

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Teaching Students with Visual “Disability”: The Experiences of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Lecturers

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Education (Curriculum Studies) degree

by

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DECLARATION

I, Zodwa Prudence Khumalo, student number 214580939 declare that this dissertation is indeed my own work, which reflects my own hard work and sleepless nights. It has never been submitted before to any institution for another qualification.

Researcher



SUPERVISOR

'The use of inverted commas in this study is used a sign of respect as I was uncertain of the correct term to use to refer to people without sight'

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother, who raised me. I know, that if you were alive you would be proud of me. You taught me basic education: to respect, to live and honour other, and to work hard as the sky is the limit. You never went to school but you sent me to be educated on your behalf. Today, I stand tall in your honour to say THANK YOU and I present this as respect to you.

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ABSTRACT

The acceptance of students with “disabilities” into mainstream classrooms is a global issue. In South Africa, during the apartheid era, people with “disabilities” were segregated into their own schools, and did not receive quality education as their peers in mainstream schools. South Africa post- apartheid, with its democratic government created new policies, which were to address past apartheid oppression in its education system. Amongst other policies was an inclusive education policy, which advocates for the inclusion of students with “disabilities” into mainstream classes. A public Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) has since 2015 enrolled students with visual “disabilities” as its initiative to implement the inclusive education policy. This resulted in the unexpected need for the lecturers to change their normal teaching strategies in order to accommodate these students.

A study within the qualitative approach, using a case study methodology, was employed to gather data on the experiences of four TVET College lecturers teaching students with visual “disabilities”. Semi-structured interviews with four lecturers were used to generate data. Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory underpinned this study and was useful in interpreting the experiences of TVET college lecturers.

This study has revealed three major findings: the TVET College lecturers have never received any professional training to prepare them to teach these students. There are no resources currently available to teach students with visual “disabilities”. The lecturers received no support from management and the Department of Higher Education in teaching students with visual “disabilities”. Nevertheless, the lecturers have embraced this challenge and have found their own agency to cope with teaching these students despite all the challenges they have encountered from not being trained, battling with resources and not being supported.

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List of abbreviations

1. ACE- Advance Certificate in Education
2. EFA- Education For All
3. ELT- Experiential Learning Theory
4. FET- Further Education and Training
5. IC-International Community
6. NATED- National Accredited Technical Diploma
7. NCV- National Certificate Vocational
8. NQF- National Qualifications Framework
9. O &M- Orientation and Mobility
10. PGCE-Post Graduate Certificate in Education
11. PWD- People with disability
12. SAQA- South African Qualification Authority
13. SLO- Student Liaison Officer
14. SONA -State Of The Nation Address
15. SSS- Student Support Services
16. TVET- Technical Vocational Education and Training
17. UCRPD- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
18. UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
19. Unisa- University of South Africa
20. WHO- World Health Organisation

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Chapter 1

Introduction, context, and layout of chapters

1.1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the background of the study, the rationale that aroused my interest to conduct the study on the phenomenon and the experience of TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” It also provides a brief background of the context where the study was conducted. The chapter also contains critical research question and sub-research questions, to which this study will strive to respond. The dissertation structure is then outlined and lastly, there is a conclusion of the chapter.

1.2 Background of the study

Prior to 1994, South Africa was an undemocratic country, where apartheid existed. In 1994, South Africa for the first time received its democracy. The advent of democracy brought major changes in the education system of South Africa. Democracy gave birth to new educational policies and practices, which never existed before. The education system was restructured, by the new government to create and implement new policies and practices that were characterised by high access to education for all, no discrimination, and equality in education (Taylor, 2009). Berkvens, Van Den Akker, and Brugman (2014) stated the policies asserted that every child must have access to education, irrespective of their socio-economic status, physical condition, race or gender. This suggests that all learners including those with “disabilities” have the same rights as others. Furthermore, the International Council of Associations for Science Education (2013) as cited by Ngubane-Mokiwa and Khoza (2016) confirmed that “access to high-quality education is a fundamental right to all” (p. 2).

Despite the achievement of democracy in South Africa and the policies described above, children with “disabilities” are still disadvantaged because they attend “special schools.” Special schools according to Takala (2007) are schools created to assist children with special needs in their studies

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and in coping with various situations at school. Takala (2007) further states that the main objective of special schools is to “assist and support the child during the learning process” (p. 50). The fact that learners with “disabilities” studied only with the “disabled” learners were viewed as discriminatory (Takala, 2007), because they were not exposed to a diversity of learners. In 2001, the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, launched a paper (White Paper 6), “Building an Inclusive Education and Training System”. The paper called for the implementation of what was already an international trend: “Education for All” by 2020 (Department of Education, 2001). This launch pronounced inclusive education as a new path to address past discrimination against people with “disabilities”. Hence, Engelbrecht (2006) explained that inclusive education in South Africa was established to correct past discriminations and to build a democratic society.

Inclusive education is the terminology used for the non-discriminatory education system, including the integration of “disabled” learners in regular classrooms (Engelbrecht, 2006). According to Green (2007), inclusive education is the catalyst in the education spectrum towards the acknowledgment of human rights and advocates a strong tendency towards education for all. Therefore, enrolling students with visual “disability” by a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College was an initiative to exercise a human right to all through “education for all” (RSA, 2016). Achieving inclusive education becomes an impossible accomplishment without the implementers of the policy and curriculum, the lecturers. Therefore, studying their experiences in teaching students with visual “disability” is vital in order to comprehend how they have embraced the shift from their normal teaching practice to inclusive education classrooms. Studying lecturers’ experiences is crucial in establishing their challenges so that improvements where necessary could be made. Their shared experiences will also be a foundation and a pathfinder to other lecturers who might face the same position in the future. It will also act as an advisory document to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), governing the TVET Colleges, on the necessary adjustments required in its curriculum policy documents.

1.3 Focus and purpose of the study

Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) colleges are institutions of higher learning, where the focus is on vocational training. Most lecturers are from industries, which suit

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the needs of vocational training. Some of the lecturers do not have any training or qualifications in teaching, but they can impart their industrial knowledge and experience to students appropriately. Once they are within the college, they develop themselves in the teaching and education field by doing a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Their experience in teaching in TVET colleges has mainly been related to students who are sighted. It was only in 2015, where they found themselves faced with a situation where they had to teach students with visual “disabilities.” Teaching students with visual “disability” demanded an urgent change in the teaching practices of these lecturers to accommodate these students. Therefore, this study will focus on their experiences in teaching students with visual “disability.” The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.”

1.4 Rationale of the study

The motivation for this study stems from my personal experience of 11 years teaching at a TVET College. For all these years, we have enrolled students with other forms of “disabilities” for example, inability to use both hands. However, for the first time in 2015, 12 students with visual “disability” were registered for Public Management N4 under the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) programme as a project class. A NATED programme is one of the two curricula for TVET colleges. The NATED programme is a curriculum leading to a diploma, either Engineering or Business Studies programme. It commences in N1- N6 for Engineering and N4-N6 for Business Studies. Before the class of students with visual “disability” started as a project, the students were learning alone in their own segregated classroom and were taught by lecturers assigned to teach them alone. Again, in 2016, one student was registered on a National Certificate Vocational (NCV) programme and was inclusively learning together with sighted students. The decision to enrol this student was taken after a lengthy engagement with the lecturers who were to teach the student. Most of them were reluctant to enrol the student due to fear, limited training, and low levels of confidence in dealing with students with such a “disability.” However, the college management convinced them and cited the South African constitution that advocates for equality and quality education for all (RSA, 1996). The student was enrolled which pronounced a change in normal teaching practices of the lecturers in order to accommodate the student.

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The transition from teaching able-bodied to an inclusive practice was sudden and an unpleasant one for the lecturers. Hence, this study aims at exploring the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” I am studying their experiences because I aim at gaining an in-depth understanding of their teaching strategies, their challenges, and opportunities. Their experiences will assist me in my teaching practice since I also have students with visual “disability” in my class. As their lecturer, I have struggled to describe their condition in an appropriate manner that is not offensive to them, because they individually refer to their condition differently. Some will refer to their condition as being “visually challenged, some visually “disabled”, some visually impaired, and others blind.” By conducting this study, I hope to ascertain the correct terminology to refer to people with no or little sight.

It is over a decade now, since South Africa attained its democracy, but there is still an estimate of up to 70% of children with “disabilities” who are out of school (Seale, 2013). An initiative of this public TVET College to enrol these students was aimed at breaking this trend. Though enrolling these students is in line with inclusive education policy, the policy implementers’ (the lecturers’) views are vital. One would agree that a shift from teaching visual students to having to accommodate non-visual students requires new strategies and a positive attitude. As such, Mahlobo (1999) explained that teachers’ attitude towards their work will be influenced by the level of commitment in their work in general. He further added that a highly committed teacher’s method and approach can enhance learners’ motivation to expend effort in their academic development. Therefore, the experiences of lecturers remain fundamental for the effective implementation of teaching in an inclusive classroom. For this reason, this study aims to explore the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.”

Conducting this study will first benefit me, as a novice researcher to develop academic writing skills and to debate arguments. It might also benefit TVET College lecturers who will be participants in the study because through their shared experience they can improve and / or develop new teaching strategies to teach students with visual “disability.” Lecturers from other TVET Colleges who might in the near future be in a similar situation of teaching students with visual

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“disability” might also benefit from the findings of this study. Students and parents of students with visual “disability” could be informed that TVET colleges are now catering to the needs of their children. Lastly, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) as the employer, by understanding the experiences of lecturers could derive means to assist lecturers to best implement the inclusive education policy, especially in the TVET sector.

1.5 Critical research question

This study strives to provide findings on the following critical research question:

What are the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability”?

To respond to the research question, the following foci influenced data production:

- Ø The teaching strategies used in teaching students with visual “disability”
- Ø Lecturers’ structure of their lecture plans
- Ø Lecturers’ feelings about teaching students with visual “disability”
- Ø The challenges faced by lecturers, while teaching students with visual “disability”
- Ø The opportunities available to lecturers who teach students with visual “disability.”

1.6 Context of the study

This study was conducted in one of the TVET Colleges located in the far North of KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. This public TVET College offers two programmes concurrently, namely National Certificate Vocational (NCV) and National Accredited Education Diploma (NATED). This college has embarked on an inclusive education programme since 2015 when it first enrolled 12 students with visual “disability” on a Public Management programme. In 2016, one student was enrolled in Transport and Logistics. Since then there has been growth in the intake of students with visual “disability” as now in 2017 the total number of these students is 35. The enrolment of these students announced the start of an inclusive education for lecturers- they had to adjust their teaching strategies to accommodate these students. This college was selected because it comprises participants relevant for the study, who are, lecturers of these students. Lecturers from this college are professionals with industry qualifications and experience ranging from diplomas to master’s degrees. The lecturers’ qualifications are aligned with the vocational education and training that this college offers. Some of the lecturers have a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) as their teaching qualifications. Their qualifications suggest no exposure to inclusive education. The

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infrastructure of this college is an old College of Education building constructed very long ago. Currently, the buildings are not suitable for students with “disabilities” as they were built before the introduction of inclusive education. There are stairs, which prevent students on wheelchairs to access buildings and are not user-friendly for students with visual “disability.” There are no ramps. The college is currently under-resourced, it particularly has no adequate resources for students with visual “disability.”

1.7 Account for the use of inverted commas for “disability” throughout the study

Interaction between an able-bodied and a person with some form of “disability” demands the highest degree of sensitivity and caution. People with visual “disability” use different terminologies to refer to their “disability.” Some prefer visually “disabled”, some visually impaired or even blindness. The word “disability” as indicated in the title is in inverted commas. This is not to be insensitive towards people with “disability”, but due to my uncertainty of the correct terminology to use, I opted to use it, however with care, hence the use of inverted commas. While I was teaching students with visual “disability,” I was not sure how to refer to their condition because they individually referred to their condition differently. This created some degree of uncertainty in me of which term is correct from these several terms. As a novice researcher, I am hoping to discover what literature advises as the correct terminology to refer to people with no or little sight. Terminology usage is addressed in chapter two.

1.8 The establishment of the project for students with visual “disability”

One of the participants are also one of the College Project Coordinators of this institution who has narrated the history of the establishment of the project class of students with visual “disabilities”. The enrolment of students with visual “disability” initially started in 2015 and was one of the initiatives of this Project Coordinator. His major duty is to negotiate projects for the college. It was through the project he had with the Department of Health that he was afforded an opportunity to be National Marker for one of the Public Management N4 subjects. It was during his marking assignment that he saw a script of a student, written ‘*the candidate is blind.*’ The Project Coordinator was triggered to know how the student learnt and was able to write the examination. Later in 2014, the chairperson of People with Disabilities from the local municipality, who is also blind, visited him to enquire about the learning opportunities for people with blindness in this

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institution. The chairperson was accompanied by 10 potential students with a visual “disability” who were eager to be part of students of this institution. They were all in possession of a grade 12 qualification and they wanted to further their studies. The Project Coordinator communicated the idea to the College Senior Management who applauded the idea to accommodate these students but only as a project at that time. This meant that these students were to study on their own as a project class.

In preparation for the project that started in 2015, the Project Coordinator visited many places searching for knowledge and resources, as this was a new project for the college. In one of his visits, he visited one of the Department of Health offices around Durban where he met, a Head of Department, an old gentleman who was born blind. This gentleman was pursuing his Ph.D. and his wife is also blind and has an Honours degree in Social Sciences. *‘This was so interesting for me as I never thought a blind person could go that far’* explained the Coordinator. They informed him of a school for the blind in central Durban where he could get further guidance and resources required for learners with visual disabilities. This school has *‘become our feeder school, most of the students come from it’* he explained. At this school, he met the school principal *‘who volunteered to mentor me to get the project off the ground.’* As part of mentoring, the principal suggested a lecturer who is also blind as a suitable person to teach these students. The lecturer who is blind, *‘was interviewed and she was successful, she had an Honours in Education.’* The presence of the teacher then announced that the project was approaching its commencement. However, since the resources were not in place this called for another visit.

