and F and explained the research to the lecturers. The lecturers are an integral part of the core function of the FET Colleges and I wanted to know what the daily challenges faced by them teaching at a rural FET College. All the lecturers that participated in the research volunteered to take part in the research.

The lecturers of Campus A and Campus F nominated the current students from each campus. I asked them to nominate average students and not “star” students because I hoped to gain more information and knowledge behind the students’ reasons for studying at the College. The average students also have more challenges to face daily. The Campus Heads of both campuses provided me with contact numbers of former students and I contacted the students to find volunteers to take part in the research. I explained the reason for the research to the students and interviewed the first four volunteers from Campus A and the only three volunteers from Campus F. Former students (graduates) were interviewed to record their experience of the College and what they gained from the training.

Contact numbers for the co-operatives were provided by the Co-operatives co-ordinator at the Central Office, who also accompanied me when the interviews were conducted. Four Co-operatives were interviewed, because co-operative linked with the short skills course strategy of the Colleges and I wanted to see if the training was of any value to them.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In all research there are ethical considerations to be followed (Burton, 2000). A set of four principles and rules was developed by Kent (2000) who identified these principles as autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice, which can be used to guide ethical analysis.

- Autonomy: the researcher has an obligation to recognise that a person has the right to agree or not agree to take part in a research project. The basis of this is to ensure that informed consent is achieved.
- Beneficence: this principle involves the obligation to take positive steps to help others.
- Non-maleficence: this principle is concerned with the obligation not to inflict harm or expose people to unnecessary risks. The researcher should not cause harm.
- Justice: people should be treated fairly and ensure fair entitlement of resources.

The four rules identified by Kent (2000) are: veracity, privacy, confidentiality and fidelity.

- Veracity: researchers have an obligation to provide accurate information about the nature of a study. This rule concerns telling the truth and not being deceptive.
- Privacy: this rule concerns the respect for limited access to another person. People have the right to limit access to themselves, physically, emotionally or cognitively.
- Confidentiality: this rule concerns the right to control information about oneself.
- Fidelity: this rule concerns promise-keeping.

In my research, all participants had to complete an informed consent letter and were promised confidentiality. See Appendix C. Berg (2001) explains that informed consent means the knowing consent of individuals to participate in an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or manipulation. In my study the consent was obtained and ensured in writing. The Rector of the College

permitted me to do the research at the different sites. See Appendix D. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University to conduct the research. See Appendix E.

When conducting research on institutions, Simons and Usher (2000, p. 5) argue that “ethical issues have to be taken against a background of institutional complexities, personal responses and multiple expectations that are often conflicting expectations.”

3.7 RESEARCHERS POSITIONALITY AND LIMITATIONS

I am an office-based educator at the FET College and at the time of the fieldwork, also served as the examination officer of the College and assisted with the implementation of the QMS system at the College. I am also assisting in the curriculum section as well as in the research department. The staff were all known to me and I felt that they would be open and relaxed in my presence. During the interviews most of the role players were relaxed, and I did not get the impression that they were holding back any information from me. However, during the interviews with the Central Office Managers I found that some of them were a bit more hesitant to share too much information.

This study had the following limitations, which need to be taken into consideration:

- This study is about a rural College in the Northern Region of KwaZulu-Natal and the findings may not be generalisable for the rest of the rural FET Colleges due to the uniqueness of the different delivery sites and the distances between them.
- Some of the managers might have held back some critical information of value out of fear for intimidation. The managers of Central Office also preferred not to have the interviews recorded.
- Respondents could have given me responses they thought I wanted to hear because they are known to me.
- My knowledge of the context of the College could have influenced the way I interpreted the responses from the respondents.

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

“Reliability and validity are ways of demonstrating and communicating the rigour of research process and the trustworthiness of research findings” (Roberts, 2006, p. 41). Peräkylä (1997) argues that the issues of reliability and validity are important, because the objectivity of the research is at stake. Roberts (2006) describes reliability as how far

a test or procedure will produce similar results when tested or used in different circumstances. Validity is about how close we get to what we believe we are measuring to what we intended to measure. Roberts (2006) argues that researcher bias presents a potential difficulty in achieving validity in qualitative research. Validity in qualitative research can be enhanced by using triangulation where different theories, data sources and methods are used during research. (Roberts, 2006). I used semi-structured interviews and observations of the premises and classroom to increase the validity of the research.

3.9 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

After data has been collected it needs to be analysed and interpreted. Poggenpoel (1998) argues that data analysis in qualitative research is a challenging and highly creative process. The data collected needs to be understood.

Robson (2002) describes different approaches to qualitative analysis like the quasi-statistical approach, the template approach, editing approach and the immersion approach. Robson (2002) also identifies common features of qualitative data analysis. Although the approaches to analysis are very diverse, recurring features can be identified namely: codes that are given to an initial set of materials, adding comments, reflections, trying to identify common phrases, similar patterns and themes, gradually identifying a set of generalisations and then linking the generalisations to knowledge in the form of theories.

Miles and Huberman as cited in Robson (2002), provide a framework for conceptualising qualitative data analysis that is useful in case studies. Miles and Huberman (Robson, 2002) view analysis as consisting of three concurrent flows of activity namely: data reduction, data display and the drawing of conclusions or verification.

Data reduction is necessary to keep data manageable. Several methods for data reduction are discussed in Robson (2002). During and after data collection the data mountain can be reduced by the production of summaries and abstracts and coding. Robson (2002) suggests that the session summary sheet can be used shortly after an interview or observation has taken place. The session summary sheet consists of a single sheet that summarises what data has been obtained, who was involved, what issues were covered and the relevance to research questions which should be recorded on this sheet. Robson (2002) indicates that a similar sheet called the document sheet should be

prepared for each document. This form clarifies its context and significance as well as summarising the content of lengthy documents. Both of these documents (session summary sheet and document sheet) assist in data reduction, which is viewed as part of the analysis process.

Another technique of data reduction is the development of coding categories. According to Robson (2002) a code is a symbol applied to a section of text to classify or categorise it. Codes are related to research questions, concepts and themes. The Miles and Huberman (Robson, 2002, p. 477) approach distinguishes between first and second level coding. The first level coding is “concerned with attaching labels to groups of words. In the second level, the groups are coded into a smaller number of themes or patterns.” This coding process, according to Robson (2002), is central in developing an understanding of your data.

To draw conclusions is the next step in data analysis. According to Robson (2002) one starts drawing conclusions about what things mean from the start of data collection, noting patterns and regularities, positioning possible structures and mechanisms etc. Miles and Huberman (as cited in Robson, 2002, p. 480-481) list the following tactics that a researcher might use for drawing meaning from data:

..... noting patterns, themes and trends; seeing plausibility (does it make sense); clustering; making metaphors (rich, data reduction and pattern-making devices which help to link data with theory); counting (frequency of occurrence); making contrasts and comparisons (similarities and differences); partitioning variables; linking particular data to general concepts; factoring (attempt to discover factors underlying the process); noting relations between variables; finding intervening variables; building a logical chain of evidence and making conceptual or theoretical coherence.

Robson (2002, p. 460) identified several deficiencies of the individual as analyst.

- Data overload: the individual has limitations with the amount of data that can be dealt with.
- First impressions: early input can resist revision of data especially if the early input made a huge impression
- Information availability: if information is difficult to obtain it tends to get less attention.
- Positive instances: the human tends to ignore information conflicting with hypotheses already held and to emphasise the information that is easier to obtain.
- Internal consistency: the human tends to discount the novel and unusual.

- Uneven reliability: the fact that some sources are more reliable than others tend to be ignored.
- Missing information: something for which information is incomplete tends to be devalued.
- Revision of hypotheses: there is a tendency to over or under react to new information.
- Fictional base: the tendency to compare with a base or average when no base data is available.
- Confidence in judgement: excessive confidence is vested in one's judgement
- Co-occurrence: tends to be interpreted as strong evidence for correlation.
- Inconsistency: repeated evaluations of the same data tend to differ.

It is important to verify your findings to overcome the deficiencies of the individual as analyst. Miles and Huberman cited in Robson (2002), list tactics that can be used to assess the quality of qualitative data analysis. The first tactic is to check for representativeness, then to check for researcher effects (the effect you have on the case and the effects your involvement in the case has on you); triangulation is a good tactic to verify findings. If you find inconsistency you need to investigate further by using multiple sources and modes of evidence and double-check findings; weigh the evidence, some data are stronger and one naturally places greater reliance on conclusions based on the stronger data.

I used coding to analyse all the data obtained during the interviews and observations. I first coded the data into different categories per question. I had a general section where the questions were the same for all the respondents and more specific questions applicable to the role of the role players I interviewed. Especially with the general questions that were the same for all the respondents I had to make use of categories to reduce the large amount of data received. I then created tables for each question, stating the categories and then started counting the responses to make the analysis easier. This was very time consuming and especially with the general questions I had to revisit some of the questions to make sense of data gained. In my research all the data was audio taped, except where the interviewees did not agree to the audio taping, in this case the Campus Head of Campus A and the Managers at Central Office. All of these tapes were transcribed and then analysed. This was very time consuming.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented descriptions of the research design of the study. It focused on the theoretical purpose and justification of the methodology used as well as the data gathering techniques. An explanation of the data analysis methods was also given. The next chapter presents the findings of this study as a result of data analysis. It discusses the data obtained and interprets the findings in relation to the research aim of this study.

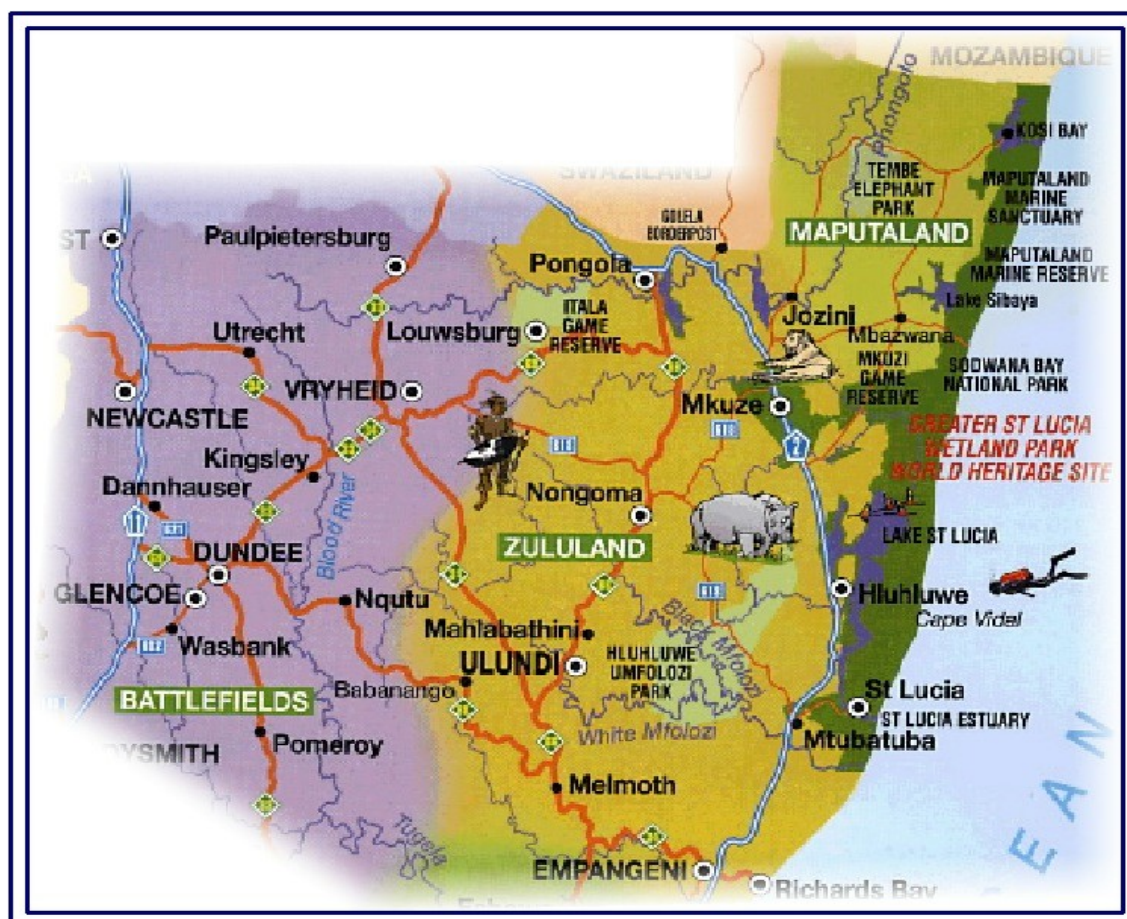
CHAPTER 4

4. FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the results of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the challenges facing rural FET colleges and more specifically a rural college in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. The data was collected from a sample of the major role players. There were 8¹ campuses (in 2007), and two of the campuses were used to collect the data: the first campus, which was established in 1949 (Campus A) and the last campus, which was established in July 2005 (Campus F). The distance between Campus A and Campus F is about 350 km.

Figure 1: Map of Area



Source: Adapted from <http://www.africasafari.co.za/Maps/KZN-Map.gif>

¹ Vryheid, Nongoma, KwaGqikazi, Maputa, Emandleni, Babanango, Nqutu and Jozini in 2007.

Figure 2 : List of Campuses

Campus A	Vryheid
Campus B	Nongoma
Campus C	KwaGqikazi (Nongoma)
Campus D	Babanango
Campus E	Emandleni
Campus F	Maputa (Kwangwanase)
Campus G	Nqutu
Campus H	Jozini
Campus I	Nkandla
Campus J	Pongola

At each campus the Campus Head, lecturers, current students and graduates were interviewed. At the Central Office, the Curriculum Manager, the Community Outreach Programmes (COP) Manager, the Student Support Services Manager, Marketing Manager and the Registrar were interviewed.

Four members of co-operatives who had been trained by the College were also interviewed.

4.2 BACKGROUND OF CAMPUSES

To understand the analysis and interpretation of the responses it is important to understand the background of the two campuses. Photographs shed more light on the circumstances in which the two campuses operate. I also made use of an observation sheet to record the situation at the campuses. I also used my knowledge of the two campuses gained from my position at the College.

It is very important to portray an accurate picture of the two campuses to gain insight into the challenges experienced by role players on a daily basis.

Table 4: Observation Sheet

Staff and learners	Campus A	Campus F	Comments
Teaching Staff	27	5	
Support Staff	9	3	
Security	1	1	
Principal	1	1	
Learners	1700	282	
Facilities			
Classrooms	15	9	
Toilets (students)	8	9	5 not in use at Campus F – males and females share same toilets at Campus F.
Toilets (staff)	9	2	The majority of the staff ablutions are situated in the office block – was previously hostel staff accommodation.
Hostels	0	0	
Workshops	1	0	A workshop was built at Campus F but is not yet furnished.
Staff Accommodation	1 house	2 flats	The staff accommodation at Campus F belongs to the local high school, which rents it out to the Campus. The staff accommodation at Campus A had to be evacuated in 2008 to establish a Bed and Breakfast.
Hall	1	1	Due to infrastructure shortage the hall is used as a classroom at Campus A.
Tuckshop	1	0	
Library	0	0	A library is not available at either of the campuses.
Study Rooms	1	0	Study room is used as classroom for most of the day due to classroom shortages at Campus A.
Security	1	1	
Fencing	1	1	
Computers – Students	147	46	
Staff Computers	5	0	2 not working – only one printer working at Campus A. Staff at Campus F use the computers in the computer classes.
Internet Access – Students	0	0	In July 2008 Campus A received an internet connection for one class only.
Internet Access – Staff	0	0	At Campus A internet access is only available in the offices of the management
Telephone	1	1	The telephone line at Campus F has not worked for many months.
Fax machine	1	1	Fax machine at office, but not working due to no telephone connection at Campus F.
Photocopy Machine	3	1	
Recreation Areas	tables & chairs wooden tables under canvas	Two small benches	

There are certain similarities between Campus A and Campus F as discussed below.

Both of the campuses were initially built and used as hostels for local high schools. A lot of planning and construction/demolishing were necessary to make the buildings more suitable for a College.

Classrooms were created by demolishing walls of dormitory rooms. This resulted in awkward shapes for some of the classrooms. Dining halls were divided by dry walling to create more classrooms, resulting in poor sound quality in classrooms. Communal bathrooms were demolished to create classrooms and garages were transformed into classrooms.

Figure 3: Layout of classroom



Awkward layout of classroom
at Campus F.

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

Figure 4: Garage converted into a classroom



Awkward layout and very
weak lighting

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

Campus A and F both changed the original hostel staff accommodation into administrative offices.

4.2.1 Campus A

Campus A is situated in a large rural town in rural KwaZulu-Natal with a population of 243 766 according to the 2009/2010 Integrated Development Plan of the Municipality. The area is served by 117 primary schools, 50 secondary schools and a FET College. 22.31% of the population has no schooling, 60,15% has some primary and secondary schooling and 2.54% has post secondary schooling. 3,4% has an unspecified

qualification which has been interpreted as some form of skills training. The unemployment rate is 59,4% (Integrated Development Plan, 2009/2010).

This campus was established in 1949 when language classes for women were introduced in English and Zulu. From 1950, part-time classes was offered for women in commercial subjects. The first full-time students were enrolled in 1982. In 1990 the College opened its doors to all races. In 1997 the first male students were enrolled with the introduction of the Marketing Course at the College.

Campus A is situated in a residential area, which causes a lot of tension between college management and the residents of the area. The students tend to sit outside the college premises in the street, to the disapproval of the residents. It is also difficult to drive in the one street because of the students gathering in the middle of the street. Taxis transporting the students also make a big noise in the residential area.

There is limited space inside the premises for the students to relax.

Figure 5: Recreation area of Campus A



Plastic sheeting with wooden tables and chairs

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

Figure 6: Recreation area of Campus F



Concrete bench against the wall of the hall – no shade

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

The corridors are very narrow, causing a lot of congestion in the corridors between periods when students move from one class to another and during lunch break.

Figure 7: Congested corridors



Narrow corridors at
Campus A

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

There are only 15 classrooms available at Campus A. Two of the classrooms are prefabricated buildings. Most of the classrooms were created by demolishing walls or by creating partitions.

The ablution facilities for the students at Campus A are very far from adequate. For 1700 students only 8 toilets are available.

Campus A offers a variety of courses. NATED courses include: Management Assistant N4-N6, Marketing Management N4-N6, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering N2-N6. NCV courses include: Office Administration, Tourism, Engineering and Related Design, and Electrical Infrastructure and Construction Level 2 – Level 4. Skills courses and Learnerships are offered from time to time at the Campus. In 2007 only 1 Learnership was offered to 13 learners and no Skills courses were offered in 2007. No members of Co-operatives were trained at the campus in 2007. Only one small Electrical workshop, donated by Eskom, was available for the students in 2007. In August 2008 the Engineering department moved to a new campus with three workshops. Although the workshops are far better equipped, they are still not equipped with all the machinery needed for the different Engineering courses. The workshops are also not yet accredited by the different SETA (MERSETA and ESETA), which means that Engineering learnerships cannot be offered at the college.

There is no library or resource centre at Campus A. An internet connection has only been available in one classroom since July 2008.

4.2.2 Campus F

Campus F is situated in a small rural town close to the Mozambican border with a population of 163 694. According to the Integrated Development Plan of the area, 18% of the population has no schooling, 57% has some primary and secondary schooling and 8% has Standard 12 or tertiary education. The area is served by 98 primary schools, 36 secondary schools and 1 FET College (Integrated Development Plan, 2009/2010).

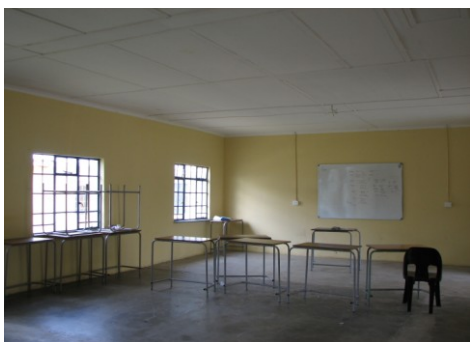
Campus F was established in July 2005 and is next to a local high school, creating a lot of distractions for the students. I observed that the high school learners walk freely onto the College premises to fetch water at the toilet facilities. During school break time the noise level is extremely high and it is difficult to teach.

At Campus F only 5 classrooms are available. Four of these classrooms are single hostel rooms and can only accommodate about 15 learners at a time. The layout also causes problems because of windows on both sides of the classroom on the narrow sides, therefore the whiteboard can only be placed on the longer sides of the classroom leading to an awkward layout and a limited number of students that can be accommodated in the classroom.

At Campus F only 4 toilets are available for 282 students. The men and women share the facilities. Other toilets are available but the water has been cut off to the toilets because of construction work at the campus (construction of the electrical workshop).

Campus F offers a limited number of courses. Only Management Assistant N4-N6 and Electrical Engineering N2-N4 are offered at Campus F as part of NATED courses. The only NCV course offered is, Office Administration. Skills courses and Learnerships are not offered and no members of Co-operatives were trained at the campus in 2007. In 2007, no workshop was available for the Electrical Engineering courses. In 2008 a workshop was built, but no equipment installed.

Figure 8: Electrical workshop



Unfurnished “electrical workshop”

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

There is no library or resource centre at Campus F and no internet connection for the students or the staff. There is no telephone or fax line available for staff to communicate with Central Office. The College makes use of the local pharmacy fax line to send and receive urgent faxes. Since the beginning of 2009, one of the staff members has been using her own cell phone internet connection and fax-to-email facility to access information from Central Office. Staff often use their own cellular phones to contact Central Office for urgent messages.

The observation analysis confirms all the challenges indicated by role players interviewed. From the analysis it is clear why the role players identified lack of infrastructure and lack of resources as challenges that they experienced at the College.

4.2.3 Information about role players

The following respondents were interviewed at the two campuses:

Table 5: Information about role players

Campus	Campus Heads	Lecturers	Current students	Graduates	Managers	Members of Co-operatives	Total
Campus A	1	4	4	3			12
Campus F	1	4	4	4			13
Central Office					5		5
Co-operatives						4	4
Total	2	8	8	7	5	4	34

The managers interviewed at Central Office were the Curriculum Manager, the Community Outreach Manager, the Marketing Manager, the Registrar and the Student Support Manager. All of these managers are based at the Central Office in the same town as Campus A and are part of senior management. Senior management consists of all the Campus Heads and the Unit Managers. There are 10 units at Central Office and the managers of these units are responsible for the centralised management of the functions, namely General Administration, Human Resources, Finances, Marketing, Registrar, Community Outreach Programmes, Curriculum, Student Support Services, Quality and Further Education and Training Management Information Systems (FETMIS).

The managers were chosen due to their specific portfolio at the College. Note that the Campus Head of Campus F is not based at the campus, but is based at the Central

Office 350km away. Apart from her duties as the Campus Head for the smaller campuses (Campus D, F and H) she is also the manager for the Community Outreach Programmes, including Skills Centres. The number of Skills Centres varies during the year as the Skills Centres are run as demand driven courses. These Skills Centres are not permanent buildings; venues are rented on a short-term basis to teach skills in areas where there is a demand for teaching a specific skill. The Skills courses are not accredited courses.

Since the interviews were conducted, the COP Manager that was also the Campus Heads of the smaller campuses and the Marketing Manager have resigned and their posts have not yet been filled. The duties performed by these managers have been divided amongst the Student Support Manager who manages the smaller campuses like Campus F, D and H, and the Curriculum Manager who is now responsible for Skills courses and Marketing. The General Administration Manager resigned during 2009 and has not yet been replaced. The Finance Manager is now responsible for the management of the General Administration of the College. The above trend (vacant posts that are not being filled) could have serious implications. As reported in Garisch (2007) the stability of the College was at stake due to the administrative support function that is not properly managed.

The lecturers were interviewed on a voluntary basis. I explained the research to all staff members at both campuses and asked for volunteers. I was not looking for a specific gender or racial mix but as it turned out, I was able to interview a representative sample of respondents. At Campus A, four lecturers were interviewed: two females (white) aged 30 and 42; and two males (black), aged 27 and 34. At Campus F: four lecturers were interviewed: two females (one white one black) aged 46 and 25; and two males (black), aged 28 and 25.

The campuses nominated the current students from each campus. These students were all registered students during 2007. I requested "average" students to enable me to determine the challenges faced by the average student. The students interviewed at Campus A were two males, aged 30 (N3 Mechanical Engineering) and 23 (N6 Marketing Management); and two females, aged 27 (N5 Management Assistant) and 16 (NCV Tourism – L2). The students from Campus F were two males, aged 25 (N3 Electrical Engineering); and 23 (N5 Management Assistant); and two females, aged 27 (N4 Management Assistant) and 18 (N4 Management Assistant).

Former students (graduates) were chosen on a voluntary basis. All of them graduated before 2007. The College provided me with the telephone numbers of former students and I contacted them and interviewed the first four volunteers of Campus A, and the first three volunteers of Campus F. The graduates interviewed from Campus A were all females, aged 21, 23, 24 and 29, and had completed the N6 Management Assistant courses. Graduates interviewed at Campus F all completed their N5 Management Assistant: two females, aged 19 and 20, and one male aged 21.

The co-operatives were chosen randomly from a list provided by the Co-ordinator of the Co-operatives programme. I visited members of co-operatives with the Co-ordinator from Central Office. A sample from two sewing co-operatives, one engineering co-operative and one agricultural co-operative were interviewed.

4.2.4 Information about the two campuses

In 2007 and 2009 respectively, the number of students and staff at Campus A and F was as follows:

Table 6: Enrolment and staffing

	Actual enrolment for 2007	Actual enrolment for 2009 ²	Number of PS ³ staff 2007	Number of PS staff 2009	Number of CS ⁴ staff 2007	Number of CS staff 2009
Campus A	1700	1394	9	9	28	29
Campus F	282	116	5	4	7	7

It is clear from Table 6 that the enrolments for 2009 at both campuses declined from the actual enrolments in 2007. This can be linked to the phasing out of the NATED courses. It is clear from these figures that the College would find it very difficult to stay open if this pattern continues. The enrolments for Campus A declined from 1700 in 2007 to 1394 in 2009 (18% decline). The enrolments for Campus F declined from 282 to 116 in 2009 (59% decline). However, the total number of staff members stays the same. One of the reasons for this can be that three year contracts are offered at the College to council appointed staff.