The college team of three staff members including the Project Coordinator visited the Society for the Blind and Deaf around Durban. As they arrived there, they *‘were blind-folded and were taken around the campus and we didn’t even know where they are. They wanted us to feel what it is like to be a blind person.’* After that session, there they were informed of resources that can be downloaded free from the internet, such as Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) programme and narrator voice. The NVDA programme was the one downloaded and installed on the computers with the assistance of an Information Technology (IT) person of the college to be used for students with visual “disability.” The NVDA programme is the programme that is used by people who are

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blind to read the documents for them. The lecturer and the learning programmes were all in place for the project to commence however, module textbooks were still hard copies. At the beginning of 2015, 12 students were enrolled for the Public Management programme, a programme leading to a diploma qualification. In the absence of audiobooks, students were provided with voice recorders so that they could record their lectures as part of their note-taking. In 2016, one student was enrolled in the National Certificate Vocational Level 2 on the Business Studies department. This one student was not enrolled as part of the project but formed part of an inclusive classroom. The number of students with visual “disability” has thus increased gradually over the years.

1.9 Research design, methodology, and paradigm

This study is a case study of four TVET College lecturers teaching students with visual “disability.” The study employs a qualitative approach to research within an interpretive paradigm to gather in-depth data on the experiences of the TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” These lecturers were selected as participants to gather the findings of this study using semi-structured interviews. The aim of the study is to explore the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.”

1.10 Structure of the dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1- The first chapter orientates the reader on the researcher’s intentions to conduct a study on the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” This chapter commences by providing a concrete background to the study. It further provides the focus and purpose of the study as well as the rationale for intending to conduct the study. It outlines the research the question, for which this study aims to reveal findings with its sub-questions. In summary, it outlines the research procedure employed in this study, to introduce the reader to the research methodology earlier in the study.

Chapter 2- This chapter comprises the literature reviewed on teaching students with visual “disability.” It has four sections: firstly, it discusses the preferred terminology to refer to people with visual “disability”, secondly, inclusive education as a new path in the education system, thirdly teaching students with visual “disability.” Lastly, it discusses the theoretical framework that underpins this study which is Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT).

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Chapter 3- This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study, research approach, paradigm, participant selection, data collection plan, and limitation of the study. The issues of validity and trustworthiness are also discussed.

Chapter 4- An analysis of data gathered through semi-structured interviews of four TVET College lecturers are provided in this chapter. The findings were analysed and interpreted utilising by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) as indicated in the Theoretical Framework of the study.

Chapter 5- The main findings and insight of the study is stated in this chapter, and recommendation for future studies are made, and an overall conclusion to this study is provided.

1.11 Conclusion of the chapter

This chapter has outlined the background of the study, the rationale behind choosing the phenomenon, teaching students with visual “disability”, gave a brief summary about the context of the study as well as the layout of the chapters. It has also indicated the focus and a critical research question of the study to be: *‘What are the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability”?’*

The following chapter is the literature review on the correct terminology usage, the teaching of students with visual “disability” and the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

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CHAPTER 2

Literature review

Teaching students with visual “disability”

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a background to the study; it has also outlined my rationale for exploring lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disability.” It has also stated the main research question: what are the TVET College lecturer’s experiences of teaching students with visual “disability” as well as sub- research questions to which the study aims to respond. It has in summary, provided a methodology on which the study is grounded.

This chapter outlines international, national, and local academic literature reviewed around the phenomenon, teaching students with visual “disability.” The study employs two literature review methods: an argumentative and historical method. An argumentative review as explained by Berg and Howard (2004) is when a researcher presents ideas that support or oppose each other on a specific topic to argue for a specific idea. A periodic or historical method traces the occurrence of events over a period of time to pave direction for future encounters (Berg, 2004). The significance of adopting these two methods for this study is to highlight supporting and refuting ideas to develop an argument yet, also provide a historical background to lay a firm foundation for the presentation of arguments. Argumentative and historical methods used in this study would assist the reader to trace the historical background of issues discussed from the ancient time right up to recent times, whilst giving the reader contradicting and concurring ideas on the phenomenon being discussed in this study.

It is vital to indicate that the study has used literature mainly from the school context due to limited research studies within the TVET sector on teaching students with visual “disability”. Therefore, terms such as teacher and learner are used. By a learner, I am referring to a person being taught by the teacher in the classroom environment, the teacher being the one imparting content knowledge

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to the learners. A teacher-learner term will be used where a school context is being referenced. In tertiary institutions, such as TVET colleges where teachers are referred to as lecturers and learners as students such terminology will apply. Lecturer- students perform similar roles as teacher-learners in schools. The study will use teacher-learner and lecturer-student together.

The literature of this study is divided into FOUR sections, 2.2 to 2.5.

Section 2.2: focuses on the correct terminology used to refer to people with no or little sight, whether visual “disability” or visual impairment or blindness.

Section 2.3: elaborates on inclusive education as a new path in the education sector, its merits, its challenges to teachers in their practice and the position of the Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) curriculum on inclusive education.

Section 2.4: is centred on teaching students with visual “disability”, the teaching strategies suitable for these students, the challenges of the teaching strategies, the resources needed for teaching students with visual “disability”, the assessment approaches for students with visual “disability”, lecturers’ experiences and challenges, and the support for lecturers from College Management and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Lastly, the opportunities lecturers should receive, since they are teaching students with visual “disability”.

Section 2.5: Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was used as a framework to discuss the experiences of lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability”.

2.2 Terminology clarification

2.2.1 Introduction

“Disability” in general is very diverse as there are different forms of disabilities, such as physical “disability”, hearing “disability”, mental “disability,” and many more. However, for the purpose of this study the major focus will be on visual “disability”. This is in line with the aim of the study, which is to explore TVET college lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disability”.

2.2.2 Visual “disability” or visual impairment or blindness, which one is correct?

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People with “disability” are part of the global population therefore, knowledge about them should be a primary need for all. Amongst people with “disabilities”, are people with visual “disability” also our population. A 2010 World Health Organisation (WHO) annual report, revealed that approximately 285 million people around 190 countries are visually “disabled”, 246 million of them are low vision whilst, 39 million are totally blind mainly from cataract, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration. All these terms are medical conditions leading to loss of eyesight or vision. The report further explained that 90 million of these people are children, who are still in schools and tertiary institutions (Donohue & Bornman, 2014) which suggests that they also form part of our schooling population.

The latest report released on October 2017 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) revealed, no major change from its 7- year report of 2010 as it revealed that, 253 million people are visually impaired, 36 million are blind whilst 217 million have moderate to severe vision impairment. While comparing these reports it becomes explicit that many people with visual “disability” decreased over this period by approximately 68%. It is still amazing, to note that there are 506 million people with some form of visual “disability”. Though these figures do not highlight children and youth as that report of 2010, it would not be surprising, if most of these people are children and youth. Comparable to these figures are individual preferences on the preferred terminology to use to refer to these people. Some prefer visual impaired, some visual “disabled”, and some blindness. In light of these different preferences Beverley, Bath, and Booth (2004) advised that to better comprehend the differences between visual “disability” visual impairment and blindness, one must use visual acuity and visual pitch, associated with sight. This suggests that visual acuity and visual pitch will be used to explain the differences between these terms. Visual acuity refers to the clarity of the vision while visual pitch refers to the level of the vision, short-sighted or farsighted (Beverley et al., 2004).

2.2.3 Difference between visual impairment, blindness, and visual “disability”

Visual impairment is a broad term referring to a spectrum of people with sight problems, from low vision to blindness (Konur, 2006). This suggests that any person with a sight problem has a visual impairment. Spiers (1992) explained that for a person to be considered visually impaired his or her

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acuity vision should be lesser than 20/70. If a person's visual acuity is this low, it means the vision cannot be corrected with standard glasses or contact lenses but a person can see something even if it is just light (Resnikoff et al., 2004). However, when a person cannot see anything, even light, the condition is thus referred to as blindness (Resnikoff et al., 2004). Blindness on its own is categorised into partially blind and total blindness. When a person is partially blind, it means a person can see something, but when one is totally blind then a person cannot see anything at all (Konur, 2006). The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes blindness as acuity of less than 3/60 or visual pitch which is less than 10 (Mégret, 2008). This acuity accommodates both partial and total blindness. Spiers (1992) explained that for total blindness an acuity vision should be less than 20/200 which implies that person is unable to see at 20 feet of what a normal person can see at 200 feet (Spiers, 1992). In summary, this means people with visual problems are visually impaired, but acuity and pitch categorise them based on their level of vision (partially blind to total blindness). If so, then when does one become visually "disabled"?

Brady, Morris, Zhong, White, and Bigham (2013) enlightened that if any part of the body cannot perform its function then that condition is referred to as a "disability". Similarly, if the eyes of a person cannot perform its function to visualise objects, then they have a visual "disability". The Disability Services Act (1993) described a "disability" as any unceasing condition that prevents a person from performing daily activities, which could be temporal or permanent. Oliver (1990) cited physical, intellectual, and sensory, hearing and many more as examples of "disability". These disabilities have an impact on a person's performance of daily activities and participation in society. The discovery about the term "disability" to be correct through scholars has brought relief that this term is not discriminative but rather a term given if a person's part of the body does not function. In fact according to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of People With Disability (PWD), the term "disability" is preferred abbreviated as PWD meaning 'People With Disabilities.' (Quinn, 2009). Therefore, the use of the term "disability" is apparently correct according to literature.

Nevertheless, organisations for people with "disabilities" possess a different view about what "disability" is and interpreted. The World Health Organisation (WHO) described "disability" as an interaction between a person's body function and the society in which an impaired person lives (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). The British social model for "disability" explained that people

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are “disabled” by social exclusion and discrimination (Oliver, 1990). Confirming this view is Shakespeare (2013) who explained that “people are disabled by society and by their bodies and minds” (p. 5). Findlay (1992) on the same notion argued that “disability” is an unacceptable treatment caused by society when it fails to satisfy the needs of those people with “disabilities”. He further explained that people are impaired not by the reason of their impairment but by the barriers created by society, which hinders their full participation in society. For example, a building, which has no ramp, is not accessible to a person in a wheelchair. This is a barrier that is created by the society, which hinders the person’s accessibility to the venue. It has emerged from these descriptions that a person is “disabled” in his own mind and body but moreover, by the barriers created by the society, stereotypes, and stigmatisations of people with “disabilities”. This means if the barrier does not exist then the “disability” becomes an ability. Quinn (2009) suggested that the best way to comprehend “disability” is to see it as part of diversity, which implies that we should see each other as unique individuals from one another.

2.2.4. Communication with visual “disabled” people and an establishment of preferred terminology

It has been noted from the previous section that people with visual “disability” have different preferences regarding their condition. Therefore, this section will strive to determine the preferred preference to address these people. Greeting a person is the first step to the start of any conversation between people; it could be in the form of words or a mere hello with just a hand. Nicotera (1993) suggested that the best form of communication for a person with a visual “disability” should rather be spoken words than visual communication. This is because the uses of spoken words make sense to a person with a visual “disability” as opposed to visual communication. By spoken words, I mean words that could be heard rather than visual communication, which is through what a person sees. Nicotera (1993) continued to state that people with visual “disability” depend largely on four senses as their fifth sense (sight) is dysfunctional. Therefore, it could be concluded that for people with visual “disability” communication is through only these four senses: touch, smell, taste and hearing and not through the sense of sight.

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Communication barriers between people with visual “disability” and sighted people are numerous. By communication barrier, I am referring to any communication breakdown that could exist in the process to transferring or receiving information (Van Schalkwyk, 1997). For the purpose of this study, the limitation will be on only two barriers. The first one is the societal perception of “disability” as already discussed earlier that the society uses “disability” to stereotype and stigmatise people who are “disabled”. In overcoming this barrier, Mégret (2008) suggested that acquiring knowledge about “disability” could empower the society to accept and to integrate these people into the mainstream society. Furthermore, a “disability” group, unlike racial groups, is the one that anyone can join any time. The more information we have about people with “disability”, the more we realise how akin they are to us (Mégret, 2008).

The second barrier is the use of preferred terminology to refer to people with visual “disability” as there are vast preferences used to refer to these people such as visually impaired, blindness or visual “disabled”. Brady et al. (2013) indicated that there is no single preference since preference is individual, which could lead to barriers at times. Terminology in any field distinguishes it from other fields and should be used appropriately to suit the purpose (Yeo & Moore, 2003). Therefore, terminology within the field of “disability” is crucial and should be used appropriately to avoid misunderstandings. The use of terminology reflects the attitude a person has against a certain group of people. Words and phrases indicate respect or disrespect for another person especially in the field “disability” (Nicotera, 1993). Once that person perceives you as being disrespectful, a communication barrier is created that could be everlasting.

To overcome this terminology barrier, Khadka, Ryan, Margrain, Woodhouse, and Davies (2012) suggested that the first step is for “disabled” people to accept their “disability”. This indicates that a person with a “disability” must acknowledge being “disabled” and be able to communicate with another person the preferred way of communication. Brady et al. (2013) expressed effective communication as a tool to prevent assumptions where a person would concede on the preferred terminology. Symeonidou (2013) advocated for a listening skill, to be used as another method to avoid misunderstandings. He explained that listening to the voice of a person with a “disability” in acquiring confirmation on the preferred address could yield to

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effective communication between people communicating. However, most importantly is to adopt the principle of a slogan ‘Nothing about us without us’ (Quinn, 2009). This principle advocates for self-representation. It recognises that people with “disability” should be involved in any policymaking, education and any other activity that concerns them. Therefore, establishing the best way to refer to a person’s condition is to enquire from them personally and never make any assumption.

2.2.5. ‘People with disability’ or ‘people living with a disability,’ which phrase?

Numerous debates have taken place on the correct phrase to use between ‘people living with disabilities’ and ‘people with disabilities.’ In 2010, during the sixth annual American Psychological Association (APA) on the preferred term to use between the two, it was agreed that the latter term ‘People With Disability’ (PWD) was preferred as it recognises a person first (Beauchamp-Pryor, 2011). Moreover, The Disability Rights Movement of South Africa recognises “disabled” people and ‘people with” disabilities”. Emphasis should be on the person and never on the “disability” because the person comes first before the “disability” (Mégret, 2008). The rephrase ‘living with disability’ implies “disability” to be an illness. “We are not sick, we are disabled.....” (Mégret, 2008, p. 497). A “disability” is not an illness but simply a dysfunction of a certain part of the body. Hence, Yeo and Moore (2003) stated that people with “disability” do not appreciate being pitied nor being treated especially as though they are sick. In fact “disability” is not a sole identity of a “disabled” person but merely an appendix to a human creature (Vaughan, 2009). Therefore, recognising a person first by using a phrase, ‘person with disability’ (PWD) is crucial while interacting with these people or talking with or about them.