As can be seen from Table 7 below, different courses are offered at campuses. To show the complexity and variety of courses offered at different campuses I showed the total and percentages of the other campuses as well. By including these statistics I tried to

² The enrolment figures for Trimester 3 are not yet recorded.

³ PS - Public Sector staff (administration)

⁴ CS - College Sector staff (educators)

highlight the challenges experienced by the central office to manage the campuses, which is so far apart in terms of resources and infrastructure provision.

Table 7: Courses offered in 2007

NATED⁵ COURSES				
	Campus A	Campus F	Other Campuses	College
N2	225 (46%)	48 (10%)	212 (44%)	485 (100%)
N3	344 (41%)	106 (12%)	397 (47%)	847 (100%)
N4	422 (39%)	86 (8%)	583 (53%)	1091 (100%)
Management Assistant	302	84	-	386
Marketing Management	52	-	-	52
Public Relations Management	-	-	78	78
Business Management	-	-	112	112
Human Resources Management	-	-	276	276
Electrical Engineering	52	2	112	166
Mechanical Engineering	16	-	5	21
N5	230 (36%)	42 (7%)	363 (57%)	635 (100%)
Management Assistant	137	39	-	176
Marketing Management	62	-	-	62
Public Relations Management	-	-	48	48
Business Management	-	-	94	94
Human Resources Management	-	-	164	164
Electrical Engineering	21	3	55	76
Mechanical Engineering	10	-	2	12
N6	213 (46%)	0 (0%)	253 (54%)	466 (100%)
Management Assistant	132	-	-	132
Marketing Management	60	-	-	60
Public Relations Management	-	-	29	29
Business Management	-	-	78	78
Human Resources Management	-	-	81	81
Electrical Engineering	14	-	65	79
Mechanical Engineering	7	-	-	7
NATED TOTAL	1434 (41%)	282 (8%)	1808 (51%)	3524 (100%)

NCV COURSES				
	Campus A	Campus F	Other Campuses	College
Office Administration	30	- ⁶	23	53
Tourism	25	-	-	25
Hospitality	-	-	34	34
Agriculture	-	-	54	54
Civil Engineering	-	-	32	32
Engineering and Related Design	32	-	14	46
Electrical Infrastructure	30	-	38	68
NCV⁷ TOTAL	117 (37%)	0 (0%)	195 (63%)	312 (100%)

OTHER				
	Campus A	Campus F	Other Campuses	College
LEARNERSHIPS	13 (52%)	0 (0%)	12 (48%)	25 (100%)
SKILLS⁸ COURSES	136 (33%)	0 (0%)	281 (67%)	417 (100%)
CO-OPERATIVES	0	0	4 (100%)	4 (100%)

⁵ NATED: National Education Qualifications

⁶ NCV Office Administration only offered since 2008 at Campus F.

⁷ NCV: National Certificate Vocational. Level 2 – 4. Replaced the old NIC (National Intermediate Certificate) and NSC (National Senior Certificate) from the Department of Education.

⁸ Skills Courses consist of various short courses delivered at different Skills centres, mainly beadwork and sewing.

As can be seen from the above table, not all courses are offered at all campuses. The College offers very few courses at Campus F. Campuses A and F that formed part of the study, both offer the following courses: Management Assistant and Electrical Engineering as part of the NATED courses, as well as Office Administration for NCV. In addition Campus A offers Marketing Management and Mechanical Engineering as part of NATED courses and Tourism, Engineering and Related Design and Electrical Infrastructure and Construction as part of NCV. After the phasing out of the NATED courses, Campus F will only offer Office Administration. Campus A is situated in the KZN Battlefields Route and is surrounded with good tourist destinations. A number of game farms and lodges surround this area. According to the tracking system of students, very few⁹ of our students get work in any of the lodges

Campus F is situated near the Mozambican border and is surrounded by tourist attractions but no tourist courses are offered there.

An analysis of the above figures shows that in 2007, the College still concentrated on the NATED courses that need to be phased out during the next few years. N1, N2 and N3 have already been phased out, and the last enrolments for N4 were in June 2009. In 2007, 84% of the enrolments at Campus A were for NATED courses. Only 7% were for NCV. Very little emphasis is placed on Learnerships (less than 1%) and Skills Courses (8%), despite the fact that Rasool (2005) argues that the best opportunities for FET colleges in the Skills Development Strategy lie in the provision of Learnerships. The low participation in delivering Learnerships by the FET Colleges can be linked to the accreditation process required by the SETAs, which are responsible for registration and funding of Learnerships. Private providers need to be accredited by the individual SETAs to deliver a Learnership. The SETAs insist on the public FET Colleges being registered for each different SETA, despite the fact that each provincial education department is registered by Umalusi as the relevant quality assurance body. Despite the argument of Gewer (2001) that Learnerships provide an ideal model for colleges to deliver qualifications that contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation, Learnerships are not offered at Campus F and very few are offered at Campus A.

The statistics for the College as a whole show that the emphasis in 2009 is still on NATED courses (85.73%) followed by NCV courses (5.90%), Learnerships (0.48%) and

⁹ Although Tourism was identified as one of the niche areas, the enrolment and employability of our students showed the opposite. The Tourism course will no longer be offered at Campus A from 2009 due to a lack of interest.

Skills Courses (7.89%). With the new proposed funding norms, and the phasing out of NATED courses, the College could be in serious financial trouble.

It is interesting to observe that the Skills Courses were only offered at Campus A in 2007. None was offered at Campus F in 2007, despite the fact that this Campus lies in a deep rural area with a very high unemployment and poverty rate. For the college as a whole, only 417 people were trained in Skills courses. Campus A, which is the more “urban” campus, trained 33% (136) of all the Skills learners.

In 2009 (at the end of September), the statistics for the college as a whole show that 67% (2552) of the enrolments were for NATED courses, 25% (963) for NCV, 0% for Learnerships and 8% (290) for Skills Courses. Although the percentage is much higher for NCV than in 2007, it must be kept in mind that NCV now covers L2-L4, whereas in 2007 it was only offered at L2. More alarming is the decline in the enrolments at the College since 2007. The enrolments at Campus A declined from 1700 in 2007 to 1394 in 2009, which represents an 18% decline in enrolments. The enrolments at Campus F declined from 282 in 2007 to 116 in 2009, which represents a massive 59% decline.

4.3 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

Different interview schedules were developed for the different role players. The interview schedules were divided into two sections: a general section, which was the same for all the respondents, and the second section, which consisted of specific questions, related to the different role players. See Appendix A.

The responses to the interview questions are presented according to each of the questions asked. For purposes of clarity the analysis of the general questions is done first. The questions asked will serve as subheadings. Tables and a graph are used to present the findings.

4.4 RESPONSES TO GENERAL QUESTIONS

All the respondents were asked the general interview questions.

4.4.1 Key challenges faced by people in rural areas

The most common challenges identified amongst respondents are: poverty, lack of infrastructure, unemployment, lack of skills and illiteracy. Poverty seems to be the biggest challenge faced by the rural people.

Table 8: Key challenges faced by people in rural areas

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of finances/poverty	4	100	1	25	2	50	1	100	1	25	1	25			1	100	5	100	16	53
Lack of infrastructure – roads, water and electricity	3	75	2	50	2	50	1	100							1	100	4	80	13	43
Unemployment	1	25	2	50			1	100					1	33	1	100	5	100	11	37
Lack of skills	3	75			1	25	1	100			2	50			1	100	3	60	11	37
Illiteracy	3	75			1	25	1	100							1	100	4	80	10	33
Transport	1	25	2	50	2	50	1	100							1	100	1	20	8	27
HIV/AIDS	1	25	1	25	3	75	1	100							1	100	1	20	8	27
Shortage of FET Colleges													3	100	1	100	2	40	6	20

Responses indicated in Table 8 showed a variety of challenges experienced by people in rural areas.

16 of the 30 respondents (53%) indicated that poverty is the biggest challenge. The challenge of poverty was also consistent amongst all the categories of respondents.

It is interesting to see that the students from Campus A indicated transport and a lack of infrastructure as a major concern. This could be because of the fact that most of them stay in the townships outside the town, between 30 and 50 km away, which is not within walking distance. Transport is not regarded as a problem at Campus F. This could be because transport is seen as a luxury. According to the students interviewed, 99% of them walk to college. During observations at Campus F, I did not see one student using any form of transport.

Campus A students seem to be much more aware of the poverty crisis than the students at Campus F, despite the fact that they stay in a very poor area with a high unemployment rate. When I prompted the students from the rural campus about poverty, they indicated that most of them had lived in the same circumstances for many years and they do not know any other way. As discussed in Section 2.5 the responses from the students of Campus F correspond with the argument of Barnes (2004) that people are marked by the process of marginalisation and their whole life is dominated by forces that they have no or little control over.

4.4.2 Role of FET Colleges in rural areas

The respondents were asked how they see the role of the college in the rural area. The responses indicated in Table 9 were to be expected. The role of any education institution should be to provide education.

Table 9: Role of FET Colleges in rural areas

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To provide education according to community needs	4	100	4	100	4	100	1	100	3	75	4	100	3	100	1	100	4	80	28	93
Offer income generation courses							1	100							1	100	5	100	7	23
ABET							1	100							1	100	2	40	4	13
Eradication of poverty							1	100							1	100	1	20	3	10

The vast majority of the respondents (93%) stated that the role of the college in a rural area should be to provide education according to the community needs. Education should lead to employment or means of income. At Campus F many people are street vendors and try to support their families by selling goods on the pavements. The major employers in the area are the Hospital, the Municipality and Boxer Stores. (See photographs of some of the street vendors in the area. As can be seen in the photographs most of the vendors stationed next to each other all sell the same goods). However, as can be seen in Table 7 no Skills Courses are offered at Campus F. By offering Skills Courses related to the informal businesses in the area, people could be empowered and in turn create employment for others. Co-operative training was offered at the Campus in 2006 but since then no training has been offered.

Figure 9: Informal trading

Motor vehicle repairs
Campus F

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

Figure 10: Street vendors

Vendors in main street – all
selling the same produce
Campus F

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

Figure 11: Street vendors

Vendors in main street
Campus F

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

In rural areas, the local education institutions should provide courses applicable to the area's needs. The courses offered at these campuses should provide employment for the learners. Courses should address the community needs. The College does have researchers to conduct research on the needs of the community and where which courses must be offered, but it seems that the recommendations by the researchers are not followed up. The courses offered at Campus F are very generic. For example,

Tourism and Hospitality is not offered, but the area is very dependent on the tourism industry.

4.4.3 What the College is doing for the Community

I asked the respondents what the College is doing for the community. A variety of responses were received from the respondents as indicated in Table 10.

Table 10: What the College is doing for the Community

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Developing skills	4	100			4	100	1	100	2	50	2	50	3	100	1	100	5	100	22	73
Providing affordable education	2	50			2	50	1	100									4	80	9	30
Not involved as yet	2	50	3	75					1	25									6	20
Maintaining self-discipline of youth, crime control	1	25									3	75			1	100			5	17

22 of the 30 respondents (73%) indicated that the college developed the skills of the community, 6 of the 30 respondents (20%) indicated that the College is not involved in the community and 9 of the 30 respondents (30%) indicated that the college provided affordable education for the community. An interesting response was received from students who indicated that the college maintained the self-discipline of the youth. When prompted, one of them said that, "Children are now attending the college, not loitering in the streets doing crime". Another response was that, "The college provides hope and information". The response from lecturers indicating that the College is not as yet involved in the community suggests that the lecturers have an idea that the College should be doing something for the community.

4.4.4 Challenges experienced at College

Once again a variety of responses were received as indicated in Table 11. The majority of the responses had to do with the centralisation of the College: lack of infrastructure, lack of resources from central office, poor management, delays in the appointment of lecturers and lack of job security. The first four of the challenges identified by the respondents are functions that are controlled by Central Office.

Table 11: Challenges experienced at the College

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current students		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current students		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of infrastructure, e.g. class rooms, workshops	4	100	2	50			1	100	1	25	2	50	3	100	1	100	4	80	18	60
Lack of resources from Central Office	2	50	4	100	1	25	1	100	3	75	2	50			1	100	3	60	17	57
Poor management	4	100					1	100	3	75					1	100	4	100	13	43
Delay in appointment of lecturers	3	75					1	100	2	50	1	25	1	33	1	100			9	30
Language barrier	4	100	1	25	2	50	1	100	1	25									9	30
Non-payment of fees	1	25			1	25	1	100	1	25	3	75	1	33	1	100			9	30
Job security	4	100													1	100			5	17

18 of the 30 respondents (60%) indicated the lack of infrastructure as a major challenge. Observations done at both campuses confirmed the lack of infrastructure: not enough classrooms, inadequate ablution facilities, no workshops or inadequate workshops, no internet facilities and no working telephone or fax machine.

17 of the 30 respondents (57%) indicated that lack of resources from Central Office pose a great challenge. Resources requested for campuses must be submitted to Central Office (Supply Chain Management). Only then are quotations requested and the Bid Committee meets. The Bid Committee consists of the Finance Manager, the Curriculum Manager, Deputy Director: Corporate Services, Deputy Director: Academic Services and the Recapitalisation Manager. The Committee looks at the quotations and makes a recommendation. This is a very long procedure and the administrative staff working in the Supply Chain section does not always understand the urgency of some of the requests for teaching and learning materials. Lack of planning on the part of the lecturers

and Campus Heads also aggravates the problem. The General Administration Manager, the Chief Administration Clerk, the Supply Chain Manager and two of the Supply Chain Clerks resigned during 2009 and have not yet been replaced, which placed tremendous pressure on the one Supply Chain Clerk and the Finances Manager who now has to do all the work. When prompting the students about how they know about lack of resources one of them indicated that, "When students are complaining about the lack of resources like textbooks, they are informed that central office is not delivering the resources needed".

13 of the 30 respondents (43%) indicated that poor management is a major challenge. If the figures are observed closely, it becomes apparent that only the lecturers, Campus Heads and management gave this response to the question, and of these 14 of the 15 respondents (93%) indicated that poor management is the major challenge. Even more alarming is that 5 of the managers interviewed (100%) indicated poor management as a challenge. As one manager said, "There is no teamwork or communication amongst senior management." Another one of the managers commented, "Lack of focus, open campus, close campus and open campus again". When prompted, the respondent explained that Campus H, was opened, then closed, then opened again and eventually closed until further notice.

There is an interesting difference between the two campuses' responses about the language barrier. 8 of the 13 respondents of Campus A (66%) said that the language barrier is a big challenge. This might be because the Campus Head of Campus A enforces the language policy strictly. The staff uses English as the medium of instruction. The one respondent at Campus F who stated that language was a barrier was the only non-Zulu speaker at the campus (8%). This confirms my observation on the use of English as medium of instruction. During observations at Campus F, most of the classes were conducted in Zulu. While at Campus A, I only heard English being used in the classes.

4.4.5 Appropriateness of courses offered at this college for rural areas

I asked the respondents if they think the courses offered at the College are appropriate for the rural areas.

Table 12: Appropriateness of courses

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current t		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Responses	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Appropriate – engineering – (mathematics and science)	4	100	4	100	4	100			3	75	4	100	3	100			2	40	24	80
Not appropriate – should focus more on niche areas	1	25					1	100	1	25					1	100	5	100	9	30

It is interesting to see that the majority of respondents from the campuses indicated that the programmes are appropriate. Management of Central Office and the Campus Heads however indicated that the programmes should concentrate more on the niche areas. Central Office Managers gave mixed responses. As one of the respondents indicated, “I can say on the one hand that the Engineering courses offered are appropriate because it involves Mathematics and Science. On the other hand, few of the courses we offer focus on our niche areas, for example Tourism, Forestry and Agriculture.” The more rural campus students indicated that the programmes are appropriate due to Mathematics and Science being offered as part of the Engineering courses at the college. This is because few schools offer Mathematics and Science in the rural areas. The main reason why 80% of the responses received indicated that the Engineering programmes are appropriate is because they involve Science and Mathematics and not because of Engineering. 27% of the respondents did not think that the courses were appropriate because the courses offered did not represent the niche areas identified by research. The niche areas of the College have been identified as Tourism, Forestry and Agriculture. However, no courses are offered in Forestry. Tourism was only offered from 2007 at Campus A. The enrolments were so low that the course is being phased out at Campus A. Only 3 students are enrolled for Level 4 in 2009. Agriculture is only offered at the College at Campus E that did not form part of the research. Campus E is situated on a farm.

This leads to the question: which courses the college should offer? The respondents were asked which courses they would like to see offered at the College. A wide range of responses were received as indicated in Table 13.

Table 13: Courses College should offer

Response	Campus A				Campus F				Central Office	Total
	Lecturer	Current	Graduates	Campus Head	Lecturer	Current	Graduates	Campus Head	Management	Responses
	N=4	N=4	N=4	N=1	N=4	N=4	N=3	N=1	N=5	N=30
Engineering Courses										
Mechanical Engineering.		1			1	2				4
Civil Engineering		1			1	1		1		4
Motor Mechanics						1		1		2
Agricultural Engineering.	1							1		2
Utility Studies/Services										
Catering		1		1			1	1		4
Tourism	1	2				1		1		5
Hospitality	2				1			1		4
Business Studies										
Human resources		2	2			3	2			9
Business Management		1				1	1		2	5
Financial Management	2		1			2			1	6
Marketing	1				1	2				4
Short Skills Courses										
Bricklaying				1	1			1		3
Welding	2			1	1			1		5
Plumbing		1		1			1			3
Crafts							1		1	2
Boilermaker				1		1		1		3
Sewing	1			1				1		3
ABET	1			1				1	1	4
Agriculture						1		1		2
Teaching						1				1
A+ Computer	1		1							2
Public admin	1									1
Bookkeeping	1		1							2
Homebased care	3	1		1			1	1		7
ECD	1			1				1		3
Hairdressing	2	1		1						4
Carpentry	1			1				1		3
Entrepreneurship courses enabling youth to venture into their own businesses				1				1	3	5

Response	Campus A				Campus F				Central Office	Total
	Lecturer	Current	Graduates	Campus Head	Lecturer	Current	Graduates	Campus Head	Management	Responses
	N=4	N=4	N=4	N=1	N=4	N=4	N=3	N=1	N=5	N=30
Post Matric Courses										
Post matric Agriculture courses				1				1	3	5
Post matric Hospitality				1				1	3	5
Post matric Tourism				1				1	3	5

According to the respondents, Human Resources seem to be the most popular course students would like to see offered at the College. This course is only offered at Campus C, and is extremely popular. It is also interesting to see that it is only the students (5 out of 8 current students and 4 out of 7 graduates) that would like to see the course offered at their campus. None of the Campus Heads, lecturers or Managers at Central Office indicated that they would like to see Human Resources offered at the College.

Very interesting trends appeared in the data in relation to the shorter Skills Courses. The lecturers, Campus Managers and the Management of Central Office believe that Skills courses should be offered. Campus Heads would like to see the following Skills Courses offered at the College: Bricklaying, Welding, Boilermaking, Sewing, ABET, Homebased Care, Early Childhood Development, Carpentry and Entrepreneurship courses. 3 of the Central Office Managers would like Entrepreneurship courses to be offered and only 1 would like crafts courses offered and 1 would like to see the College offer ABET. Amongst lecturers, 3 of the 8 would like to see Welding offered, 2 of the 8 would like to see Homebased Care and Hairdressing offered.

There is a big difference between which courses the students would like to see offered at the College, and which courses the staff would like to see offered at the College.

Of the 12 responses received for Engineering courses, which include Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Motor Mechanics and Agricultural Engineering, 6 of the responses (50%) were from students and 6 of the responses (50%) were from staff.

Of the 24 responses received for Business Studies, which include Human Resources, Business Management, Financial Management and Marketing, 7 of the 24 responses (29%) were from staff, and 17 of the 24 (71%) from the students.

Of the 13 responses received for Utility Studies or Services Studies which include Catering, Tourism and Hospitality. 5 of the 13 responses (38%) were from students and 8 of the 13 responses (62%) were from staff.

Of the 53 responses received for short Skills Courses, 42 or the 53 responses (79%) were from staff and only 11 of the 53 responses (11%) were from students.

Of the responses received for post-matric courses, 15 of the 15 responses (100%) were from staff. None of the students even mentioned post-matric courses. This could be because the students assume that Business Studies and Engineering Studies are post-matric courses (NATED) as was the case when the interviews were conducted in 2007.

Given the responses received from the respondents it is clear that amongst staff more emphasis is placed on the offering of Skills Courses, whereas the students placed more emphasis on the white collar courses, regardless of the availability of employment opportunities.

With the new NCV courses (L2-L4) no provision has been made so far for post-matric courses. The students interviewed did not show any interest in post matric courses. Amongst the managers and Campus Heads a major concern arises about what is going to happen to the Grade 12's out there. With the phasing out of the N4-N6 courses a huge gap will appear.

4.4.6 College in ten years time

Interesting trends showed in the responses to the question about how respondents see the college in ten years time. Staff are generally negative about the future of the College whereas the students have a more positive response.

Table 14: College in ten years time

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Developed	1	25	3	75	4	100			1	25	4	100	3	100					16	53
Really struggling	1	25					1	100	1	25					1	100	5	100	9	30
Closed down	1	25							2	50					1	100	2	40	6	20
Not sure	3	75	1	25					1	25							1	20	6	20

None of the Management or Campus Heads indicated that the college would develop. As one of the respondents stated, there would be “.... reduced campuses and campuses in the more developed towns only.” Given the responses to the general question about challenges, it comes as no surprise that the Management and Campus Heads are negative about the college. 7 out of 7 Managers and Campus Heads interviewed (100%) indicated that the college would really struggle. 3 of the 7 (43%) interviewed thought that the college would be closed down. A possible explanation for this could be that only staff are aware of the implications of the phasing out of the NATED courses and the implementation of the NCV courses.

Amongst the lecturers 4 of the 8 (50%) indicated that they were not sure, 2 of the 8 (25%) indicated that the college would struggle and 2 of the 8 (25%) indicated that the college would close down.

Generally, aside from 2 lecturers, it was only students who felt positive about the future of the College. 14 of 15 (93%) student respondents indicated that the college would develop. A possible explanation for this is that this College is the only tertiary institution in the area and students have no other option but to be positive about the future of the College.

4.4.7 How to serve the community more effectively

From the responses received as indicated in Table 15, more engagement with community leaders and role players is needed.

Table 15: How to serve the community more effectively

Response	Campus A								Campus F								Central Office		Total	
	Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Lecturer		Current		Graduates		Campus Head		Management		Respondents	
	N=4		N=4		N=4		N=1		N=4		N=4		N=3		N=1		N=5		N=30	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Involve community			1	25	2	50	1	100	1	25			1	33	1	100	4	80	11	37
Better marketing	1	25	1	25					1	25	1	25	1	33	1	100	1	20	7	23
More practical courses for community who are good with their hands	2	50							1	25	1	25			1	100	1	20	6	20
Provide post matric qualifications in niche areas							1	100									3	60	4	13

Amongst Management and Campus Heads, 6 of the 7 respondents (86%) indicated that the college must involve the community more. At this stage the only involvement in the community is to provide education without consulting the community. As one of the respondents said, “We should consult the community leaders more in what they want us to offer them”. Another manager said, “ the College operates as an island”. There is no consultation with the community as such. 3 of the 7 graduates (43%) also responded that the college must involve the community more. A lecturer from Campus F said the following, “Nothing at all (service to the community) only that we sell poor services to them due to poor support” When prompted about the poor support the respondent indicated that the poor support is from Central Office.

3 of the 8 lecturers (38%) indicated that more practical courses should be offered to the community who are “good with their hands” (meaning the illiterate). 1 of the graduates and the Campus Head of Campus F also indicated that more practical courses should be offered.

Marketing also needs to be improved. Too many people in the towns and surrounding areas of the campuses are not aware of what the college is doing and what courses are offered. 2 of the 8 current students, 1 graduate, 2 lecturers and the Campus Head of Campus F indicated that the College should improve on their marketing of the College.

4.5 RESPONSES FROM CENTRAL OFFICE MANAGERS

The questions posed to the Managers of Central Office concentrated more on the programmes offered at the college and the relevance of the programmes according to the needs of the community they serve.

Table 16: How programmes respond to community needs

Response	No.	%
Courses must be informed by community needs	5	100
Conduct research that will inform the college about community needs	3	60

100% of the management at central office indicated that the courses offered at the FET colleges should be informed by the community needs. In practice, this means that the courses offered at the various campuses should be different. The analysis of the courses offered at the two campuses does, however, not reflect this.

4.5.1 The extent to which College programmes offer relevant and responsive courses

100% of the management staff indicated that the programmes offered are only to a limited extent responsive to the labour and economic needs of the rural areas. They indicated that lack of development in the rural areas hampers the ability of the campus to offer a wider range of courses. Due to the lack of development and industries in rural areas the student base that can afford tertiary education is much smaller. To equip campuses with all the relevant resources needed to offer specialised courses in rural areas, a bigger student base is needed to make it economically viable to install the necessary equipment. Skills Courses also have a very limited time-span at a site because of the population in the area, as well as the fact that a programme reaches saturation point very quickly. As soon as this point is reached, the specific Skills Courses are then moved to another area.

4.5.2 Poverty alleviation through Education and Training

As indicated in Table 17, Management responded that poverty can be alleviated by offering courses that equip people with Business, Agriculture and Tourism Skills

Table 17: Poverty alleviation through education and training

Response	No.	%
Offer formal courses equipping people in Business, Agriculture and Tourism Skills	5	100
Provide short Skills programmes like beadwork and sewing	4	80

100% of the management staff indicated that equipping people with Business Skills to manage their own businesses could alleviate poverty. As one of the respondents said,

“Teach people to be entrepreneurs”. Another respondent said, “... offer courses equipping people on Business Skills” and “... empower people with skills/entrepreneurship”. It is clear from the responses of the managers that they feel it is possible to alleviate poverty through education and training, specifically in the area of entrepreneurship and managing of small businesses.