2.2.6 Conclusion of the section

It has emerged from the literature that due to limited knowledge and understanding of what “disability” is by society, there have been misinterpretations and stigmatisation of people with “disability” by society. It has been explicit that in order to embrace “disability” a change is needed where we perceive “disability” to be diversity and part of society. A greater understanding that

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“disability” is created when a reasonable accommodation is not provided to address the needs of the person with a "disability" is needed. The literature has also outlined that though there may be vast preferences that people with “disability” prefer the best way is to enquire from the person how they prefer to refer to their condition.

2.3 Inclusive education

Inclusive education on its own is a vast subject. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, only three aspects are dealt with, *viz.* definition, merits, successes, and challenges and the stance of TVET College curriculum on inclusive education.

2.3.1 Definition of Inclusive education

Following a review of literature relevant to the term inclusive education, the following was discovered: Ainscow (1999) described it as a *transformation* of a normal classroom to allow diversity amongst learners. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) referred it to as a *restructuring* of normal classrooms to accommodate all learners regardless of their “disabilities” and abilities. Muijs and Reynolds (2002) viewed inclusive education as a *right of all learners* to learn in the same classroom with their peers without discrimination based on “disabilities” and abilities. Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson (2006) evaluated it as an *approach*, which ensures quality “education for all” (p. 28). Mukhopadhyay, Molosiwa, and Moswela (2009) explained it as *learning that takes place when learners with and without disabilities* learn together. Florian (2012) a decade later, on the same notion, proclaimed it an *acceptable unified approach* to quality education for everyone. By quality education, Barnett (1992) explained it as: “Education where learners are furnished with information, skills, and values required for their learning.” He further posited that for quality education to be successful, learners should have qualified teachers with relevant teaching strategies, necessary resources, and appropriate assessment strategies. All the terms and phrases in italics are what I have viewed as common amongst these authors. It should be noted that for a decade the term inclusive education being interrogated by different scholars, still maintained the same meaning. These descriptions, in their chronological order, possess one main view about inclusive education, that it was introduced to emancipate those oppressed during apartheid to award them access to quality education, which their peers previously enjoyed. The

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introduction of inclusive education was then to provide learners who were previously disadvantaged a chance to quality education (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2009). This means that if all learners through inclusive education, regardless of their condition, have qualified teachers, a necessary resource to embrace their learning to achieve the academic success they would have received quality education.

2.3.2 Merits of inclusive education

Teaching learners with or without “disability” in mainstream classrooms has become a recent practice in most countries, including South Africa (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2009). This practice strives to provide equal opportunity to quality education for all learners (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). The development of inclusive education policy was of good intentions, including ensuring equal treatment of all learners. The major issue though is on the actual implementation of the policy. If inclusive education was to be implemented appropriately, Muijs and Reynolds (2002) suggested it would result in improved social growth and social development amongst learners as they learn together. Ainscow (1999) concurred that it would assist in improving learners’ behavioural skills and personal achievement of individuals academically. As “disabled” learners learn together with non-disabled, they develop a friendship with their peers (Stainback & Stainback, 1992). Most importantly, learning together helps both abled and “disabled” learners to develop a language of practice amongst them (Dukmak, 2013). As alluded to previously, that terminology for people with “disability” is important, as learners learn together, they will master the appropriate way of addressing or referring to the “disabled” people. If learners without “disability” learn together with those “disabled”, they will build relationships that will change their perception about “disability” and they will share knowledge, which will develop them academically. Furthermore, it will prepare them for employment as they might work with them later in life because they are part of society (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2017).

2.3.3 Successes and challenges of inclusive education

Although inclusive education was developed to produce positive results, its success depends very significantly on teachers, as they are the implementers of the curriculum (Jerlinder, Danermark, & Gill, 2010). Teachers are the primary agents in the implementation of the inclusive education

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policy (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002), which suggests that there should be some form of intervention to assist them to comprehend this new education ideology. Thus, Hargreaves (1994) argued that: “It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do (p. 117), which determines the knowledge the learners receive.” Similarly, if teachers do not believe in themselves or have confidence in what they are doing, they will have no concrete knowledge to pass on to the next generation. Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) urged that teachers should be armed with knowledge and skills they need to best implement inclusive education policy. Frankel, Gold, and Ajodhia-Andrews (2010) outlined “adequate training, sufficient support, and resources” as necessary tools to support teachers to implement the inclusive policy (p.4). If these tools are of such supreme importance for teachers to implement the inclusive policy, then the government should create a budget to provide necessary training and resources that teachers need (Fakolade, Adeniyi, & Tella, 2017). Amongst these tools, Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) viewed support as superseding all. The authors stated that support is a compulsory element, to assist teachers to cope with the needs of different learners. Support should be continuous as a primary tool for teachers because they are confronted with learners with different “disabilities” each year (Fakolade et al., 2017). For example, a learner with a visual “disability” this year, the following year a learner with a hearing “disability.” Since the needs of these learners are not the same, support should be continuous. Polat (2011) on the notion of successful implementation of inclusive education policy suggested proper infrastructure and necessary resources as other necessities. He further added that these elements could change the teachers’ attitude about including learners with “disabilities” in their classrooms.

2.3.4 Teachers’ challenges and attitudes towards including learners with “disability” in their classrooms

Although continuous support, training, resources, and infrastructure can assist teachers in implementing inclusive education policy, their willingness and attitude remain the fundamental aspect of the implementation of inclusive education policy (Dukmak, 2013). Different studies conducted on teachers’ attitude towards including learners with “disabilities” in mainstream classes have revealed different views. Studies such as those conducted by Talmor, Reiter, and Feigin (2005), Minke, Bear, Deemer, and Griffin (1996), Berryman (1989) and Horne and

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Ricciardo (1988) have revealed that teachers in mainstream schools do not have sympathetic attitudes towards including learners with “disabilities” in their classrooms nor are they prepared to accept these learners (Barton, 1998). Center (1993) pointed to the lack of confidence as well as qualified support personnel as contributing factors to such attitudes. This implies that if teachers were trained in how to deal with learners of different “disabilities” and abilities, their confidence would be improved, and their attitude changed.

Most recent studies, such as those conducted by Florian (2012), Dukmak (2013), Round, Subban, and Sharma (2016) and Lee and Low (2017) confirmed the findings of previous researchers who indicated that the attitudes of the teachers were negative about including learners with “disability” in their mainstream classes. The findings of the study conducted by Florian (2012) in Scotland on preparing teachers to work in inclusive classrooms revealed that the teachers did not possess any sympathetic attitude towards learners with “disability.” The teachers are reluctant to include these learners, as they believed that it “interferes with the effective education of other students” (Florian, 2012, p. 276). Another study conducted by Lee and Low (2017) revealed that teachers in mainstream classes were not in support of the inclusion of students with “disability” in their classroom. Teachers felt that they were not trained nor prepared to embrace inclusive education. Dukmak (2013) enlightened that such attitudes are mainly due to the anxiety teachers have about the nature of the “disability.” Vaughn et al. (1996) argued that it was factors such as the size of a class, limited resources, and lack of teacher preparation, which result in teachers having such a negative attitude about including learners with “disability” in their classes. These factors are some of the challenges teachers encounter as they attempt to implement the inclusive education policy, thus causing their resistance to embrace inclusive education. Nevertheless, Donohue and Bornman (2014) advised that teachers’ attitude could change if they could be armed with appropriate support and necessary resources to assist them in implementing the inclusive education policy.

Despite, the negative attitudes teachers have toward including learners with “disability”, other studies revealed a different view. Studies such as those conducted by Villa, Thousand, & Chappie, (1996) and Ward, Center, & Bochner (1994) revealed that teachers had a positive attitude towards including learners with disabilities in their classes. Nonetheless, Avramidis and Norwich (2002)

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argued that teachers were only positive about those learners with “disabilities” who did not need extra instructional or management skills from them.

2.3.5 TVET College curriculum on inclusive education

Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) colleges as they are currently known, were previously known as Further Education Training (FET) colleges (*FET Act 1998*). TVET colleges emerge from a colonial and apartheid-era that provided an academic component to artisan training. During the FET summit in 2014, the former South African national Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr. Nzimande announced that the name was to change from Further Education and Training to Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) colleges (Dlamini, 2014). The change of name was in line with the new curriculum, which is vocational education and training other than artisan training and development.

TVET Colleges are running two curricula concurrently which are The National Accredited Technical Diploma (NATED) programmes commencing from N1-N6 on Business and Engineering studies. The NATED programmes are for students who are in possession of a grade 12 qualification- they study towards a diploma qualification. The NATED programme was to be phased out in 2007 because it was viewed as not serving the purpose of uplifting the economy. The previous curriculum (NATED) was to be replaced by a curriculum known as National Certificate Vocational (NCV). This curriculum (NCV) was introduced in 2007 to commence from National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 2 to NQF level 4. It was developed for any person in possession of a grade 9 qualification (Ansah & Ernest, 2013) to pursue vocational education and training. For this reason, Makinana (2012) explained that it was an improved grade 10-12 qualification to keep students in colleges so that they can vacate TVET Colleges at the age of 18 years, ready for a vocational career. Makinana further added that there has been a huge amount of money channelled to TVET Colleges for the training of students within the vocational education sector.

Prior to the introduction of the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) curriculum the former Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr. Blade Nzimande made the below announcement:

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“Department’s highest priority is to strengthen and expand the public TVET colleges and turn them into attractive institutions of choice for school leavers. ... Key objectives in strengthening colleges include improving their management and governance, developing the quality of teaching and learning, increasing their responsiveness to local labour markets, improving student support services, and developing their infrastructure.” (Republic of South Africa, 2013)

The objectives of TVET Colleges are specific and attainable. However, they are not explicit on how students with “disability” would be accommodated. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (2007) affirmed that the TVET college curriculum is aimed at equipping students with suitable skills needed by the industry. The main aim of NCV curriculum as a new curriculum in TVET colleges is to “respond to the priority of skills demand of the modern economy in South Africa” SETA (2012, p. 26). Although the TVET curriculum is clear on its purpose (producing students who are responsive to skills required in the country), it is rather silent on how students with “disabilities” will achieve this purpose. It is also silent on inclusive education and how this type of education should be implemented in TVET colleges. At the Seoul Congress (2007), TVET Colleges were called to be accessible to all, which is in line with the notion of sustainable development (Berkvens et al., 2014). Powell (2012) outlined that TVET Colleges have a fundamental role to play in fighting poverty. The major role of a TVET college is to train young people for employment which response to the skills needed for the country’s economic development while simultaneously addressing past apartheid imbalances by giving quality education to those who were previously disadvantaged (Badroodien & Kraak, 2006). Students with “disabilities” are part of the previously disadvantaged group. However, the TVET college curriculum is silent on how students with “disabilities” are to be accommodated by the curriculum. The silence identified in the TVET curriculum regarding issues of inclusivity calls for its revision to cater to the needs of all students.

Fraser and Maguvhe (2008) advised that a curriculum which is not learner-centered and learner-paced will hinder the blind and visually-impaired learner from learning and actively participating in the learning mediation to their full potential. Thus, Jansen (2001) expressed that South African policies are enacted due to political agendas, without the consultation of those which it will affect.

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The fact that a TVET College curriculum does not address how students with “disabilities” are accommodated is an example of a curriculum development that was enacted without consultation of all parties involved, a special reference to lecturers lecturing these students. A study conducted by Ngubane-Mokiwa and Khoza (2016) also confirmed that for TVET curriculum to be responsive to the needs of the students with “disability”, it should be learner-centered. Thus, suggesting that if students take a central position in the formulation of the curriculum, the curriculum could address learners’ needs. It is clear from the above discussion that the TVET curriculum has such commendable objectives of ensuring quality education for all but is not vocal on how students with “disability” will benefit from the curriculum.

2.3.6 Relevance of inclusive education to the study

Students with visual “disability” in TVET colleges are fulltime students in this public TVET College where the study was conducted. These students are spread between the college’s programmes: National Certificate Vocational (NCV) and National Assembly Training and Education Department (NATED). One cannot discuss students with “disabilities” without outlining the inclusive education policy, because this policy paves a new path to education- an education system that is accessible and provides quality training to all regardless of disability and ability. It is through inclusive education policy that students with “disabilities” are awarded an equal opportunity to receive a quality education as their peers; therefore, discussing inclusive education was vital. Furthermore, this study might be used to provide awareness to other lecturers who are located in other TVET Colleges who might not yet have students with visual “disability” in their classroom but might in the future have such learners and therefore, need training in advance on how to teach inclusive classes, i.e. classes that have students with “disability.”

2.4 Teaching students with visual “disability”

2.4.1 Introduction

This section discusses what the reviewed literature suggests as the best teaching strategies suitable to teach students with visual “disability”. It incorporates some challenges that teachers may encounter while employing those strategies. It further indicates the assessment strategies employed by teachers to assess these students. It also provides the kind of support necessary for teachers to

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receive from their management as well as the Department of Higher Education and Training. It outlines the lecturers' experiences in teaching students with visual "disability" and opportunities these lecturers should receive because they teach students with visual disabilities. Most of the literature reviewed in this section is within a school context, due to the shortage of that, which is within the TVET sector. For that reason, terminology such as teachers, schools and many more are used. The literature, was, however, adapted to a TVET sector, to serve a similar purpose of how students with visual "disability" are taught.

2.4.2 Teaching strategies suitable for students with visual "disability"

A classroom is a place where teaching and learning take place, where an educator imparts knowledge or gives instruction about the task (Teaching Act, 2001). However, teaching strategies are varieties of teaching techniques or methods used by teachers to improve students' learning (Etkind & Shafrir, 2013). Berkvens et al. (2014) expressed teaching strategies as techniques used by teachers to structure education to be an exciting adventure for learners by bringing real-life situations into the classroom. Therefore, it can be concluded that teaching strategies are creative methods that are used by teachers in the classroom to assist learners to comprehend the content being taught by bringing real-life situations into the classroom. When explaining teaching, Downing and Chen (2003) outlined vision as a vital sense in teaching and learning. They expressed that most teachers make use of visual aids in their teaching such as pictures, photographs, chalkboard, textbooks and more. Generally, teachers incorporate teaching techniques such as reading from a textbook, writing on the board or even using visual aids such as charts and diagrams. However, these strategies do not accommodate students with visual "disability" as they are unable to read from the book or from the board or take notes during the lesson (de Schipper, Lieberman, & Moody, 2017). Teaching students with visual "disability" who will not be able to use their vision suggests that teachers resort to other teaching strategies to accommodate learners and to assist them to cope with the curriculum. Thus, Fraser and Maguvhe (2008) affirmed that teaching learners with visual "disability" require and deserve specific strategies that "address their unique learning mediation needs during the learning process" (p. 3).