Poverty remains concentrated in rural areas. Akoojee and McGrath (2005) argue that there is a strong relationship between basic education and poverty reduction. Skills development is crucial to alleviate poverty.

4.6 RESPONSES OF LECTURERS

Questions asked of lecturers concentrated on learning and teaching resources as well as facilities at the college. The preliminary literature review showed that rural education institutions were poorly resourced, therefore I decided to add a question on how lecturers overcome the limitations of teaching in a rural area.

The first question I asked the respondents was why they are teaching at the College.

Table 18: Reason for teaching at college

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Love to teach and help the youth to gain knowledge and qualifications	3	75	3	75	6	75
Earn a salary/only job available	4	100			4	50
Have suitable qualifications			2	50	2	25

6 of the 8 respondents (75%) indicated that they love teaching and want to help the youth gain knowledge and qualifications. As one respondent of Campus F said, “To help the young community with the small knowledge and qualification that I have”. Another respondent of Campus F said, “It is because teaching has always been a dream to me, but one problem, I didn’t have enough money to go and do teaching, so, once I saw the opportunity, I grab it”. One respondent from Campus A said, “I love to teach”.

4 of the 8 respondents (50 %) indicated that they teach to earn a salary. All of these respondents were from Campus A. As one of the respondents of Campus A said, “There is no other job available” and another respondent said, “It is the only job available”. Both of the respondents that indicated that it was the only job available later said that they had

developed a love for teaching. One of the respondents is still employed by the college. The other one left during 2009.

I wanted to know from the respondents how long they have been teaching at the College.

Table 19: Time at College

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
0-6 months			1	25	1	13
7-12 months			2	50	2	25
1-5 years	1	25	1	25	2	25
6-10 years	3	75			3	37
10+						

In Table 19 it is clear that there is a turnover in the staff at Campus F. Only one of the staff members had been at the Campus since it opened in 2005. However, he also resigned in 2009.

The turnover at Campus F is really an area of concern. It is extremely difficult to find staff that will stay at Campus F. The Campus is severely under-resourced and it is situated in a malaria area. It is also very hot and at the time of the research, there were no air conditioners or fans to provide some comfort to the staff. As one of the staff members indicated, "The campus gets all the hand-me-downs from other campuses – including staff." The accommodation provided leaves much to be desired and most of the time they are without water and electricity. It is also not safe in the area. On the other hand the staff at Campus A, especially the Business Studies staff have taught for a long period at the Campus. A higher turnover is experienced at the Engineering Campus. The Campus Head of Campus A indicated that this could be the result of poor salary scales offered to the lecturers. In the private sector the trade people can earn a much better salary. It seems that most of the staff members also use the college as a stepping-stone to a better position. As one of the respondents said, "I was desperate for a job"

4.6.1 Problems teaching the subject

The respondents were asked what problems they experience teaching their subjects. The respondents from Campus A indicated that they do not have any problems teaching their subjects. The respondents from Campus F that teach the practical subjects like Computer Practice and Electrical Engineering indicated that they do experience some

problems. The two lecturers that are teaching Computer Practice and Information Processing said that they experience problems with computers and printers that are faulty and that they normally wait for a long time for the equipment to be repaired. The College only has one technician to service all the computer equipment used by the College and it is difficult for one person to serve such a wide geographical area. The two lecturers teaching Electrical Engineering said that they do not have tools and workshops.

The responses received on the question about any problems they experience teaching their subject corresponds with the answers received on the following two questions on facilities and teaching aids. A lack of infrastructure and resources, once again, tops the list.

The next question posed to the respondents regarded the facilities they would like to have at the College for their students.

Table 20: Facilities at College

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Workshops and equipment	1	25	4	100	5	63
Study room with extra computers	3	75			3	38
Library	3	75			3	38
Internet access	2	50			2	25

5 of the 8 respondents overall (63%) said that they would like to see workshops and equipment at the college, 3 of the 8 respondents (38%) said that they would like a study room with extra computers and a library at the college for the students. 2 of the 8 respondents (25%) would like to have internet facilities for the students.

When analysed by campus, the differences between the campuses are very clear. Respondents from Campus A want the more elite facilities like a library (75%), study room with computers (75%) and internet (50%) etc. Respondents from the rural campus (Campus F) are not used to the “elite” facilities and only want the basic facilities like workshops and equipment (100%).

Closely related to the previous question is what teaching aids/resources lecturers would like to see at the Campus.

Table 21: Teaching Aids/Resources at the College

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
OHP	1	25	3	75	4	50
More computers	2	50	1	25	3	38
Television	2	50			2	25
Workshops for trade tests			2	50	2	25

Similar responses and trends were seen as in the question about the facilities. Again Campus A was looking for the latest technology. Campus F does not have even the most basic equipment; therefore the respondents from this campus would like an OHP. It is interesting to see that the respondents from Campus F are looking for workshops where trade tests can be done. One of the respondents said, "We need a workshop for trade tests. Our people cannot travel or stay in the city for the trade test. We need it here."

The next question posed to the respondents was: "What is the cost of teaching in a rural area?"

Table 22: Cost of teaching in rural area

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Home area – no extra costs	2	50	2	50	4	50
Transport to go home very expensive	1	25	2	50	3	38
Maintenance on vehicles due to bad roads			2	50	2	25
Rental accommodation very high	2	50			2	25

4 of the 8 respondents (50%) said that they do not incur any extra costs to teach in a rural area, because their homes are in the area. The other 50% of the staff at Campus A and Campus F are from outside the area. Staff members from Campus F indicated that the cost of working in a rural area is not that high. Most staff members stay in staff accommodation available for a minimal fee. The accommodation, however, leaves much to be desired, and the supply of water and electricity is regularly disrupted. Other respondents complained about the high cost of maintaining their private vehicles. The road infrastructure is very poor and the researcher experienced this as well during the time the observation was done. To travel 45 km took about one hour due to the potholes and general condition of the road. Campus A staff indicated that rental accommodation in the area is very high.

Figure 12: Bad roads

Potholes
Campus F

Source: Photograph taken by researcher

4.6.2 Measures to overcome the limitations of teaching in a rural area

I asked the respondents what measures they take to overcome the limitations of teaching in a rural area. Responses to previous questions indicated that there is a lack of infrastructure, resources, etc. in rural areas. I wanted to know what the lecturers do to overcome these limitations when teaching the curriculum.

Table 23: Measures to overcome limitations

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nothing	1	25	1	25	2	25
Work overtime			2	50	2	25
Bring own material from home			2	50	2	25

Staff members at Campus F were only appointed at the end of March 2007 and as a result 50% said that they had to work overtime to finish the syllabus. As one respondent from Campus F said, “Extra time (without remuneration) allows my students extra practice”. Another respondent from Campus F said, “I put much effort and teach with what I have, also try to bring some pictures on the students minds”. When prompted about what is meant by putting pictures on the students minds, the respondent indicated that the students from the deep rural areas have no frame of reference, most of them do not know what an airport or an elevator or even a hotel is. “I have to put pictures in their minds”, said the lecturer. 2 of the 4 respondents (50%) from Campus F staff also said that they brought their own material from home to supplement learning materials available, due to the lack of adequate resources like a library and an internet connection.

Campus A staff did not have many responses in this regard. This might be because they do have more resources available. One of the respondents of Campus A said, “Some limitations cannot be overcome like the lack of internet, but some can be overcome by using creativity.”

4.6.3 Desire for relocation

When I asked the respondents if they would stay at the campus or leave for a better position, 75% of the respondents said that they would stay.

Table 24: Desire for relocation

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Stay	2	50	4	100	6	75
Relocate	2	50			2	25

Although all 4 staff members at Campus F indicated that they would stay at the Campus, the reality, however, told a different story. Two of them resigned at the end of 2008, and another one earlier this year (2009). As one respondent from Campus F said, “I would stay. There is such a need in the community for quality education and although very difficult, it is usually much appreciated”. Another respondent from Campus F said, “I am happy where I am and this community needs me big time”. Both of these respondents resigned during 2009. One of the respondents from Campus A said, “It will be easier to work in an urban area. The quality of students is better because they are from better schools. The language is good”. Another respondent from Campus A said, “For now I would relocate. It looks like the urban college will be more likely to be sustainable”. The two lecturers from Campus A that indicated that they would stay are married women.

4.7 RESPONSES FROM CAMPUS HEADS

4.7.1 Challenges as Campus Head

The responses received from the Campus Heads can be divided into two main categories, namely the centralisation of functions and human resources.

Table 25: Challenges as Campus Head

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=1		N=1		N=2	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Centralisation						
Resources from central office	1	100	1	100	2	100
Central office not supportive	1	100	1	100	2	100
Centralization major problem	1	100	1	100	2	100
No power to take decisions	1	100	1	100	2	100
Too much control hampers day to day running of campus	1	100	1	100	2	100
Absence of policies	1	100	1	100	2	100
Lack of commitment to policies	1	100	1	100	2	100
Human Resources						
Vacant teaching posts take up to 3 months to fill	1	100	1	100	2	100
No job descriptions	1	100	1	100	2	100
Staff in posts not qualified for (unqualified staff)	1	100	1	100	2	100
Retention of staff	1	100	1	100	2	100
Low staff morale	1	100	1	100	2	100
Demotivated staff	1	100	1	100	2	100
Posts advertised - appointments not made	1	100	1	100	2	100
No job satisfaction	1	100	1	100	2	100

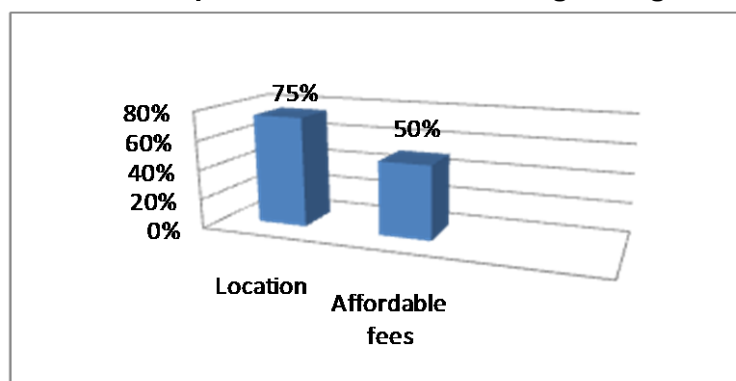
It was very interesting to see that both Campus Heads mentioned the same challenges faced at their campuses. The centralisation of most of the functions appears to cause most of the problems, and the perception is that senior management is to blame. As one respondent said, "I cannot take any decisions, if I want a globe to be changed I must order the globe from Central Office – and most of the times it is not delivered".

Campus F has the added disadvantage that is it very far from Central Office. The phone and fax line has been out of order for months. As the one respondent said, "There is poor communication between the Campus and the Central Office. It seems as if we are dumped". The staff morale is also very low due to " ... too much criticism rather than support from Central Office." Another response was, " vacant posts for more than three months ..." and "... posts are advertised, interviews conducted, but still no appointments". Another response was, "Staff are inherited from other campuses and utilised in positions they are not qualified for – security guards and cleaners are in clerical positions. Worst of all they are still paid a security guard or cleaner salary". As one of the respondents said, "There are no job descriptions for the staff, which means that I cannot take action against an employee for not doing his job – what is his job?"

4.8 RESPONSES FROM CURRENT STUDENTS

I asked the respondents what their reason was for selecting the College?

Graph 1: Reason for selecting College



The responses received from both campuses indicate that the major reason for selecting the College is the location and the affordability of fees, which emphasises the importance of the rural FET College. One of the respondents from Campus A said, “It is easy accessible, it is not far away from my home”. Another respondent from Campus A said, “There is no other college close to my home”. One respondent from Campus F said, “Its fees are affordable, and it is located in the rural area where I am staying”.

I asked the respondents what they expected to gain from their studies.

Table 26: Expectations from studies

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Knowledge and skills	3	75	4	100	7	88
Suitable employment	1	25	3	75	4	50

Most of the respondents 7 of 8 (88%) indicated that they hoped to gain skills and knowledge. One of the respondents from Campus F said, “Skills and knowledge that is work related.” Another respondent from Campus F said, “I expect to gain knowledge and a job that I want.” One respondent from Campus F said, “The best information that you take and spread it out and that will help me doing a job that I have skills for”.

One of the respondents from Campus A said, “I did not have science at school and decided to do it because I want to design cars and I want to understand the design

better". The emphasis on suitable employment was quite strong. It is clear that they expected the College to teach them the necessary skills and knowledge that would eventually lead to employment.

I asked the respondents what challenges they experienced as a students at the College.