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Cox and Dykes (2001) advised that before teaching and learning takes place for students with visual “disability” they should first be acquainted with their classroom environment and people to “associate names and faces through incidental classroom experiences, to help build relationships among all students in a class.” (p. 68). Students should first be orientated to be able to move around the classroom like their peers, with the assistance of their teacher. Therefore, Orientation and Mobility training (O & M) is necessary to achieve this goal (Cox & Dykes, 2001). Koenig (1996) explained that Orientation and Mobility are crucial for people with visual “disability” because it promotes safety, efficiency, and independency for individual mobility. Cmar (2015) almost two decades later explained that Orientation and Mobility mostly prepare learners with visual “disabilities” for life beyond their high school life. Orientation and Mobility training assists non-visual people to locate themselves and to know their surroundings (Park, Turnbull, & Turnbull III, 2002). The importance of Orientation and Mobility can never be over-emphasized for non-visual individuals as it awards them independence and confidence to move alone without any assistance. If students are to be trained to move around the class, it leaves a burden on the teachers to train them. Therefore, this training should start with them in order to impart it to their students. Downing and Chen (2003) explained that an experiment should be done on teachers where they are blindfolded to examine “the adaptation using only a sense of touch” (p. 59) to mobilise around the classroom. Indeed if teachers could experience being blindfolded that would experience what their visually “disabled” learners go through. One must outline that a once-off experiment might not have any impact on the teachers let alone to train non-visual learners. Once students have been orientated into their classroom, teaching and learning could then take place. While reviewing literature two teaching strategies were recommended as best suited for students with visual “disability”. The first one is a multi-sensory approach or tactile learning approach and the second one is an auditory approach.

2.4.2.1 Multi-sensory approach, Kinaesthetic Learning, Tactile Learning or Sensory Approach

Learning for students without vision relies on senses such as touch, taste, smell, and hearing other than vision. While reviewing literature, on learning through senses, the sense of touch becomes the most suitable teaching strategy for students with visual “disability.” The kind of learning that

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students with visual “disability” use are termed differently by different scholars. This learning takes place through other senses other than vision. Cox and Dykes (2001) referred to it as *kinaesthetic learning*, while, Downing and Chen (2003) indicated it as *tactile learning* and lastly, Fraser and Maguvhe (2008) suggested it to be *a multi-sensory approach*. These authors accord that learning through touch is the most appropriate teaching strategy for students with visual “disability.” This learning advocate for meaning which is communicated through a sense of touch, feeling, or body movement. It provides students with knowledge about the object through their sense of touch. For example by touching the boundaries of the thread of a map a student is able to read the map (Fraser & Maguvhe, 2008). Downing and Chen (2003) explained that non-visual students should be given an opportunity to feel an object, as that way they are able to “see” what their classmates see. Feeling an object is likely to assist the learner to create a picture in his/her mind of what an object looks like. Nevertheless, Smith (1998) advised that teachers should be cautious of making students touch the object if they are not willing to do so. Marson, Harrington, and Walls (2013) in their study on teaching introductory statistics to blind students suggested the use of “hand see” approach to communicating statistical formulas to these students. By the “hand see” approach Marson et al. (2013) mean learning about the world and things in it through touch. They explained that the instructor constructs a 3-dimensional normal distributor (a graph to read statistical data for people with visual “disability”) for students to measure statistical data formulas. The student with visual “disability” feels the distributor as it changes its slope moving from the mean in either direction. Through feeling the dimension, the likelihood is that the learner will be able to interpret what the object is and understand its statistical formulas. Nevertheless, Downing and Chen (2003) cautioned that not all objects felt resemble the real object. Thus, they indicated that a small plastic dog could not be compared to a real dog.

Though a multi-sensory approach is recommended as the best for students with visual “disability,” it requires teachers to be creative and to provide one- on- one attention (Demchak & Downing, 2002). A study conducted by Obradović, Bjekić, and Zlatić (2015) on teaching learners with visual “disability” discovered that using a multi-sensory approach is time consuming because of each learner is given an object to feel like part of learning. Ahmad (2015) argued that sometimes the size of the class might make it difficult for the teacher to provide individual attention as

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required. Class discipline can also be a challenge as the teacher tries to give individual attention to the learner with the “disability”, others might misbehave and a class could be chaotic (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). Campbell, Gilmore, and Cuskelly (2003) in their study revealed that the needs of learners with visual “disability” are best met in separate classrooms. Donohue and Bornman (2014) concurred that “disabled” learners are safer in special schools due to the intolerant attitude of their classmates, suggesting that though teachers might be willing to accommodate learners with visual “disability” in their class, the classmates might be disruptive.

2.4.2.2 Auditory Learning Approach

Another teaching strategy highly recommended by many scholars such as Barraga and Erin (2001); Dick and Kubiak (1997); Lieberman, Haegele, Columna, and Conroy (2014); Pritchard (2013) is an auditory learning approach. Auditory learning strategy advocates for the use of words to formulate a picture that interprets the words (Barraga & Erin, 2001). “Words are the images of things.” Simonides (as cited by Benson, 1997) “without image, thinking is impossible” (Benson, 1997, p. 141). Therefore, it could be concluded that spoken words formulate pictures with necessary meaning for a person with a visual “disability.” Khoza (2015b) expressed that when teachers create an environment where learners are assisted to construct their own unique meaning of what is being taught, their personal reason for teaching is fulfilled. Meaning is always received differently and in different ways for different people (Schiro, 2012). Meaning is never received uniformly but differently which implies that a message received formulates a different picture in the mind of a student with a visual “disability” which is equally the case for all of us as we conceptualise information differently.

Dick and Kubiak (1997) outlined that to use the auditory learning approach effectively the first step is for the teachers to consider the nature of the student's visual limitations through an informal, private conversation with the learner and parents. Knowing the learner, as the teacher, will assist you in knowing how you can assist the learner in his/her learning. Dick and Kubiak (1997) further added that teachers with learners with visual “disability” should take extra care to verbalise the meaning and the content to accommodate these learners. Careful explanation of terminology, especially of graphs, is crucial for these learners. Dick and Kubiak (1997) advised that teachers should “refrain from using vague directional cues, such as this, that, here, or there” (p. 345)

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because they hinder learning for learners with visual “disability” who cannot see the directions. For example, teachers will refer the learners to some visual art on the board and say, “As you see this graph”. Such delivery of information to learners with visual “disability” automatically excludes these learners, as they cannot see. Thus, Downing and Chen (2003) explained that language should be used appropriately to describe things to draw an image of what is explained. They suggest that while providing information, one should be precise, with an average pace in speed of words to allow learners to create an image in their mind. When reading, Thurlow, Johnstone, Timmons, and Altman (2009) suggested that teachers should read aloud, since doing so assists learners in receiving content from the textbook and capturing the lesson on their recording devices. This puts a strain on the teachers to pronounce words clearly, and slowly so that they could be audible for the learners when listening to them later. The reading aloud strategy is useful during classes but it is not suited for examination purposes (Thurlow et al., 2009) because it could cause a distraction to others.

Despite the recommendation of the two strategies as the best for students with visual “disability”, they are time-consuming for teachers. Yet, this is an overstatement for visual students because the content is repeated to allow students with visual “disability” to create their image. Repeating content may result in loss of attention for visual students (Dick & Kubiak, 1997) because they have already grasped it. Mason and Krashen (1997) affirmed that these strategies provide teachers with extra work which involves modifying the lessons, homework, and assessments to accommodate non-visual students. The adjustments in lesson plans, homework and assessments to accommodate learners with visual “disability” could lead to the extra workload for teachers, which could lead to a negative attitude towards learners with “disabilities”.

2.4.3 Resources for teaching learners with visual “disability”

For teaching and learning to be effective, there should be necessary resources in place. Remillard (2013), described resources as tools that enhance and support teachers in their preparation of the lesson and actual implementation of the lesson. According to Khoza (2015a) resources could be categorised into three types, namely hardware (HW), software (SW) as well as ideological ware (IW). He further adds that the term ‘ware’ suggests awareness, thus implying that both the teacher and the learner should be aware that resources utilised are to embrace effective teaching and

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learning in the classroom. Wood and Ashfield (2008) avowed that using the latest technological resources in teaching assists teachers in delivering creative lessons that foster learners' development. Akker et al. (2009) concurred with Wood and Ashfield (2008) that teaching materials used in the class are crucial tools for learning. As explained above regarding resources it should be noted that learners with visual "disability" rely on devices such as a computer with JAWS for their effective learning. A JAWS is a software device installed on a computer created to allow people with visual impairment to read the text on the screen of the computer either by text to speech or refreshable Braille display (Mao, So, & Woo, 1998).

Khadka et al. (2012) explained that vision plays a vital part as 80% of learning occurs through vision. This is true because mainly the teacher will use a chalkboard or whiteboard, and a textbook to teach learners and learners will use their notebooks to take notes. As such, these resources do not assist nor accommodate students with visual "disability", which suggests that there should be other resources that accommodates them. Collette and Chiappetta (1984); Kumagai (1995); Siekierska et al. (2003); Trief and Feeney (2002); Mulloy, Gevarter, Hopkins, Sutherland, and Ramdoss (2014); Thomas, Barker, Rubin, and Dahlmann-Noor (2015) all agreed that learners with visual "disability" requires the following resources: computers with speech Job Access With Speech (JAWS), interfaced speech synthesisers, closed-circuit television (CCTV), taped materials, reading machines, talking machines, hand-held magnifiers, Braille text, talking calculators, sound sonification, auditory analogues of visualisation, instruments with auditory (and not visual) readings, touch, and voice-based interfaces, touch and large print as standard equipment for the teaching of the blind and visually impaired. Marson et al. (2013) on necessary resources for teaching statistics to blind students recommended the use of textbooks on audio cassette, study guides on audio cassette, and "talking" calculators. These resources are expensive and most students with visual "disability" cannot afford them, yet they are necessary for their learning. Amongst these resources are hardware and software necessary for students with visual "disability." The ideology ware is the teaching strategy used by lecturers in their teaching practice to teach students with visual "disability." Teachers are resourceful from which knowledge is gained to assist learners. It is crucial to note that without the necessary devices to assist students with visual "disability", their learning becomes a challenge and more so for their

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lecturers. Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) contended that teaching students through a variety of media is relatively new and a challenge for educators in broadening their knowledge on how to operate the devices. Abner and Lahm (2002) in their study noted that a gap between teachers' educational technology and their technology knowledge brings about frustration to them in operating the devices. The teachers' lack of knowledge of operating these devices could bring about frustration and has the potential of developing a negative attitude about including learners with visual "disability."

2.4.4 Lecturers' experiences of teaching students with "disability"

In curriculum development, teachers are at the micro-level, which implies that they receive a curriculum as cascaded to them from macro-level, for implementation. Darling-Hammond (2000) referred to this approach as a top-bottom approach, where the curriculum is cascaded from above. Huizinga, Handelzalts, Nieveen, and Voogt (2014) explained that teachers have little or no contribution to the formation of the curriculum yet, the implementation of the curriculum is upon their shoulders. Day (2004) indicates that since teachers play such a vital role in the implementation of the curriculum, they should not be viewed as ordinary distributors of content knowledge, because of their role expands beyond the classroom. Berkvens et al. (2014) affirmed that such a role regards teachers as the cornerstone in the implementation of the curriculum in practice. For this reason, if their experiences could be recognised, an improved curriculum could be developed. Teachers possess a greater insight into the challenges of the curriculum, its opportunities, its strengths as well as weaknesses.

Fraser and Maguvhe (2008) explained that many teachers do not possess relevant competencies and skills to deal with non-visual students because most of them have undergone general education and not specialised in inclusive education. As a result, most teachers experience difficulties in adapting to inclusive education to accommodate students who are visually "disabled" (Fraser & Maguvhe, 2008) suggesting that their confidence to implement inclusive education is compromised. Wall (2002) provided findings of a survey study of 410 teachers in the United States on teaching students with visual "disability." Her study revealed that most teachers preferred to use general technology in their lessons, not because it is more appropriate for the needs of their

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learners, but because they feel more at ease with general technologies (such as word processors, computers, CD-ROMs, or DVDs) than with assistive technology devices which demonstrates that teachers are experiencing challenges in teaching learners with visual “disability” using their suitable devices. Hwang and Evans (2011) in their study on attitude towards the inclusion of students with “disabilities” in Korea revealed that though teachers might have a positive attitude towards inclusive education, they are reluctant to have learners with “disabilities” in their classrooms. There might be contributing factors, which could make teachers reluctant to have learners with “disability” in the classes, such as training on assistive devices, workshops on the implementation of inclusive education, relevant qualification and many more.

Konur (2006) proclaimed that for teachers to accommodate learners with visual “disability”, two major adjustments are necessary, namely: presentation adjustment and timing adjustment. Presentation adjustment is how teachers structure curriculum delivery that best accommodates non-visual learners. Secondly, the timing adjustment concerns the adjustment in time from the preparation of the lesson to the final examination. The teacher spends extra time in preparing lessons that will accommodate students with visual “disabilities” (Donohue & Bornman, 2015). The teacher looks for strategies that will accommodate these learners and at times develops learning material for them. During an assessment, the teacher should print assessment for these students in a bigger font or arrange a scribe and prepare a separate venue where an assessment will be conducted. All these must be prepared by the teacher, and are time-consuming for them. Hence, teachers might seem as being reluctant to accommodate students but having an extra burden could result in such an attitude (Tiwari, Das, & Sharma, 2015).