Table 27: Challenges as a student

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Finances			4	100	4	50
Not enough teachers	1	25	2	50	3	38
Transport			2	50	2	25
Infrastructure	2	50			2	25

All four of the students interviewed from Campus F have financial problems. Two of them stay with friends because they are orphaned. As one of the respondents from Campus F said, "As a student with no parents I find myself in a big problem of money to pay for transport, school fees and pocket money". Another respondent from Campus F said, "We are walking long distances to school". School in this case means College. Another respondent from Campus F said, "The finance problem. In my family there is one person who is working and we are a big family so she finds it quite hard to afford to pay for me especially because I am not a real family member". One student stays about 26 km away from the College and he relies on trucks from Mozambique to take him to College. Some days he only arrives after classes have finished due to a lack of transport. He leaves home at five in the morning to get to class. After class he has to use the same mode of transport to get home because he cannot afford transport fees.

From the responses of Campus A students, it is clear that they are more concerned with infrastructure than transport or finance. As one respondent said, "... facilities for practical". Another interesting response was, "The diversity of students in the class, I get bored easily". By this she meant that the way in which the classes are taught is boring. The respondent is the only mother tongue English speaker in the class and the classes are no challenge for her. This specific respondent left at the end of her Level 3 (NCV Tourism) year. It is unknown to me if she completed her studies at another College. Another response was, "The classrooms are too small".

I asked the students if they would like to do the same full time courses or a short course in the same area. 87% of the respondents said that they would prefer to be doing the full time course rather than a short skills course.

Table 28: Short Skills Course or Current Course

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Current Course	4	100	3	75	7	87
Short skill course			1	25	1	13

The main reason was that the full course would make them more competent for work. As one respondent said, "The world is tough out there." The only student that said he preferred a short Skills Course was the student that had to travel 26 kilometres per day. He chose this for obvious reasons.

I asked the students what their expectations were in five years time.

Table 29: Expectations in five years time

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Manager position	3	75	1	25	4	50
Own business	1	25	2	50	3	38
Employed			1	25	1	13

An interesting trend shows that 75% of Campus A respondents indicated that they see themselves in manager positions, while only 25% of Campus F respondents indicated management positions. One of the respondents of Campus A said, "... Managing or an Executive secretary of the Municipal Manager".

50 % of Campus F respondents see themselves as owning their own business. As one of the respondents said, "I see myself as a qualified electrician and owning my own company". This might be because of the lack of industries in the surrounding area of Campus F. Most of the people make a living by informal trading. Only one of the respondents from Campus F said, "I see myself working for a good company where I will earn a high salary to fix my problems as well as my community problems".

One student at Campus F said that she wanted to run her own funeral house. She responded as follows, "I have a dream of having my own funeral house to help people in

pain”. She is orphaned and cared for by friends. She is also not a very strong student and is repeating her N4 course in Management Assistant. Despite all odds she is the secretary of the SRC of the College, selected out of all the SRC members from all campuses. She knows what she wants and with a little guidance will become very successful.

The responses received seem to be unrealistic expectations on the students’ part. Looking at the overall picture, 50% seems a high percentage of students to indicate that they see themselves in a manager position. If you break it down according to campuses it shows clearly that the students from Campus A see themselves as managers, once again probably due to the fact that there are more employment opportunities in the bigger town. Owning a business in the area where Campus F is situated seems to be the norm due to the lack of industries and employment in the area

4.8.1 Medium of Instruction

Originally the language issue was dealt with through two questions namely, “What language is used in the class?” and “What do you think about English as the language of instruction?” Respondents answered the two questions together so I decided to analyse the two questions together. The official medium of instruction is English at all the campuses. Classes are supposed to be presented in English and the exams and textbooks are only in English.

Students from both campuses indicated that they are taught in English. Despite the fact that all the Campus F students indicated that they are taught in English, my observation was different. When I walked around the buildings listening to the classes being taught, all I heard was Zulu. During the observation at Campus A, English was used in most of the classes with the exception of one of the Engineering classes.

Despite the differences between the two campuses, all of the respondents indicated that they are happy with English as the medium of instruction.

Students were asked what changes they would like to see at the College.

Table 30: Changes at College

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=4		N=8	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Infrastructure improvement	4	100	3	75	7	87
Additional courses			2	50	2	13

7 of the 8 respondents (87%) indicated that they would like to see infrastructure improvements at the College. Both of the campuses were previously used as hostels and renovations had to be done to change them into Colleges. As one of the respondents said, "The way the College appears, the way the buildings is designed and the grounds." When prompted, the respondent indicated that it does not feel or look like a College. Both campuses experience the problem of insufficient toilets and ablutions due to the fact that they were designed as hostels with a limited numbers of occupants. Another response from a Campus F student was, "I would like to see girls having their own private place (toilets) separated from the guys." Responses from the students of Campus A include the following, "We want new facilities, practical more hands on, cut out engine". When prompted what he meant he said that he would like to see more equipment in the workshops, a workshop where he can take an engine out, strip the engine and build it again. Another response was, "... new buildings because the students are increasing each and every trimester." Another respondent said, "I want to see a library and an organised canteen for students with a ticket system to avoid queuing". Another said, "More space for college recreation area and sports ground".

2 of the 8 respondents (13%) said that they would like to see more courses at the College. Both of these respondents were from Campus F. One of the respondents from Campus F said, "I would like to see the addition of other courses." Another said that, "I would like to see my college having some more courses not only Management Assistant and Electrical Engineering".

4.9 RESPONSES FROM GRADUATES

Four graduates from Campus A and three graduates from Campus F were interviewed. All seven of the graduates were Management Assistant students. It was the only course that was offered by both campuses that produced N6 graduates. Electrical Engineering that was also offered by both campuses produced very few N6 graduates.

Graduate students were asked what they expected from their studies.

Table 31: Expectations of studies

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=3		N=7	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
To obtain a qualification	4	100	3	100	7	100
To get a job	4	100	3	100	7	100

All (100%) of the graduates from Campus A and Campus F said that they expected to obtain qualifications and to get a job. One of the responses received from the students of Campus F included the following, "...to find my diploma, to work and to go further in my studies." Another one said, "I expected to obtain a Diploma in Management Assistant and to be able to get a better job position" and another responded, "... to get employed."

The students from Campus A responded as follows, "To see me graduate with a national diploma". Another response was, "I expected to get more practice about management assistant. I expected to go to an office and arrange for us to see what type of work they do." Another said, "To become a secretary," and "I wanted to work as an admin assistant and end up being a manager."

The next two questions posed to the graduates were, "Are you employed?" and "Are you employed in your field of study?" I decided to analyse the questions together because of the link between employment and the field of study.

Table 32: Employment

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=3		N=7	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Clerk			2	67	2	29
Teacher	1	25	1	33	2	29
Unemployed	2	50			2	29
Secretary	1	25			1	14

Only 3 of the 7 respondents (43%) are employed in their field of study. Two are employed as clerks and one as a secretary. 2 of the 7 respondents (29%) of Campus A indicated that they are unemployed.

Looking at the responses it is surprising to see that two of the respondents (29%) (one respondent from each Campus) are employed as teachers at local high schools, one near Nongoma and one in Kwangwanase. In the rural areas the majority of the teachers in the schools are not qualified or are underqualified. More alarming is the fact that even at the College, unqualified or underqualified teachers are being appointed at both campuses.

Although the expectations of the students when they started at the college were to gain a qualification to obtain a job, 50% of the respondents interviewed from Campus A were not employed.

All three of the students of Campus F were approached by the hospital and municipality before they finished their N6 certificates. Due to the scarcity of work in the area the students indicated that they had to take the positions offered to them. As one graduate said, “Jobs do not fall in your lap”.

The two graduates from Campus A that indicated that they are unemployed, “work” at Campus A as interns. They only receive a daily travel allowance. According to the Campus Head they deliver excellent work and enjoy the exposure of the working environment. Campus A “employs” interns after the completion of their N6 Management Assistant course for a maximum period of 18 months. For a N6 Management Assistant to obtain a National Diploma in Management Assistant a graduate had to be employed in their field of study for 18 months. After the completion of the 18 months, the employer supplies the Department of Education with a letter stating the duties the graduate performed, which is then taken into consideration and the N6 Management Assistant is then converted into a National Diploma equal to M+3 for employment purposes. Most of the previous interns are employed around Vryheid. When employers enquire about students that underwent the in-service training, the interns currently employed are sent for interviews first.

The next question posed to the respondents was to find out if they would do the same course (18 months) or a shorter Skills Course (3 months) in the same line of study.

Table 33: Short Skills course or same course?

Response	Campus A		Campus F		Total	
	N=4		N=3		N=7	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Same course	3	75	2	67	5	71
Short Skills Course	1	25	1	33	2	29

Despite the fact that some of their expectations were not met, 5 of the 7 respondents (71%) said that they would do the same full-time course instead of a short course if they had the choice. As one of the respondents said, “The world is tough out there, you must get the best qualification possible to obtain a job”

The last question I posed to the graduates was to find out if they would recommend the College to future students.

All the respondents indicated that they would recommend the college to future students. One of the respondents from Campus F said, “Because in our community, we need more

knowledge and skills in order to get employed or to start out own business”. Another said, “Yes, if it was not for the college I could not be a teacher”. One of the students from Campus A said, “Our College is not like those fly-by-nights colleges like you have Grade 11 today, Grade 12 tomorrow, but is the college that is registered and known by government. I am proud of my college.” In the wide geographical area where the College is situated, word of mouth is the best marketing tool for the College. Family and friends who studied at the College and who are employed are the best advertisement for the College. The fact that the College does not have a Marketing Manager that can organise intensive marketing campaigns means that word of mouth is much needed to market the College.

4.10 CO-OPERATIVES

In addition to the other role players I also interviewed four members of co-operatives.. The FET College has been training co-operatives’ members since 2005 as part of a project in partnership with the Department of Labour. Currently the FET Colleges train the members of co-operatives for a week. They then go back to communities, work on a business plan and come back to present the business plan. In the second week of training, the business plans are discussed, changes recommended and they are assisted to complete the loan applications to Ithala Bank. As soon as the loan is granted the co-operative can run their businesses.

The Co-Operatives Co-ordinator accompanied me to the places where the four chosen co-operatives were operating. During the interviews with the co-operative members communication was very difficult, despite the fact that the co-ordinator assisted me with the translation of the questions. The co-ordinator had to repeat questions and explain in detail what we wanted to know. According to some of the members, they heard about the free training and some people even formed the co-operatives during the training together with other people attending the free training. This is a desperate cry for help.

The list of co-operatives interviewed is displayed in Table 34.

Table 34: Co-Operatives

Name of co-operative	Type	Members	Date established	Loan granted
Ikusasaletu	Agricultural	13	28 May 2005	R355 000.00
Sisacancane	Sewing	7	28 March 2005	R78 000.00
Best Engineering	Services (Engineering)	5	28 February 2007	R570 000.00
Izimpande	Sewing	11	28 March 2005	R278 000.00

The first question posed to the co-operatives was to find out what the reason was behind starting the co-operative.

Table 35: Reason for starting a co-operative?

Reason for forming a co-op	N=4	
	No	%
Employment opportunities	4	100
Skills development	3	75
To make it easy to sell and produce our product	2	50
Investment and upliftment of our country	2	50

100% of the respondents said that they started/formed the co-operative because of the employment opportunities. 50% said that it was an easy way to sell and produce their products.

The new Co-operative Act, 14 of 2005 (RSA, 2005) came into law in South Africa in August 2005. This Act sees co-operatives promoting economic and social development by creating employment, generating income, facilitating broad-based black economic empowerment and eradicating poverty. The training of co-operatives is intended to empower ordinary citizens with the necessary skills for economic activity. The answers received from the members correspond with the aim of the act.

The members of the co-operatives interviewed were asked about the challenges they experience to register the co-operatives.

It is interesting to note that 3 of the 4 Co-operative members (75%) interviewed indicated that they did not experience any problems to register the co-operative. This could be the result of the good facilitators that are teaching the Co-operatives courses at the different sites. A common problem concerning the co-operatives is that they find it difficult to get members to sign the papers for registration and the application for finances from Ithala Bank.

4.10.1 Co-op training at a FET college

100% of the co-operative members interviewed attended the co-operative training at the college, and 100% of the respondents said that they found the training adequate.

When asked which areas they found most useful, the following responses were received: 3 of the 4 respondents (75%) indicated that the Financial Plan module was of the most value, 2 of the 4 respondents (50 %) indicated that the Conflict Management module and

the Business Plan was the most useful and 50% found the Human Resources module useful.

I asked them if there are any changes they would like to see in the training.

Table 36: Changes in training

Changes in training	N=4	
	No	%
Nothing	3	75
Produce more Zulu manuals	1	25
Retraining facilitators	1	25

Mixed responses were received. 3 of the 4 (75%) respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the training and nothing needed attention. 1 of the 4 (25%) respondents indicated that more Zulu manuals should be produced. The manuals are printed in both English and Zulu. The classes, however, are presented in Zulu. 1 of the 4 (25%) respondents indicated that the facilitator needed more training. When prompted he said that the facilitator was not good in teaching.

I asked the respondents what benefits they gained by forming the co-operative.

Table 37: Benefits gained by forming a co-op

Benefits gained	N=4	
	No	%
Handling business in an appropriate way	3	75
Employment	1	25
Development of business skills	1	25

3 of the 4 (75%) respondents said that they learnt to handle business in an appropriate manner, 1 of the 4 (25%) said that they gained employment (working for the co-operative) and 1 of the 4 (25%) said that they developed their business skills.

The next two questions posed to the co-operatives regarded the financial aspect of the co-operatives. The first question was, "Is the co-operative financially active?" and the next question, "Can the co-operative support all the members?"

Table 38: Financially active

Financially active	N=4	
	No	%
No	2	50%
Not really	1	25%
Not yet	1	25%

I asked the respondents if the co-operative is financially active. 50% said “No”, 25% said “not really” or “not yet.” Given the responses received from the co-operatives, none of them are financially active, despite large amounts of money allocated to them.

However, when I asked the interviewees if the co-operative could support all members, the answer contradicted the answer in the previous question about whether the co-operative is financially active. 3 of the 4 respondents (75%) said that the co-operative could support all the members, whereas in the previous question, 2 of the 4 (50%) said that the co-operative was not financially active. I am of the view that if the co-op can support all the members it should be financially active. It is clear that there is a lack of financial understanding. It appears that the members do not understand the concept. From the responses received it seems that money is not handled properly. One of the respondents said that, “If money comes in it is shared”. Looking at this response it appears to me that there is no long term planning of the activities of the co-operative. When prompted about how and when meetings are held to discuss the day to day running of the co-operatives, one of the respondents indicated that they “.. do not meet, only when money arrive.”

The next question posed was to find out about the challenges the co-operative faced daily.

Table 39: Challenges faced daily

Challenges faced daily	N=4	
	No	%
Members not active	3	75%
Financial problems	2	50%

3 of the 4 respondents (75%) said that the co-operative members are not active, they lose interest and drop out of the co-operatives. This confirms my previous observation that it appears that no long term planning is done and it also contradicts the financially active responses.

4.10.2 What support did you receive after the training from the College and Ithala Bank

I asked the co-operative members what support they got from the College and from Ithala Bank after the training. 2 of the 4 (50%) of the respondents said that they received no support from the College and 2 of the 4 (50%) said that the College introduced them to

Ithala Bank and 2 of the 4 (50%) said that the facilitator visited them to see how they are doing.

As for support from Ithala Bank, 3 of the 4 (75%) said that Ithala Bank supported them with finances (loans), 2 of the 4 (50%) said the Bank taught them how to handle finances and 1 (25%) said that the bank did nothing to support them.

Looking at the responses received by the co-operative members it is clear that the answers correspond with the research conducted by Ortmann and King (2007) which found that co-operative members did not clearly understand the purpose of a co-operative, how it functions, and what the members' rights are. Trollip (2001) argues that the project members seemed to lack product development skills such as the identification of the target markets and marketable products, product design and quality control. This is an area where the FET College can deliver much needed skills to the community by offering the skills courses to the community. Co-operative training can assist by providing the skills needed. As the responses received were from people that have already been trained by the College, it might be necessary to look at the Co-operative training course material and adjust the training. Two weeks training might not be adequate for training Co-operatives.

4.10.3 Recommendations

The responses received from the co-operative respondents on the question of which recommendations they can make to improve the co-operative training, was very vague. When I asked them what they meant by the remarks they could not respond to the question despite an interpreter being present. One of the respondents said, "The college should help us because they train us". Another said that, "Ithala should intervene". When prompted about what he/she means, no explanation was given. One respondent was very positive, "The college should keep up the good work".

When interviewing the candidates I realised that they did not have any idea of why they did the training. Although interviewing co-operatives was part of the original proposal, I felt that no information other than the fact that the respondents grasp every opportunity for any training offered was gained. The word spread that training is given for free and they show up. I found the interviewing process with the co-operatives very difficult due to the language barrier. Even the Co-operatives Co-ordinator that accompanied me and did the translation during the interviews commented that she found the process very

demanding. All the questions had to be repeated and explained in detail before any responses were received from the interviewees.

4.11 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the study was to determine the challenges faced by the rural College daily in delivering education and training in the rural areas. The following main issues were identified: poverty, lack of infrastructure and resources and the centralisation of functions.

Poverty was identified by all role players as one of the main challenges facing people in the rural areas. Linked to poverty is the fact that students at both campuses struggle to pay the fees at the colleges and that they struggle to afford the transport fees to get to college on a daily basis.

The lack of proper infrastructure both in general in rural areas and specifically at the colleges was also a great challenge. Closely related to the lack of infrastructure at the campuses is the lack of resources, the limited courses and the high turnover of staff. All of these contribute to the challenges faced at the colleges on a daily basis.

The centralisation of functions seems to be the biggest obstacle for the campuses. It appears that Campus Managers feel that the centralisation of the functions hampers the day to day running of the campuses and that they do not have any authority to make decisions concerning the running of the campus. Delays in appointments of lecturing staff have an influence on the quality of teaching at the campuses.

An interesting observation made was that the students prefer courses associated with white-collar jobs, regardless of the number of employment possibilities. This response from the students contradicts the aims of the National Skills Development Strategy. The Managers and lecturers prefer courses that are skills orientated and involve entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the research. As indicated in Chapter 1 the main research aim of this study was to determine the challenges faced by a FET College situated in a rural area.

The main research question relate to the challenges faced by rural people on a daily basis, and how these challenges influence the delivery of education in the rural areas. General questions were asked of all respondents as well as specific questions applicable to the specific respondents during semi-structured interviews.

Akoojee and McGrath (2008) question whether FET Colleges in general can deliver skills development for poverty reduction. Looking at the findings of my research, the rural College that was the focus of my research, still has a long way to go before significant skills development will or can take place. Despite the recapitalisation process, the college still lacks the necessary infrastructure and human resources to take its rightful place in the National Skills Development Strategy.

As Rasool (2005) argues, the Skills Development Act (Republic of South Africa, 1998), presented new opportunities for FET Colleges which should play a crucial role in the skills development challenge of South Africa. Mrs Ina Cronje, former MEC of Education in KwaZulu-Natal stated that the FET Colleges are about the acquisition of skills that the country is in desperate need of. In a speech delivered during August 2005 (Department of Education, 2005), the former National Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, identified the following objectives for FET Colleges: to position the FET Colleges to offer modern intermediate skills programmes, to increase the participation and success rate of the age group 16 – 24 and to focus on the development and employment needs and opportunities related to development projects. Mbola (2007) reported that the former Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Sibusiso Ndebele advised that FET Colleges need to offer skills that keep pace with changing national and provincial needs and that programmes offered at FET Colleges must be properly aligned towards the skills requirements of our country.

Yet, at the same time as so much is expected of the FET Colleges, the Department of Education has withdrawn the funding for short course provision, which is contradictory to the Skills Development Strategy of the Government (Garisch, 2007). The Department

introduced the new programme, National Certificate Vocational, which is an alternative to the academic programme offered at high schools. At the same time, the Department announced the phasing out of the NATED programmes (N4-N6), which provided initial post-school education, without replacing it with other post-school qualifications for the age group 18-24. This left a huge gap for rural students many of whom cannot afford to attend a university, thus effectively excluding a generation of young people from gaining valuable qualifications and skills that could lead to employment. This also has an influence on the sustainability of the rural College.

Enrolments for 2009 at both campuses declined from the actual enrolments in 2007. This can be linked to the phasing out of the NATED courses. It is clear from these figures that the College would find it very difficult to stay open if this pattern continues. The enrolments for Campus A declined from 1700 in 2007 to 1394 in 2009 (18% decline). The enrolments for Campus F declined from 282 to 116 in 2009 (59% decline). Taking into consideration that my theoretical framework is based on sustainable development, such a sharp decline in enrolments indicate that the College cannot be sustainable in the rural area. If Campus F does not enrol Learnerships and Skills Courses soon, the Campus will not be sustainable. The only course that the campus can offer is NCV Office Administration once NATED courses have been phased out completely.

As Ryan (2006) argues, opportunities for income generation are the most direct route out of poverty. FET Colleges offered co-operative training that could assist rural people to manage and plan different strategies to gain maximum benefits and be self sustainable. Yet, very little Co-operative training has taken place in the College which I studied since 2005. Once again, this has an influence on the sustainability of the College.

It is important to note that rural areas are not the same. Even within the campuses of the College there are major differences in the demographics and infrastructure provision. Looking at the two campuses studied and the evidence provided, the differences in the infrastructure provision at campuses are very clear.

5.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY THE RURAL COLLEGE

The challenges identified by the different role players are summarised and discussed in the following sections.

5.2.1 Poverty

Poverty was identified as the primary challenge faced by people in rural areas as well as by the college. As indicated in the Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (2000), 70% of poor people in South Africa live in rural areas. This results in one of the challenges faced at the College itself, namely the lack of finances to pay for studies. The majority of the students studying at rural colleges cannot afford to pay any tuition fees. The few that really can afford it, continue their studies at Universities. According to Ludman (2000) and Delius & Schirmer (2001) education must be at the heart of any poverty reduction programme. Students from Campus F see poverty as part of their heritage and are not as aware of the poverty challenge as the students from Campus A. Contributing to this challenge is the funding formula used by the Department of Education. The Department has withdrawn the funding for Short Skills courses provision and, with the phasing out of the NATED courses the funding for FET Colleges could be reduced over the next few years as subsidies will only be allocated for the NCV courses. A new or adapted formula is needed, particularly for rural areas. The cost of living is higher in rural areas due to higher costs of services such as food, water, shelter, energy, health and education. Transport and communications services costs are also very high.

5.2.2 Lack of infrastructure

Lack of infrastructure in general refers to the lack of water, electricity and roads in the area. Campus A is situated in a rural town and the lack of infrastructure is not that severe in the town itself. Students staying outside the town, however, do experience infrastructure problems like lack of electricity and water. The road network, however, is not that bad, although students have to travel long distances to the college every day. At Campus F, the lack of infrastructure is much more evident. For example, the Campus operated without electricity for the first year after opening, and a generator was used to supply power to the computer classes until electricity was supplied to the Campus. The local high school next to the college does not have running water or electricity and local high school children fetch water regularly from the college premises.

With regard to the lack of infrastructure relating to the college in particular, both of the campuses were previously used as hostels for local schools and a re-designing had to take place to make the buildings more suitable for a College. Dormitory rooms had to be changed into classrooms as well as ablutions demolished to make room for classrooms.

At both campuses there are not enough classrooms for the number of enrolled students. Toilets at both campuses are inadequate for the number of students per campus. There is no workshop at Campus F, despite the fact that Engineering courses are offered at the Campus. Campus A only had one small fitted electrical workshop prior to their move to the new site in August 2008.

5.2.3 Lack of resources

Closely related to the challenge of poor infrastructure is the lack of resources at the college. Campus F is affected the worst by this lack of resources. No telephone lines or internet are available at the College. To communicate with Central Office, staff have to make use of the fax line of a local pharmacy, or use their own private cell phones. Since 2009 one of the staff members has made use of her own private cell phone connection for urgent messages from Central Office.

According to the ISRDS (2000), rural areas throughout the world have similar characteristics, including a lack of infrastructure. *Emerging Voices* (2005), states that schools in rural areas are poorly resourced in terms of infrastructure like buildings, roads, water and electricity as well as with equipment. The situation at the College is the same, according to observations made by myself and the report of Garisch (2007).

5.2.4 Centralisation and poor management

Challenges experienced at the College such as the lack of infrastructure, lack of resources and human resources challenges can be related to poor management and the centralisation of functions. Respondents interviewed indicated that they feel that the management lack focus. According to the respondents there is no teamwork or communication between Senior Management (Unit Managers and Campus Heads) and Top Management (Rector and Deputy Rectors), which results in the college not being developed properly. All the respondents interviewed indicated that the college will really struggle to survive. Keeping in mind that the college is situated in an actually poor area with no or little income from student fees, this might result in the closing down of the college. This would really have a negative impact on the role of the college in the rural area in providing education and training to the poorest of the poor.

Garisch (2007) states that the divide between college leadership and campus-based management should be addressed as a matter of urgency. I am in total agreement with

his report. Garisch (2007) reports that strained relationships between campuses and unit managers at central office have worsened over time. Amongst Campus Heads (not only the two campuses involved in my research) the perceptions were that the wrong people were appointed to the positions at Central Office, resulting in crises management due to the inexperience of the appointed managers. The Campus Heads felt that poor communication on the part of central office regarding new policies and procedures, resulted in confusion and a lack of responsiveness on the part of the Campus managers. This resulted in power struggles and resistance to central office initiatives. Since the publication of the Garisch (2007) report, however, the situation at the College has further deteriorated. As mentioned in Chapters 2 and 4, a number of resignations amongst management staff (Marketing Manager, Community Outreach Manager and the General Administrative Manager) as well as support personnel have been tendered, without any effort being made to replace these staff members. The only appointments made during the last few months have been for temporary teaching staff. The last promotion posts were filled in 2006 with the appointment of all the Unit Managers at Central Office.