2.4.5 Assessment of students with visual “disability”

The discourse on assessment differs greatly in different fields such as the medical, education and sports fields and many more. In the field of education, assessment is associated with the testing or examining the content knowledge grasped by the students (Ministry of Education, 2007). There are kinds of assessment strategies such as peer, diagnostic, formative, summative, self and more. Teachers use an assessment to “determine the level of content attained by the pupil” (HMSO, 1995, p. 42). An assessment provides teachers with feedback on their teaching, the content grasped as

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well as areas of improvements (Earl & Giles, 2011). Amongst, the kind of assessments mentioned above teachers mainly use two forms, formative assessment, and summative assessment. This is not to say, they do not use others but these two are mostly used.

Formative assessment was defined by writers as early as 1960. Scriven (1967) stated that a formative assessment is conducted during the programme to gather information about the programme and to make the necessary judgment of the overall programme. Bloom's (1969) view states that formative assessment determines what the learner has achieved at different stages of the learning process. It provides feedback and allows amendments to take place where there are gaps in the learning process. Five decades later, Dixson and Worrell (2016) maintained the same meaning, as they explained that formative assessment is conducted during the development or improvement of a programme to fast track the learning process. Therefore, it could be concluded that formative assessment runs concurrently with teaching and learning, to determine if content knowledge has been grasped on a small amount of work in a programme for example on one or two chapters. Hamilton et al. (2009) affirmed that formative assessment provides feedback to learners and teachers on a regular basis during the programme. Its purpose is to inspire the teaching and learning process to fill the gap between current learning and the objectives of the programme. The formative assessment could include questions asked during the lesson, after the lesson, a class test, an assignment and many more.

Summative assessment, on the other hand, is conducted after the completion of the programme (Scriven, 1969). Mertler (2016) on the same notion defined summative assessment as mainly used to assess the learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills at the end of the instructional period, unit or course. It is usually after the teaching and learning had occurred, to determine progress from one level to the next (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Hamilton et al. (2009) highlighted that summative assessment provides evidence of what learners have or have not accomplished in a specific grade, programme, or curriculum. Hence, it is regarded as playing a decisive role in the student's progress.

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Preparing for and conducting an assessment normally simply requires a question paper, answer script, a venue, and an invigilator to be available. The learners simply respond by writing their responses down. Plimmer, Crossan, Brewster, and Blagojevic (2008) argued that most visual people learn how to write from their childhood, and take such an ability for granted, which is not for people with visual “disability.” Therefore, one could conclude that non-visual students need to be assessed differently from using pen and paper because they cannot see nor read a question paper. The student with visual “disability” inability to use a usual method of assessment lays a burden on the teacher’s workload. Following a critical review of the literature around the assessment approaches suitable for students with visual “disability,” five assessment approaches emerged, which were: human reader, audio recording, Braille reader, screen reader, and large print formatting for partially sighted students.

2.4.5.1 Human reader (scribe)

The first assessment approach is a human reader or scribe. A human reader (a scribe), is a person who assists a student with a visual “disability” during an assessment to read instructions and transcribe the responses that the candidate provides (Thurlow et al., 2009). The scribe performs an essential role in the students’ academic progress. Therefore, the scribes should read instructions clearly at an average pace and with audible volume (Hersh & Johnson, 2010). The utterance of words should be correct, for the student with a visual “disability” to create a clear picture in his/her mind of what is being asked. Human beings are subject to making human errors such as not pronouncing words properly and writing incorrect spelling, which might lead to conflict and misconceptions of information (Bishop, 2004). Therefore, if there are conflicts and misconceptions of the question, results could be a poor performance not because knowledge is not there but because the question was misunderstood, and emotions might be high. Nevertheless, using a human reader could be beneficial to the student because the candidate is able to request the scribe to repeat or rephrase a question for further clarity (Presley & D'Andrea, 2009). Despite, such assistance from the human reader, there could be some barriers which could hinder this activity, such as the scribe’s accent, personality, reading skills and availability when needed. For example, when the candidate requires the scribe to repeat the question, the scribe might read with attitude and aggression which might cause some frustrations to the learner.

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2.4.5.2 Audio recording approach

The second assessment approach is the audio recording approach. Hanson, Lee, and Forer (2002) viewed an audio record, as a replacement for a human reader, where a teacher (self-voicing) records questions on the tape recorder, a learner listens to the recording and uses either a recorder to respond to the questions or types the responses on the computer with JAWS. JAWS is a software device installed on a computer created to allow people with visual impairment to read the text on the screen of the computer either by text to speech or refreshable Braille display (Mao et al., 1998).

The voice on the recorder must be audible, steady with very limited echo or barrier (Hanson, Lee, & Forer, 2002). The inaudibility of the recorded voice could create a wrong picture in the student's mind, which could result in the provision of incorrect response. The audio approach requires a quiet environment free from any physical barriers (Goldberg, Hoory, Mizrachi, & Kons, 2014). Its shortfall might be lack of resources such as a tape recorder or a computer with the JAWS programme. Audio recordings are also time consuming for teachers, because extra time should be created to record the same question which was print prepared for the other learners (Goldberg et al., 2014).

2.4.5.3 Braille reader approach

The third assessment approach is the braille reader approach. Braille is a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind (American Foundation for the blind). A braille reader was created to afford an opportunity to visually "disabled" people to access information through touch (American Foundation for the blind). These people cannot read printed texts or information on a screen. Therefore, an attempt to assist them was to invent a typing test software with dots that they can read (Southern, Clawson, Frey, Abowd, & Romero, 2012). Boulton (1993) explained that braille permits visually impaired people "direct access to the print word" which increases their opportunity to more accurate information such as spelling of words (p. 9). Sadato et al. (1998) affirmed that the braille reader converts simple tactile information into meaningful patterns that have vocabulary and semantic properties. By tactile information I mean information that is encoded and can be interpreted by using the sense of touch (Spacey,

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2017). People with visual “disability” will have more access to information through printed braille text than merely listening to a text.

Using a braille reader approach to assess non-visual learners means that the teacher should use a Perkins braille machine to braille the question paper and print it on the embossed paper. A Perkins machine is the machine used to type dotted texts to be read by people who are blind, and embossed paper is the paper that is used to print the dotted text. The learner then reads the question paper from braille and responds to the questions by either using a Perkins braille machine or a computer with JAWS (Lazarus, Thurlow, Lail, Eisenbraun, & Kato, 2006). The use of braille seems to take a lead in providing independence to learners because it enables them to express themselves better than using either a human reader or an audio reader. For a person to be able to read braille, one must be trained and should own a braille Perkins machine to use continuously, but these machines are expensive (French, 2004). Hence, Zhao, Plaisant, Shneiderman, & Lazar (2006) explained that the level of braille literacy on people with visual “disability” is very low compared to screen out the technology. Because of high prices, visually impaired people from poor background cannot afford it neither can they attend schools where they can be trained to read braille. This means only the elites could have access to a braille reader, hence the literacy level is so low. A braille approach for teachers could be a challenge if they are not trained on how to use Perkins braille machines or to read braille at all if their learners are not brailled literate.

2.4.5.4 Screen reader approach

The fourth assessment approach is a screen reader approach. Boulton (1993) referred to this approach as a voice output system. Information on the computer screen is translated into audible words, which permit a non-visual person to read the information at a speed of 200 words per minute. Lazar, Allen, Kleinman, and Malarkey (2007) asserted that a screen reader approach is a common approach for visually impaired people. On the same notion, Zhao, Plaisant, Shneiderman, & Lazar (2006) attested that the level of literacy of screen out technology is much better than that of braille literacy. Therefore, most visually “disabled” people who cannot afford a braille machine opt for computer assistive technology. Computer assistive technology is any form of product or item provided through the computer to assist a person with a “disability” (Thomas et al.,

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2015). Gerber (2003) avowed that computer technology has a huge impact on the lives of the people with visual “disability” because it enables them to access information and allows them to read for themselves to enhance their knowledge and be independent. For a screen reader to be possible, a computer must be furnished with software such as JAWS or Windows-eyes and more, which reads the information that is on the screen in an electronic format (Lazar et al., 2007). When the teacher opts to use this approach, a question paper in an electronic format should be loaded onto the computer with JAWS or Windows-eyes or other software, for the learners with visual “disability” to access it. The learner may respond on the computer or use any other approach comfortable to him or her to respond. Using this approach might be less time consuming because in most cases question papers are developed in electronic format (typed onto word document) and then made into a print format (hard copy) for sighted learners. This suggests that the same question paper, which was developed as an electronic format, could be loaded on the computer with the screen reader.

The success of the screen reader approach depends on computer literacy of both the teacher and the learner because it will be of no use for the teacher to prepare for a screen reading approach if the learner is computer illiterate. Moreover, the availability of resources such as a computer, a reader programme, and electricity should be in place. Boulton (1993) indicated that the major weakness of a screen reader is that it does not provide information on the layout of the text (structures or diagrams or tables) which suggests that though the content of the text is provided, its structural appearance is not provided. The layout might not be the only aspect the screen readers do not read because Karshmer and Gillian (2005) stated that for mathematic formulas a mathematic mark-up language programme should also be installed, and there could be many more. A mathematic mark-up the language programme is the programme installed onto the computer of a visual “disabled” person to read mathematical formulas for them. Should the screen reader approach be used to assess students with visual “disability”, Gerber (2003) advised on-going computer training should be in place to assist both the teacher and the learner to keep up with latest modern technology.

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2.4.5.5 Large print formatting

The last assessment approach is large print formatting. It has been highlighted that visual “disability” is divided into two which is total blindness and partially sighted. The four assessment approaches discussed above are more suitable for a totally blind person. However, the large print formatting is more suitable for partially sighted learners. Boulton (1993) avowed that partially sighted people “cannot see the normal print size of the standard computer screen” which means alternative methods of displaying information should be used (p. 12). If one cannot see on the normal print size (might mean size 12) of the computer screen, the conclusion is that the same applies to the printed text. The best way to assist the person to access information is to enlarge the text to a larger font. A partially sighted person using a computer to access information should use a computer with a ‘zoom text magnifier software’ (Alves, Monteiro, Rabello, Gasparetto, & Carvalho, 2009). Waterfield and West (2008) highlighted that a zoom text magnifies software, as it is used to enlarge the screen for a person who requires a text in a larger font. If a partially sighted learner uses a computer with a zoom text magnifying software, this suggests even the printed hard copies should be of a large print font. This means that the teacher should print the question paper for a partially sighted student in large font for the learners to read it. Alternatively, the question paper should be on the computer with a zoom text magnifying software from where the learners can access it. The learner could either use the same computer to respond or write the responses in the answer book. It could be expected for the learner to use large handwriting when responding because that is visible to him or her.

Lazarus, Thurlow, Lail, Eisenbraun, and Kato (2006) outlined that the assessment approaches, as discussed above are not always available to learners when they are needed. For example, a scribe, might not be available to assist the student with an assignment. Braille readers are expensive and require training of both the teacher and learner. Regardless of the assessment approach, the teacher might opt to use to assess the learner with a visual “disability”, extra preparation is required. For example, the teacher will, perhaps, have to book a human reader, take time to record the question paper, at times a separate venue. This might cause some frustration to the teachers.

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Marson et al. (2013) advocated for fairness in the assessment of both visual and non-visual learners. They state that if visual learners are permitted to bring notes and books in the exam room, the same should apply for learners with visual “disability.” They should be permitted to use audio texts or voice recorders or other accessible material to use as their notes in the examination room.

2.4.6 Support for teachers teaching students with visual “disability”

Support as alluded to earlier is a fundamental element in the implementation of any policy including inclusive education. Therefore, teachers who have learners with “disabilities” should get continued support to assist them to cope with diverse classes. Thus, Muthukrishna and Schoeman (2000) explained that to adapt to a curriculum which is inclusive and appropriate to all learners’ needs, the Department of Education should develop district-based support teams to provide systematic support to teachers. There should be training workshops designed for teachers where they could share their experiences and receive support to cope with diverse learners. Donohue and Bornman (2014) confirmed that it is the responsibility of the Department of Education to ensure that teachers are trained and are prepared to cope with diverse learners, on a continuous basis. Such training programmes should incorporate specialised personnel who possess classroom experience to provide teachers with hands-on experiences and practical skills appropriate to them. A study conducted by Maher (2009) revealed no evidence of training programmes provided by the Department of Education to teachers in preparing them for inclusive education, which leaves the Department of Education liable and accountable for teachers to fail in executing and implementing the policy (Maher, 2009).

Mukhopadhyay et al. (2009) expressed that teachers in both special and mainstream schools are not provided with adequate training which prepares them to cope with all learners’ needs. Teachers do not receive any training which assists them to adjust their teaching strategies to accommodate different learner’s needs (Maag & Katsiyannis, 2000). Jansen (2001) pointed to insufficient funds, to capacitate teachers to deal with diverse learners in an inclusive classroom. Teachers are expected to accomplish the task of tailoring the curriculum to suit each learner’s particular needs and the pace of learning is not thoroughly detailed. Stofile (2008) outlined that the Department of Education envisaged that most teachers be reoriented to new methods of teaching via

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comprehensive training programmes that are provided. Training programmes that educate teachers on how to accommodate and teach learners with “disabilities “ are generally a week or two long, but teachers report that although these brief training programmes are helpful, they are insufficient (Stofile, 2008). The Department of Education should also increase funding for schools so that infrastructure could be changed to meet the needs of the learners.

2.5 Theoretical framework grounded on Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)

In trying to comprehend lecturers’ experiences in teaching students with visual “disability,” an attempt was made to evaluate numerous frameworks such as Kant’s theory of experience, Dewey’s Experiential Learning Theory and Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was identified as the most relevant framework, which could be used to analyse and interpret the lecturers’ experiences. Before the discussion of the theory, it is vital to comprehend what an experience is. Most people claim to ‘know what an experience is’ (McCarthy & Wright, 2004, p. 64), therefore, the literature on experience is used to comprehend what an experience is.

2.5.1 What is an experience?

While, reviewing the literature on the term ‘experience,’ the work of John Dewey (1925) was largely used to understand ‘experience’. John Dewey within the field of experiential learning in literature could be said to be a leading authority in this field. McCarthy and Wright (2004) in their article confirmed that “experience marks the heart of Dewey’s work” (p. 64). He described the experience as something that affects one’s life personally and is a process of gaining new knowledge through an empirical or experimental attitude of the mind (Dewey, 1925). Since experience is a process, it suggests that it is not ‘ready-made’ (p. 45) but requires an individual to be involved in learning. It is a product of what one goes through (Dewey, 1925). Dewey further added that experience depends greatly on how an individual makes sense of the knowledge gained, based on his/her history and personality (Dewey, 1934). This implies that a person’s background informs how one interprets the current situation based on the previous experiences.

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In the context of work, the experience is prior to work-related knowledge and skills acquired over a period of time applied to the current job (McDaniel, Schmidt, & Hunter, 1988). Experience in life generally is the only source of knowledge (Albert Einstein, 1956). Experience is a great teacher of all things (Julius Caesar, 40 BC). Experience is not what happens to you but what you do with what happens to you (Aldous Huxley 1932). McCarthy and Wright (2004) viewed experiences as created through the discovery of new knowledge. Dewey (1925) asserted that experience is what informs a person's decision about the current situation. Therefore, it could be concluded that to experience something, personal involvement or observation where knowledge is acquired informs a person's decision for the future. As such, the lecturers through personal involvement in teaching students with visual "disability" would have gained knowledge, which will assist them in their future encounter with these students.

2.5.2 Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)

Experiential learning as the name suggests means learning that occurs through experience. The Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was proposed by a psychologist, David Kolb, influenced by the works of other theorists such as John Dewey and Jean Piaget. According to Kolb (1984), learning can be defined as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 36). Kolb's theory provides a holistic approach to how experience can influence the learning process through perceptions, environmental factors, and emotions. The theory describes learning as following a cycle of four stages namely: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation (Figure 1). According to Kolb (1984), concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation are ways of grasping experience, whilst reflective observation and active experimentation are ways of transforming experience.

The first stage is a concrete experience- at this stage, the learner begins to do something or gathers the information that serves as a basis for reflection. The learner is actively involved in the experience and experiences different kinds of feelings. The second stage is reflective observation, the stage at which the learner consciously reflects on the learnt experience. The third stage is abstract conceptualisation, this is where the learner attempts to conceptualise a theory or model of what has been observed. The learner at this stage makes sense of what has happened or interprets that experience. The fourth stage is active experimentation, where the learner is trying to plan to

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test a model or theory or plan for a forthcoming experience. At this stage, the learner performs the task based on the new experience.

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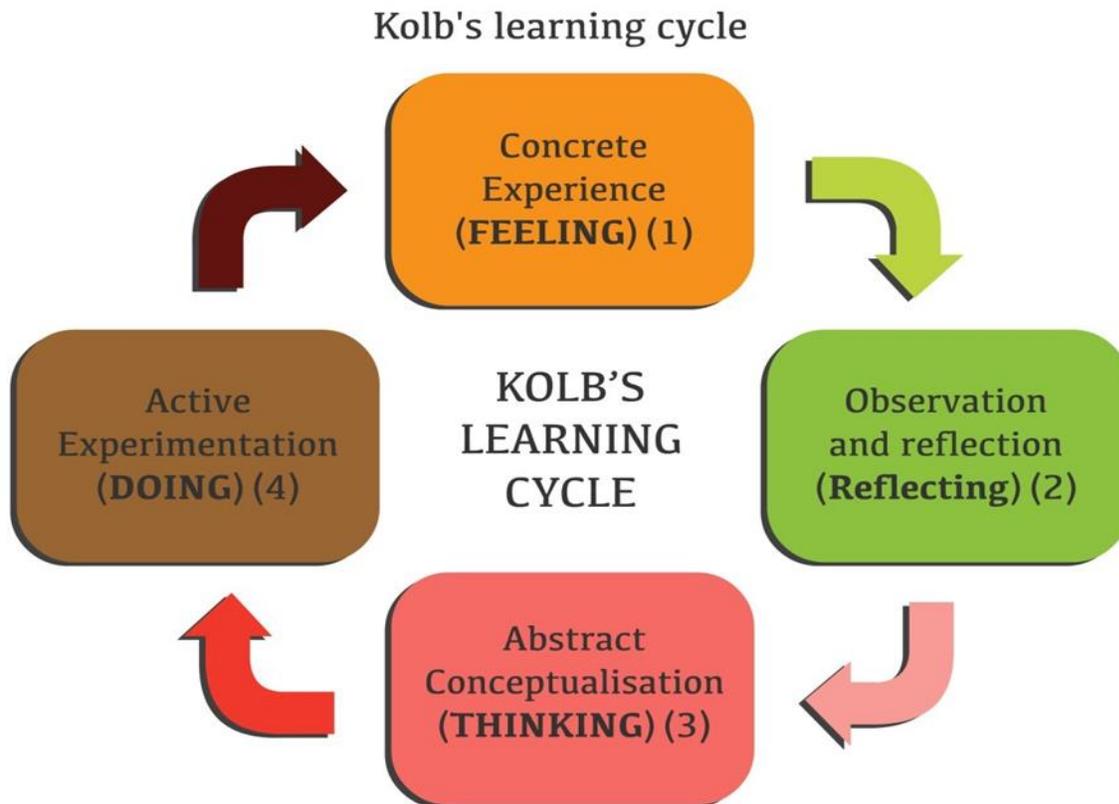


Figure 1. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. (Source Kolb 1984, p.42)

2.5.3 Relevance of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory to the study

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was developed in the in the eighties but it is still relevant to current studies. This theory fits the purpose of this study, which is to explore the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual "disability." This theory involves the construction of knowledge by means of personal active involvement, which is exactly what the lecturers are involved with as they teach these students. Kolb's theory also focuses on adult learning, which fits the purpose of this study because the experiences being studied are those of TVET College lecturers who are adults and professionals. Furthermore, this theory involves formal objectives to learning, which leads to empowerment (Moon 2004). Through their shared experiences, the lecturers will be empowered and in turn empower others. The learning circle of TVET college lecturers teaching students with visual "disabilities."

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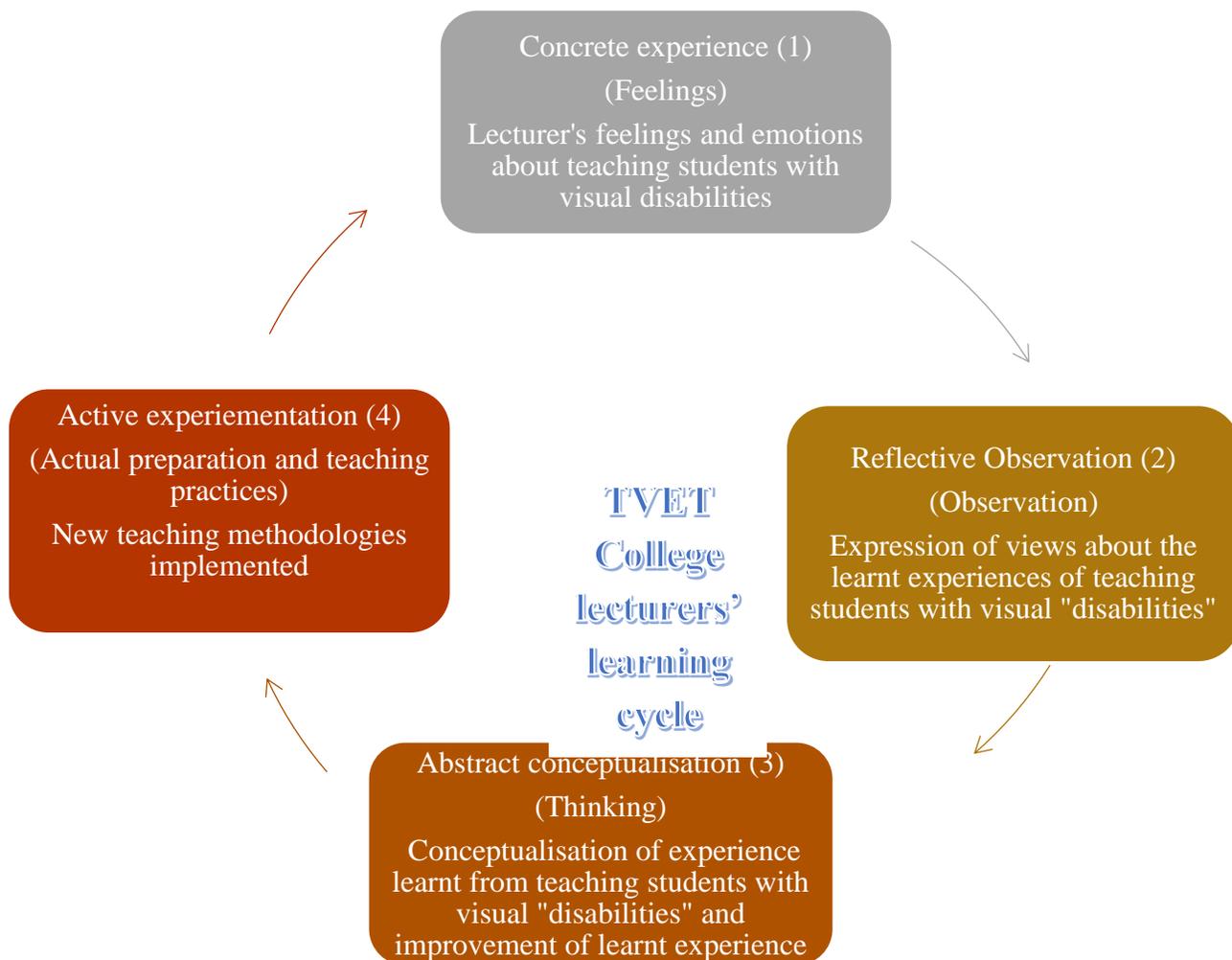


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework for analysing and interpreting the TVET College lecturers' learning circle (adapted from Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, Kolb, 1984, p.42).

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The four stages of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory can be used to interpret lecturers' experiences in teaching students with visual "disability." The lecturers have been teaching these students for some time, which has created a new experience for them, as their concrete experience. At the concrete experience stage, their feelings and emotions about teaching these students would have been expressed. The lecturers would be able to narrate how they felt about the experiences of teaching students with visual "disability." On the second stage, reflective observation, the lecturers would have reflected on their learnt experiences and expressed their views of what they learnt about teaching students with visual "disability." The third stage involves conceptualising of their experiences of teaching students with visual "disability." The lecturers at this stage would have made a comparison of what they had done, reflected on what they already knew about teaching these students and how they could improve their teaching practice in the future. The last stage involves active experimentation, where knowledge learnt is put into practice. The experimentation stage involves the lecturer's actual teaching practice of teaching these students in their class. Thus, the Theoretical Framework of the current study shown in Figure 2 has been adapted from Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. The Theoretical Framework (Figure 2) will be used to interpret data generated through semi-structured interviews with four TVET College lecturers' experiences in teaching students with visual "disability."

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed intensively how teaching and learning should take place for students with visual "disability." It has emerged from the chapter that inclusive education is currently not a practical practice yet in South African because teachers are not embracing it because of factors such as not being trained to teach learners with "disability". It was also clear that the curriculum for TVET Colleges is also not explicit on how students with "disability" are accommodated in TVET Colleges. The chapter has also outlined two teaching strategies, which are recommended for students with visual "disability": the tactile approach and auditory approach. The tactile approach is the one that advocates for the use of touch to create meaning or communicate meaning, whilst an auditory approach is one that uses words to create meaning. From the assessment approaches it became clear that using a pen and paper is not suitable for the assessment of these students. Hence, the four assessment approaches were rather recommended as suitable for

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assessment of students with visual “disability.” These approaches are human reader, audio recording, braille reader, screen reader, and large print formatting. It has also emerged from this chapter that teachers are not just reluctant to include learners with “disability” in their classroom but due to limited resources to teach these learners and no training capacitation their attitude is negative towards including these learners. It has also positioned this study within an Experiential Learning Theory by Kolb and discussed its relevance to the study.

My reflection of this chapter was that I discovered it to be the most challenging because searching and finding relevant articles and books around teaching students with visual “disability” was difficult. There was limited literature around this phenomenon, more so in the TVET sector. Hence, there was a need for me to adapt literature from a school context to a TVET context. This confirms what Fichten, Asuncion, Barile, Ferraro, and Wolforth (2009) highlighted as they pointed out the scarcity of empirical research around the post-school education sector on the experiences of teachers in teaching students with disabilities.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology used in this study.

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CHAPTER 3

Research design and methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has elaborated an account on what literature reveals on acceptable terminology for referring to people with “disability”, the inclusive education policy implementation, how students with visual “disability” should be taught, and lastly, the theoretical framework that underpins this study, Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory.

This chapter provides a methodological approach, research design and the research paradigm used in this study. It further outlines the limitations and how ethical issues were addressed in the study. This study has employed a qualitative approach to research and is positioned within an interpretive paradigm, as its lens to view the world. The methodology used was a case study, which allowed for an in-depth generation of data on lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disability”. A semi-structured interview was employed as a data generation instrument to generate data on the experiences of TVET college lecturers. The recruitment procedure used in the selection of participants, will be explained as two sampling procedures were used namely purposive and convenience selection. The data generation plan outlines the plan on how data was generated, and it provides a justification for data generation. Lastly, the chapter will discuss the ethical issues that were considered in the study, limitations of the study and data analysis plan.

3.2 Research methodology

Research is described in many ways. For example, it is a “scientific and systematic search on a specific topic” (Kothari, 2004, p. 8) which requires a coherent application of scientific methods. The systematic use of scientific methods is referred to as methodology. The methodology is a system of principles, practices, and procedures applied to a specific branch of knowledge on a specific focus area (Peffer, Tuunanen, Rothenberger & Chatterjee, 2007). As such, this section will outline a system of principles and procedures applied searching the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” These principles and procedures are

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research approach, paradigm, data gathering procedure, sampling as applied in this study to explore the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.”

3.3 Research approach

A researcher conducting a study is at liberty to choose an appropriate research approach in which to locate the study, depending on the kind of data required for the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2013). The researcher may choose to employ either a qualitative, a quantitative or a mixed method. The choice is driven by the kind of data the researcher aims to collect or gather either quality or quantity or both (mixed method). Similarly, this study was located within a qualitative approach to research as opposed to a quantitative research approach which aims at collecting data that is numerical which could be used to analyse large samples. The researcher in this approach has an organised plan to collect data and attempts to simplify the phenomena by a well-planned and organised data collection plan. Its emphasis is on objective measurement and statistical or numerical data collected pools, questionnaires or surveys (Black, 1999; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 1993; Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2008).