5.2.5 Human Resources

The acting Campus Head of Campus F is stationed at the Central Office, 350 kilometres away. Staff at Campus F must be satisfied with “hand-me-downs” from other campuses, including redundant staff from other campuses, resulting in high dissatisfaction amongst lecturers, which in turn leads to a high turnover in staff. The turnover of staff is higher in the Engineering Department at both campuses. Campus Heads indicated that this could be the result of poor salary scales offered to the lecturers. In the private sector, the Engineering staff with trade tests can earn a much better salary.

As mentioned in Chapters 2 and 4, a number of resignations amongst management staff (Marketing Manager, Community Outreach Manager and the General Administrative Manager) as well as support personnel have been tendered and these positions have yet to be filled. The only appointments made during the last few months have been for temporary teaching staff. The last promotion posts were filled in 2006 with the appointment of all the Unit Managers at Central Office. Given the enrolment figures that declined at both campuses, the total number of staff members stayed the same at both campuses. One of the reasons for this can be that three year contracts are offered at the College to council appointed staff. This, however, could result in the College being overstaffed as a whole, preventing the Central Office from making any new appointments.

5.2.6 Curriculum

The curriculum followed at the FET Colleges is divided into two main categories. The first category is NATED courses, which are examined by the Department of Education and the second category is the NCV courses which have been introduced by the Department since 2007 and are basically an alternative to the more academic programmes offered at Secondary Schools. The NCV programmes only cover the Secondary school (Levels 2 – 4). In 2007, the first year of implementation, 312 students were enrolled for Level 2. Funding for the Colleges is tightly tied to the NCV courses. This has the potential of threatening the existence of the rural college. Campus F is situated in a deep rural area where most of the schools in the area are no-fee schools. Why would a student pay the registration fee if free schooling were available? This decline in the enrolment figures is already a warning sign that the existence of the rural college is under threat. The enrolment figures from Campus A declined from 1700 in 2007 to 1394 (18%) in 2009. At Campus F the enrolment figures declined from 282 to 116 (59%).

The category with the highest number of enrolments offered at the College is the NATED courses. In 2007 the total enrolment for the NATED courses at the College was 3524 students. The NATED courses cover Secondary School (N2 – N3) education as well as Post School education (N4 – N6). These programmes are, however, being phased out. The last enrolments for the N4 programme were in January 2009. This leaves a huge gap for the post-school youth.

In addition to these two categories, Learnerships, Skills Courses and Co-operative training are also offered at the College, although in a very limited form.

Learnerships are legislated by the Skills Development Act. It is a complex contractual agreement between the learner, the provider and the employer. Due to this complex procedure, not many learnerships are offered at the college. Rasool (2005) argues that the provision of learnerships is the best opportunity for FET Colleges to be involved in the skills development strategy. During 2007 only 25 students were enrolled for Learnerships at the College.

Skills Courses are also offered at the College. These courses are not funded by the Department and are not accredited. The Skills Courses offered are craft related like beadwork and sewing. In 2007, only 417 students completed Skills courses. Co-

operative training is also offered at the College. However, only 4 co-operatives were trained in 2007.

According to Mrs Ina Cronje, the former MEC of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, FET Colleges are about the acquisition of skills that the country needs so desperately. Looking at the courses offered at the College, this is not the case. If you, however, look at the responses received on the question of which courses the respondents would like to see at the College, what the country needs and what the students want, the views are completely different. The majority of the staff concentrated on skills courses, whereas the students concentrated on the more white-collar course, regardless of the employment opportunities available in these fields.

Because of the smaller student base in the rural areas it is also not possible to offer a variety of courses due to the high cost of installing equipment needed to offer such courses and increasing the number of courses at rural campuses is not financially viable.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THIS RESEARCH

On the basis of my findings and personal experience at the College as a staff member of Central Office, I recommend the following possible solutions to the challenges experienced by the FET College.

The first and major issue that should be addressed before this College can move forward is the crisis surrounding the divide between College leadership and campus based management. At this stage the College stability is at stake as recorded by Garisch (2007). I recommend that the Department or an outside consultant be appointed to guide the process and solve the divide between different role players. All the role players should sit around a table and find a way forward.

The second major issue, is that the College needs to resolve the administrative support functions of the College. As Garisch (2007) reported, the College is now becoming unstable due to the cumulative impact of the constraints caused by the lack of administrative support functions. How can the College function without a General Administration section? In the past few months, the General Administration Manager, the Supply Chain Manager, the Senior Administrative Clerk and two of the Procurement Clerks resigned. None of them were replaced. At the moment only one person is

employed in the Procurement Section. The Finance Manager is acting in the General Administration Manager's post.

The Marketing Manager resigned in 2008. How can the College grow without a Marketing section to market the courses offered at the College? Although it was decided at a Management meeting that the campuses should be responsible for their own marketing campaigns, the campuses cannot do this effectively because of the lack of staff.

How can the College deliver on our role to provide skills the country needs when the Community Outreach Programme Manager resigned? The duties of this Manager have been transferred to the Curriculum Services Manager who is also responsible for Marketing and Learnerships, with only 2 support staff members. I recommend that the issue of the vacant posts be addressed as a matter of urgency. Vacant posts should be filled with capable people who are familiar with the FET Sector. Out of personal experience (being utilised in different sections), the College is currently operating in crisis mode, resulting in issues raised by the role players like the lack of resources, support from management etc.

If the above issues are resolved the following recommendations will be much easier to implement.

Delivery sites

Despite the lack of administrative support staff, the college serves a very wide geographical area with a number of delivery sites as well as plans for expansion to further sites. It is however recommended that the college should concentrate on one campus at a time. New campuses should not be opened before current campuses are fully operational and well-equipped. From the responses received and my observations, it is clear that most of the campuses are poorly resourced and infrastructure is not up to standard. Despite these challenges, management continues to establish new campuses in rural locations.

Staffing issues

Retention of teaching staff is another big challenge for this college. To retain and recruit competent staff the following suggestions are made:

- Provide adequate staff accommodation, especially at the more rural campuses. The staff accommodation at Campus F is not up to standard.
- Provide incentives for teaching in rural areas. Provide staff with the necessary resources and support needed.
- Provide ongoing training for staff members. Due to the high turnover of staff, expertise is lost.
- Utilise staff according to their qualifications. Amongst administrative staff at the Campuses and at Central Office, cleaners and security guards are performing clerical functions.

Student issues

Most of the prospective students at the rural campuses are extremely poor. Although the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) provides bursaries, the amount allocated to each student (funding formula) is far from adequate. The bursaries are only allocated to NCV students.

Another option could be a different fee structure for poorer regions. The fee structures should be adapted to the income levels of the catchment areas.

The unrealistic expectations of the students who prefer white collar courses regardless of the availability of employment can be linked to the lack of career guidance at the College as well as the limited courses offered at the College. It is recommended that more time is spent on career guidance for students.

Community involvement (Community college model)

The FET College should be the centre of all educational and cultural experiences. If a rural college is going to be successful in meeting the educational needs of its community, the college will have to be an expert in the politics of education. Colleges are poised to assume a leadership role for addressing social problems such as illiteracy, poverty, and low levels of education in rural communities. According to Letsie (2003) educational opportunities of many citizens have been limited and this limitation has led to many South Africans being uneducated, unskilled, unemployed and living in poverty. The establishment of community colleges (FET colleges in rural areas) should assist in alleviating poverty and unemployment.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following areas can do with further research.

- The Community College model
- Sustainability model for skills courses
- Learnerships and their role in the College curriculum
- Centralisation vs Decentralisation
- Career guidance for FET students

5.5 CONCLUSION

Education plays an important role in the community. Individuals cannot develop their full potential without education. By making education, and in particular Further Education and Training, readily available and accessible to all citizens, poverty can largely be alleviated and the people will regain their pride. More people will become employable.

If all challenges can be addressed, the rural college can become the goose that lays the golden egg. It is however essential to get the basics right, address staff issues, supply or provide the necessary infrastructure needed to deliver quality education and provide courses that will actually lead to empowerment and employment of the learners.

In my opinion the model on which rural colleges should operate should be based on the community college model of America. The College should be the centre of development in rural areas.

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Appendix A**Interview Schedule****SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS****GENERAL QUESTIONS**

I will start each interview with the following question to put the participants at ease:

Tell me a little bit more about yourself and your position at this College. If the participant leave out any of the following information I will specifically ask the questions.

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Position/what studying:

Qualifications:

Length of time at the college:

Home Language:

What are the key challenges faced by people in rural areas?

How do you see the role of FET Colleges in rural areas?

What do you think this college is doing for the community?

What challenges do you experience at this College?

What challenges does this College face in general?

What are the main differences between your college and other colleges (generally) and between this college and colleges in rural areas?

How appropriate are the courses offered at this college for rural areas?

What courses would you like to see at this College?

How do you see this College in ten years time?

What ideas do you have for how the college could serve the community more effectively?

MANAGEMENT/CENTRAL OFFICE

How do you ensure that the programmes offered at the College respond to the community needs?

To what extent are College programmes offering relevant and responsive courses according to the labour and economic needs of rural areas?

How can poverty be alleviated through education and training?

STUDENTS (CURRENT)

Why did you choose this College to further your studies?

What do you expect to gain from your studies?

What do you want to do when you have completed your studies?

What problems do you have as a student at this college? (Probe for transport, family problems, finance etc)

If you have a choice would you rather do a short skills course applicable to your community needs or would you prefer the current courses? Please explain.

Where do you see yourself in five years from now?

What language is used generally in the class room as the medium of instruction at your College?

What do you think of English as medium of instruction?

What changes would you like to see at the College?

STUDENTS (GRADUATES)

When did you complete your studies at the College?

What were your expectations when you started your studies at the College?

What work have you been doing since you left the College? (Probe re where working and what they live on if unemployed)

Have you ever been employed in your field of your study? If no, please explain

What benefits did you gain by studying at the College?

Did the studies at the College fulfill your expectations?

If you could start over, would you rather do a short course applicable to your community needs or which would give you an income or would you prefer the course that you studied?

Would you recommend the College to future students? Motivate your answer.

STAFF MEMBERS

Why did you start teaching at the College?

How long have you been teaching at the Campus?

What do you teach and do you have any particular problems with teaching this/these subjects?

What facilities would you like to have at the college for your students?

What teaching aids / resources would you like to have at your college?

What is the cost for you to teach in the rural area? (accommodation, second home, transport – most of the staff employed at the rural colleges are transferred from other campuses)

What measures do you use to overcome the limitations of teaching in a rural area? (probes – innovative ideas on how to overcome shortage of resources etc.)

If you were offered a position at another College in a more urban location, would you prefer teaching there or would you stay in your current position? Why?

CAMPUS HEADS

What specific challenges do you as Campus Head face at this Campus?

OBSERVATION SHEET

Staff and learners	Campus A	Campus F	Comments
Teaching Staff			
Support Staff			
Security			
Principal			
Learners			
FACILITIES			
Classrooms			
Toilets (students)			
Toilets (staff)			
Hostels			
Workshops			
Staff Accommodation			
Hall			
Tuckshop			
Library			
Study Rooms			
Security			
Fencing			
Computers – Students			
Staff Computers			
Internet Access – Students			
Internet Access – Staff			
Telephone			
Fax machine			
Photocopy Machine			
Recreation Areas			

Dear Sir/Madam

I am studying at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard College campus, Higher and Adult Education Department. As part of my degree (MEd) I need to complete a dissertation. The title of my dissertation is "**Challenges faced by a rural FET College: a case study of a FET College in Northern KwaZulu Natal**"

I would like to do semi-structured interviews with you (campus head), five of your lecturing staff, four current students and four graduates of the College. The interview will explore your views on a rural college. The questions will be sent to you a few days before the interview. The interview will last about an hour and will be tape recorded. I am also going to do observation of the premises in general and observations of the classes of the lecturers I interview.

I would like you to nominate the staff members and students to take part in the research. The students should be "average" students. If possible I would like to have the contact numbers of graduates, employed and unemployed.

Complete confidentiality will be guaranteed. The aim of the study is not too criticize the college, but to identify the challenges experienced by all the stakeholders of the College.

If you agree to take part in my research please complete the attached form and return it in the self-addressed envelope included.

Should you have any question please contact me at 0833208118 or my supervisor, Dr Elda Lyster at 031-2602567.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my research.

ADRI VAN WYK

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Appendix D

Permission letter from Rector



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & CULTURE KZN

CENTRAL OFFICE

Tel: (034) 980 1010

Fax: (034) 980 1012

PRIVATE BAG X9424

VRYHEID, 3100

mthashanasds@telkomsa.net

11 September 2007

Mrs AE van Wyk
Mthashana FET College
VRYHEID
3100

Madam

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT CENTRAL OFFICE, VRYHEID AND MAPUTA
CAMPUS**

Permission is hereby granted that Adri Elizabeth van Wyk may conduct research at Mthashana FET College during 2007/2008.

The research may take place at Central Office, Vryheid and Maputa Campus.

Mrs van Wyk may conduct the observation of the classes during class time, but interviews should be conducted in free periods or after classes.

A copy of the research should be forwarded to the College after completion.



PPM LANGA
RECTOR

CENTRAL OFFICE

Tel: (034) 980 1010
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MTHASHANA FET-LETTERHEAD-r00

2007/03/28

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