Qualitative research according to Fraenkel et al. (1993) is research in which an investigator attempts to study “naturally occurring phenomena in all their complexities” (p. 11). Kothari (2004) asserted that this type of research aims at determining the primary objectives or motives for human behaviour. Kothari (2004) continues to say that this approach aims at studying how people think and feel about certain topics or an institution, and explains that this approach aims at “receiving data that is textual or verbal” and it “helps in getting an in- depth data” on the phenomena (p. 36). Ryan, Coughlan, and Cronin (2007) explain that in qualitative research the emphasis is more on understanding participants’ experiences, feelings, and attitudes than mere statistical analysis. The primary aim is to comprehend their social world through their viewpoint. This suggests that language used in a qualitative study should be active rather than passive in nature to capture multiple realities (Frowe, 2001). After evaluating the two approaches, a researcher decides on the approach to use in the study. It should be noted that the choice of an approach is dependent on the kind of data the researcher aims at gathering, either quantitative (statistical) or qualitative (textual). As a researcher in this study, I have decided to locate this study

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within a qualitative approach, because I aim at gathering data that is textual on the experiences of lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability” in a natural setting as a primary purpose of this study. De Vaus (2004) maintained that a qualitative approach assists in comprehending participants’ attitudes and experiences while interacting with them. Salkind (2012) adding to the above notion stated that the interaction takes place as a researcher examines the individuals and the phenomenon in the context in which it occurs. Salkind (2012) further explains that the interaction between the researcher and the participants is physical and continuous. In this study interaction with the participants was face- to- face to better comprehend lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disability”. As I interacted with the participants, I was not distant from the study, because the nature of the inquiry was totally value determined (Plack, 2005).

A qualitative approach is also viewed as being subjective (De Vaus, 2004) which allows for individual views and opinions. Vishnevsky and Beanlands (2004) add that in qualitative research truth is never viewed as objective reality but rather as subjective reality experienced differently by respective individuals. This confirms the suitability of this approach to this study because data was generated from human beings who are subjective beings with different views, opinions, and beliefs. Salkind (2012) explains that using a qualitative approach assists in achieving a researcher’s goal of gaining in-depth insight into an individuals’ behaviour and the intentions for their behaviour. Using a qualitative approach as alluded to by Salkind (2012) has assisted me in achieving my goal of gaining greater insight into lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disability” to complete this study. Denscombe (2014) affirmed that researchers in the social and behavioural fields use a qualitative research approach. Since I am located within the social field, this approach became appropriate and suitable in achieving my aim of exploring lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

3.4 Case study

This study through a qualitative research approach utilised case study methodology. A case study “is systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 3). A case study permits researchers to create and present an in-depth interpretation of a specific situation, unit or event (Rule & John, 2011). According

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to Flyvbjerg (2006) a case study is beneficial in developing hypotheses, while other methods are more appropriate for testing the hypotheses and creating theories. Case studies are not to study the entire institution but only a single subject, piece or unit of analysis (Noor, 2008). This implies that a researcher using a case study aims at studying a single institution or a group of individuals to comprehend their behaviour within a specific context. A case study in this research project was used to comprehend the experiences of TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disabilities” within a single institution TVET college in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Their experiences become a case that was studied over a period of a year. Furthermore, an empirical investigation on their experiences of teaching students with visual “disabilities” was gathered within a real-life context. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) case studies possess strengths and weakness. The strengths and weakness of a case study are discussed below.

Here I discuss some of the strengths of a case study that also influenced my choice of utilising a case study methodology in this study. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) explained that a case study is a distinct means of capturing participants’ experiences and feelings in a real -life situation. Case studies provide a much better insight about the participants and their relationships in a specific situation (Neale, Thapa, & Boyce, 2006). They permit a researcher to have a holistic understanding of a phenomenon within a specific context (Noor, 2008). It also permits the researcher to create a relationship-building the participants which build trust and makes the participants open up about their situation, which increases the validity of the findings (Rule & John, 2011). Case study has the potential to give a voice to the “powerless and voiceless” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 75). According to Patton (1999) case study methodology is mostly useful in a case when a researcher aims to understand a phenomenon in detail and to identify primary data needed for the study. The primary aim of this study was to explore the experiences of TVET lecturers on teaching students with visual “disabilities” and by using a case study this aim was achieved.

Aligned to the authors’ discussion above on the strengths of a case study to this study, a case has allowed me to capture the experiences and feelings of TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disabilities.” A case study has permitted me to build close relationships with the

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lecturers which have enabled them to open up to me freely about their experiences which they valued as personal. Through sharing their experiences, the lecturers were empowered and given a platform to voice their feelings and experiences. A case study allowed me to gather detailed and descriptive data during interactions with the participants during data generation. I could understand the lecturers' experiences holistically because where there was a need for clarity, I would request the participants to elaborate.

I will now discuss some of the weaknesses or criticism of a case study as indicated by different scholars and how those weaknesses were overcome in the study. Noor (2008) stated that a case study cannot provide scientific rigor and reliability. As such it "does not allow generalizability" (p.1602) of the findings. Generalisability according to Leung (2015) is when the findings of the study are applied to a wider population. While reporting on the study I did not generalise the findings of this study to all TVET College lecturers but limited it to the four lecturers who were participants in the study. Shaughnessy et al. (2003: 290–9) explained that case studies have a very low degree of systematic control which suggests that a researcher's bias can intrude the data of the study. The use of participants' exact words in the study was then maintained to prevent the researcher's bias influencing the findings of the study. Yin (2009) explained that since case studies are detailed and descriptive, their presentation becomes lengthy and time-consuming to read. Nonetheless, Neale et al. (2006) advised that because case studies are narrative in form, and could be uninteresting to the reader, data should be pruned to report cases relating to the research question. This was evident in this study because after data was produced and transcribed the report was long and could have been boring to the reader. Therefore, data was carefully selected to present data that was relevant and appropriate to the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual "disability" as a primary purpose of this study and to respond to the research question. Despite all the weaknesses highlighted about the case study methodology it remained relevant to this study because it had the potential to provide in-depth and insightful data about the lecturers and their experiences on teaching students with visual "disabilities" in a TVET College.

3.5 Research paradigm

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Once the methodology of the study has been ascertained, the researcher must then select the research paradigm for the study. In searching for truth, different researchers utilise different theoretical lenses to view the world in order to comprehend the “nature of the phenomena” (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2013, p. 5). The lens to view the world is referred to as a paradigm. Different scholars define a research paradigm in different ways. According to Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2010) it is a way of looking at reality and frames of reference used to organise observations and reasoning. Bertram and Christiansen (2013) explain that a paradigm is a “way of seeing the world” (p. 13), while, Guba and Lincoln (1994) defined it as a “basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation” (p. 105). Therefore, it could be concluded that a paradigm provides the researcher with contextual grounds on which to place their views which could be positivism, critical or interpretive amongst many other paradigms. It should be noted that the researchers within these paradigms possess different beliefs and assumptions.

This study employed an interpretive view as the lenses to view the world. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2013) an interpretive paradigm is described as a paradigm in which a researcher does not aim to predict what people will do, but rather to describe how people make sense of their worlds, and how they make meaning of their actions. Precisely, it "aims to understand" the phenomenon (Bertram & Christiansen, 2013, p. 23). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013) maintained that interpretivists comprehend the subjective world through individuals' practice. Scotland (2012) argued that reality in the interpretive paradigm is individually constructed therefore, there are as many realities as individuals. This was evident when I was conducting this study because each lecturer individually constructed his/her own realities about their experience of teaching students with visual “disability”. I used an interpretive paradigm because I did not aim to predict how lecturers have experienced teaching students with visual “disability” but rather to understand how they teach these students through their shared experiences. In this study, lecturers' experiences were viewed as equally important and valid because as an interpretivist, I believe that truth is multiple. Their views were treated with the same dignity because they carried the crucial data for this study. Thus, Krauss (2005) added that within the interpretive paradigm “knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the

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phenomena studied” (p. 759). This suggests that as a researcher, I established meaning by interacting with lecturers to explore their experiences of teaching students with visual “disability.”

It should be noted that an interpretive paradigm just like any other paradigm has its weaknesses. Amongst others, interpretivists rely on subjective data from the participants which is always influenced by an individual’s emotions which constantly change (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013). In overcoming this weakness, I returned the findings of the study to the participants to change any data they felt they provided based on their current status and emotions when they provided it. Though an interpretive paradigm had this weakness, it remained the most suitable paradigm in exploring the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disabilities” because of its philosophical assumptions.

3.6 Data generation instruments/ methods

This study employed a semi-structured interview. An interview, in general, is a “verbal conversation between two people with the objective of collecting relevant information for the purpose of research” Longhurst (2003, p. 5). However, a semi-structured interview according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) is a verbal face- to- face or telephonic interchange where an interviewer has a prepared set of open ended questions but also allows for new views to emerge from the discussion. This implies that questions in a semi-structured interview are formulated to allow for explanations for clarity. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explained that semi-structured interview questions are phrased in a manner that permits individual responses because questions are open-ended yet specific in nature. Maree (2007) argued that using a semi-structured interview provides guidance to participants “to answer a set of predetermined questions” while allowing the researcher to probe for clarification when necessary (p. 87). The use of a semi-structured interview (face- to- face) in this study allowed me to gather in-depth data on lecturers’ experiences of teaching learners with visual “disability”. During the interviews, I could probe follow-up questions for clarity, where necessary to gather more data for the study. Since, these interviews were face- to- face, they allowed me to also read the participant’s non-verbal cues to better comprehend their experiences of teaching students with visual “disability.” Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) explain that semi-structured interviews are “standardized open-ended

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interviews” where all participants are given the “same basic questions in the same order” (p. 353). As explained by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) all participants were given the same questions in the same sequence to make a comparison of their responses and to generate themes from the data.

Some of the limitations I have experienced with using a semi-structured the interview was that since questions were in a prescribed order, the respondents’ ideas were already being shaped by the questions before they actually answered those (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). Using a semi-structured interview also demanded that I possess interview skills. Since I was not that skilful in interviewing, I found it to be challenging. Nevertheless, though preparation on the prescribed questions gained me confident. Another limitation as mentioned by other scholar is that semi-structured interview is that the flexibility of the interview may lessen reliability, and open-ended questions are difficult to analyse. It was also difficult to compare answers. Comparability and flexibility carry threats in that the same topics may be spoken in a different order, thus making comparisons difficult (Steinar, 1996). Despite these limitations a semi-structured interview was the most suitable method to use in generating data for this study because it enabled me to make follow-up questions to get more in-depth data that was crucial for this study.

3.7 Selection of participants

The selection of participants in this study was carefully done to ensure that participants selected provided crucial data for the study in trying to respond to the research question. Thus, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explain that qualitative researchers use people, reports, journals, and groups as their primary source of data gathering. Creswell (2009) adds that participants selected should contribute rich data which will help the researcher to comprehend the phenomenon and to respond to the research question. This emphasises that careful selection of participants remains fundamental as they are primary sources of data. This study amongst many sampling methods such as random, snowball, stratified just to name a few employed purposive and convenience sampling techniques.

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Purposive sampling according to Bertram and Christiansen (2013) means that a researcher makes "specific choices about which people to include in the sample" (p. 43). In this study, I purposefully made a choice about the participants to include in the study. I selected six lecturers who were teaching students with visual "disability" to explore their experiences. Howitt and Cramer (2007) explained that if the size of the participants is too large some participants become reserved and never get a chance to participate. Yet if it is too small limited viewpoints are stimulated and therefore they suggest that an ideal number to include in a focus group is between six and ten. Therefore, choosing six lecturers for the study was to make the study manageable and to allow diverse viewpoints. Kothari (2004) explained that a purposive sampling technique could also be referred to as a deliberate or non-probability sampling. He continues to state that this technique includes the selection of participants from the specific unit of the universe to represent it. Cohen et al. (2013) allude to the fact that that using purposive sampling offers access to knowledgeable individuals with in depth knowledge on a specific subject. Using a purposive sample gave me access to lecturers who had vast experiences of teaching students with visual "disability."

Despite, the successes of using a purposive sample in selecting participants who were relevant and appropriate for the study, there were some challenges. Some lecturers were reluctant to participate in the study, due to fear of being judged and victimised by management and other colleagues. Others were not comfortable in sharing their experiences because they viewed it as opening up some wounds on their bitter experiences of teaching students with "disability". However, after negotiating with them that this study will assist them in voicing their experiences while also dealing with their emotions, they were happy to participate. The participants selected were lecturers, working individuals with major responsibilities such as family, workload, and studies just to name a few. Their personal commitments because of their responsibilities became a challenge and resulted in scheduled interviews being rescheduled. This created some delays in the compilation of this research project. The second selection technique was a convenience sampling technique.

A convenience sampling according to Bertram and Christiansen (2013) is where a researcher uses a sample that is "easy of reach" (p. 43). Kothari (2004) concurs that the researcher selects

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participants who are “ease of access” for the study (p. 93). Marshall (1996) adding to the above notions stating that a convenience sampling technique involves the selection of participants who are most accessible. He elaborates by stating that using this technique is inexpensive in terms of time, money and effort. The lecturers sampled through a purposive sampling were easy to reach because the college is in my area. The traveling costs to TVET College were minimal. At times I had to wait for participants when they were committed to other things but I could travel home and return as per reschedules. Using convenience sampling had some challenges as some participants due to disinterest in the study withdrew from it. For that reason, I recruited more participants to compensate for those who withdrew. The participants indicated below in figure 1 are the participants from whom the data was generated.

No	Pseudonym	Gender	Years of teaching experience teaching students with visual “disability”
1.	Sam	Male	2
2.	Linda	Female	2
3.	Steven	Male	Semester (6 months)
4.	Frank	Male	2

Participants of the study

Figure 3. Biography of participants

3.8 Data generation plan

The table below is the data generation plan that was used in generation data for this study

Table 1 Data generation plan adapted from Vithal and Jansen (2012)

Question 1	
Research question	What are the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching learners with visual “disability”?
What was the research strategy?	Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather the required data for the study
Why was the data being generated?	The data was gathered to answer the research question.

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	It was also to explore the teaching strategies used by TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability”
WHO were the sources of data?	TVET College lecturers who teach learners with visual “disability”
How many data sources were assessed?	Four TVET College lecturers were interviewed.
How often was data generated?	Each participant was interviewed once only during the semi-structured interview
Justify the plan for data collection (Why was this the best way of collecting data for this critical question?)	The interviews provided the most direct account on the lecturers’ experiences of teaching learners with visual “disability”. Since, I used a semi-structured interview it allowed me to probe more questions and allowed lecturers to share their experiences openly which was fundamental for this study. The selection of 4 participants in this study was also manageable and provided sufficient data about the lecturer’s experiences.

Figure 4. Data generation plan

3.9 Ethical considerations

A researcher embarking on the study should consider various ethical issues. In this study ethical consideration took priority as dealing with human beings requires extensive consideration of ethical issues. Burton and Bartlett (2004) advise that ethical issues should be taken into consideration before embarking on and during a research project. Prior to embarking on this study permission to conduct it was applied for and granted from the Department of Higher Education and Training and also from the University of Zululand Research Council (refer appendix 8 and 9). The permission letter to the gatekeeper (appendix two), the college principal was written and permission was granted in writing to conduct the study in this college (see appendix ten). Burton

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and Bartlett (2004) stated that ethical issues are governed by various principles which are autonomy, informed consent, non-maleficence, beneficence, confidentiality, and anonymity. I will now elaborate on how these principles were instigated in this study.

The participants were given informed consent letters (refer appendix 1) about the study and informed consent documents (appendix 3 & 4) to sign after I informed them that will be respected and that their participation in the study was voluntary and they can withdraw from the study at any stage of the study should they wish to do so, thus addressing the principle of autonomy. I explained the aim of the study as well as their crucial role as participants in the study and how they will benefit from it which cohered with the principle of beneficence. I assured them that the study will be of no harm to them physically, psychologically, mentally and otherwise, by this I was addressing the principle of non-maleficence. Lastly, I assured them that their names will not be revealed in the study, instead, pseudonyms will be used to refer to them. They will remain anonymous which addressed the principle of confidentiality and anonymity. The participants were informed that raw data generated from the study will be safely kept in the university locked cabinet and will be destroyed after five years. The report of the study will be such that participants cannot be associated with the data. The participants were given back the findings of the study to ensure that data represents their voice.

3.10 Data presentation and analysis

After the data was generated through the data generation method, semi-structured interviews of the four participants took place. The data was transcribed, coded and interpreted by means of drawing inferences from the raw data (Wahyuni, 2012). After, transcribing, the amount of data retrieved was massive. This concurred with Merriam (1998) who stated that since data is massive it needs to be pruned in order to make meaning of it. The massive amount of data was then pruned, to enable the researcher to present the actual experiences of the TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.” The process of transcribing the data was time-consuming and caused delays in reporting the findings. Since this study is qualitative data, the presentation of data is textual text as opposed to statistical or numerical as is with quantitative studies. The analysis of this study was aligned with the analysis process by Nieuwenhuis (2007, p. 99) which outlined that

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the participants' "perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences" are analysed in order to comprehend their interpretation of the phenomenon. The transcriptions of data from the lecturers were read repeatedly to establish patterns and classifications that emerged from the data. The use of patterns and classifications to present data was to ensure that only data relevant to the study was presented, to make meaning of the lecturer's experiences of teaching students with visual "disability". The lecturer's responses were analysed using Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory as the framework that underpinned this study. The data was presented under four broad themes aligned with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, with sub-themes, which emerged from data.

3.11 Trustworthiness and validity

In qualitative research, the concept of trustworthiness is used to validate the authenticity of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, since this study is within a qualitative approach the concept becomes relevant to the study. Trustworthiness means that the data is a real reflection of the empirical data and can be trusted (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As alluded to by Guba and Lincoln (1994) regarding the issues of validity and trustworthiness I will provide evidence which makes this study a true reflection of an empirical study conducted on lecturers' experiences of teaching students with visual "disability."

Regarding the issues of trustworthiness McLaughlin and Mertens (2004) and Christiansen, Bertram, and Land (2010) all agree that the concepts of, credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability should be used to ensure the quality of the study. I will evaluate each principle and provide evidence on how it was ensured in the study.

The first principle is credibility. This is how a researcher ensures rigour in the research process and "communicate to others how they have done so." (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 95). Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle (2001) view it as a researcher's "conscious effort to establish confidence in an accurate interpretation of the meaning of data" (p.530). This suggests that a clear procedure was followed while gathering data and interpreting it accurately provides some degree of trustworthiness to the study. While conducting semi-structured interviews, I had a tape recorder to record all the proceedings to provide an account of the process.

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Transferability is when a “reader is able to generalise the findings of the study” (Gasson, 2004, p. 98). This suggests that the study should be well reported to allow the reader to generalise the findings to the same context. The context of the participants in this study is explicitly described so that if data could be transferred to the same context it could yield similar results. I have described the TVET College and the kind of personnel involved in the teaching of students with visual “disability” in a manner that if the findings could be generalised to another TVET college similar findings could be discovered.

Dependability addresses the consistency in reporting the findings “across time, researchers and data analysis technique” (Gasson, 2004, p. 94). In ensuring dependability in this study the participants’ exact words were quoted verbatim to ensure that the study becomes a true reflection of the lecturers’ experiences of teaching a student with visual “disability”.

Lastly, confirmability is based on the acknowledgment that research is never objective. Therefore the “findings should represent, as far as is possible, the situation being researched rather than the beliefs, pet theories, or biases of the researcher” (Gasson, 2004, p. 93). The study adhered to the principle of confirmability, after transcribing individual (semi-structured) interviews, I returned the transcripts to the participants to make alterations on the data where they felt uncomfortable about their inputs. This was in line with McMillan and Schumacher (2010) who state that the researcher could “check informally with participants for accuracy during data collection” (p. 330).

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research methodology and the approach used in this study. It has provided the reasons for choosing a qualitative approach and a case study methodology. It provided a paradigm used in the study to be interpretive, as the aim was to understand lecturers’ experiences from their viewpoint. The data generation method used was a semi-structured interview to generate the finding of the study. It also highlighted some challenges experienced during the data production stage. The selection of participants as the primary source of data was selected through purposive and convenience sampling.

Ethical consideration in the study was also discussed. The ethical issues were explained to indicate how they were practiced in the study to keep the participants free from harm. Lastly, the issues of

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validity and trustworthiness were outlined with greater emphasis on the four principles which are credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

The next chapter (4) will analyse the findings gathered through the semi-structured interviews.

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CHAPTER 4

Data presentation and discussion

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has outlined the methodology employed in this study. This chapter will present data that was gathered through semi-structured interviews with four participants to gather the findings of this study. After the data was gathered, it was transcribed and interpreted to make meaning of it. Since the data collected was massive, I carefully selected data that was relevant for analysis to respond to the research question.

A thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the data of this study. A thematic data analysis method was selected because it is aligned to qualitative research methods where identification, organisation and reporting of data is through themes found within a data set (Braun & Clarke 2016). Similarly, this study has developed four broad themes aligned with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. Each broad theme has sub-themes, which emerged from the data. The first theme is the Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college lecturers' feelings about teaching students with visual "disabilities". The second theme is on TVET College lecturers' reflections of teaching students with visual "disabilities". The third theme is the TVET College lecturers' thinking about teaching students with visual "disabilities". The fourth theme is the TVET college lecturers' actual teaching of students with visual "disabilities". Direct quotes from the participants' response were used so that the study represents their voice. Fictitious names (Sam, Linda, Steven, and Frank) were used to represent participants and to conform to the principle of confidentiality. The participants are introduced before the analysis is offered.

4.2 Background of participants

Steven

Steven is a male, aged 43. He is from the North coast of KwaZulu-Natal. He has more than 15 years of teaching experience, however only 1 semester (6 months) teaching experience of students

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with visual “disabilities”. His teaching experience of these students was not in an inclusive classroom but in their own separate classroom. He is a teacher by profession (Diploma in Education, ACE) and has recently graduated with Honours in Inclusive Education, which he pursued after the project of a student with visual “disabilities”, which started in 2015. His future plan is to do a master’s degree in Inclusive Education as he is passionate about people with “disabilities”.

Linda

Linda is a female, aged 40. She is from far North of KwaZulu-Natal with more than 15 years of teaching experience but only 2 years of experience in teaching a student with visual “disability” in an inclusive classroom. She only has one student with a visual “disability” in a class of sighted students. She is a teacher by profession with a Diploma in Education. She has an Honours degree in Mathematics from the University of South Africa (Unisa).

Frank

Frank is a male, aged 54 years. He is also from KwaZulu-Natal with only 4 years of teaching experience of which 2 years was of teaching a student with a visual “disability” in an inclusive classroom. He has more than 25 years of industry experience with local industry. He is not a teacher by profession but holds a B-tech degree from the University of Zululand.

Sam

Sam is a male aged 31 years. He is from a rural area in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. He has less than 5 years of teaching experience. He has no other teaching experience apart from teaching students with visual “disability”. He only taught these students alone in their segregated classroom. He is not a teacher by profession but holds a degree in Human Relations from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

4.3 THEME 1: Lecturers’ feelings about teaching students with visual “disability”

In this section, I capture the feelings expressed by the four participants about teaching students with visual “disability”. The lecturers expressed different feelings at different encounters with the students from their first encounter up to actual teaching of these students. Seven feelings emerged from the data about how the lecturers felt about teaching students with visual “disabilities” and each of these feelings are explained below.

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4.3.1 Feelings of uncertainty

All four participants expressed that they were unsure of what to do or act whilst around students with visual “disabilities”.

At first when I was doing it for the first time, when they were still in level two [entry level of National Certificate Vocational qualification]. I asked myself how am I going to do that because I don't know a thing about it. I didn't know where to start, how do you deal with them. (Linda)

At first, I was not sure where to start. Because (ekugcineni kosuku uzothi uyakhuluma usho into) [meaning at the end of the day you might say something that will offend the student.] So I was not sure, where to start. (Sam)

On the first lesson, in my class. I wasn't aware of what to do. I wasn't even sure of my teaching strategy. So, I wasn't even sure if they will pass. (Steven)

The three participants' responses revealed that their uncertainties were linked to the lack of knowledge of how to deal with students with visual “disability” which created doubts about what was expected of them. They all did not know whether to start by introducing themselves or address the “disability” first. Feelings of this sort where the participants indicated that they were not sure of what to do could have encroached upon their confidence as teaching professionals.

Apart from a lack of knowledge, Linda's uncertainty was also linked to egotism because instead of searching for assistance she asks herself, which, was probably not going to assist her to overcome her uncertainty about how to deal with these students. Her uncertainty further related to not knowing the correct approach or way to address the student when interacting with blind students. In Sam's case, uncertainty was brought about by the sensitive nature of blind students. He perceived that whatever he might say to the students they will be offended, as he perceived them as sensitive individuals.

Steven's uncertainty, unlike Linda and Sam's, was mainly on whether his teaching pedagogy would be suitable for these students or not. He had no confidence in the pedagogy he used to yield results for the student to pass. A feeling of this nature could be expected since this was his first

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time in teaching such a group of people. Steven's lack of confidence in his teaching strategies might have a huge impact on his self-confidence as well as a lecturer.

On the other hand, Frank was a different case because he met the student before, and he got the feeling that the student admires him.

The first person he met, when he come was me. I actually registered him [as a student] so I was sort of the first lecturer that he met when he came to college. So, from there, I don't know for some reason, I got the feeling that he admires me. I didn't have a problem because I will walk him, he will hold my arm and we will walk with him. (Frank)

Frank's first encounter of the student with a visual "disability" indicated that he was of assistance to the student. The assumption by Frank that the student admired him made him feel comfortable and welcoming to the student. Through this assumption, there was some level of trust and understanding between them hence he reported that he would be his hands and walk around the campus with him. During this encounter, Frank was certain about who the student was as a person through the registration process, which involves filling of registration forms, which requires a person's personal information.

Nevertheless, Frank's classroom encounter with this student was no different from the others.

In the beginning, I was worried, I asked myself several questions - am I going to cope, how am I going to do this? Will he pass my subject? (Frank)

Frank's feelings of uncertainty were also linked to self-doubt about his capabilities and suitable teaching strategies for teaching a student with visual "disability." Frank's doubts about his capabilities were linked to not being acquainted with teaching students with visual "disability" as he did not even know how he will cope with them. Therefore, it could be inferred that when a professional gets destabilised when faced with unfamiliar students, students he was not trained to teach, such feelings could be felt.

4.3.2 Feelings of Caution

Apart from feelings of uncertainty, lecturers also experienced feelings of caution. Caution in this case refers to being watchful about the choice of words and mindful of your actions in a situation. The lecturers had to avoid certain words while communicating with students with visual "disability" as well as pay attention to their actions while teaching these students.

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*At first, when you doing it for the first time. You can't say you **see** this. Because there is someone who **doesn't see**. Or you say I will **see you** tomorrow. You avoid that because anyway he will not be able to see you. You just say let's meet tomorrow. You avoid the word see in your conversation. (Linda)*

You just never know when you have said something that is wrong. These people are sensitive, so you never know when and how to approach. Even when maybe you are trying to crack a joke you find that thing to them is sensitive. Those things that you wouldn't notice when you are saying them for them it does count. And you have to watch whatever that you are saying. (Sam)

You don't have to discriminate them in a negative way, they are so sensitive when it come to that. (Steven)

In Linda's case, she had to avoid the mention the word 'see' in her conversation with the student. She perceived mentioning this word was an exclusion of this student with a visual "disability". The use of phrases such as 'see you tomorrow' was her normal way of bidding goodbye to her student, which of late with this student now she had to rephrase to 'meet you tomorrow.' Her normal way of speaking had to change to be more inclusive to all her students. Furthermore, she had to refrain from using vague directions by saying, 'you see **this**' because one student could not see what 'this' was. It then became important for her to always explain in words what others could see, what she was talking about. Therefore, it could be learnt from Linda's experience that when one converses with a person with a visual "disability" certain words or phrases be avoided as they are a practice of exclusion. Most importantly to refrain from using vague language such as 'this' as it creates no meaning to a person with no vision.

In Sam's case, unlike Linda who was specific about the words to avoid, Sam had to register whatever he said to the students, because he perceived them as being sensitive. He really had to think carefully about the jokes he told the students, as those jokes may be perceived as offensive to the blind students. This meant he had to be watchful of his language register, tone and perhaps stick to content delivery only so that the students would not be offended.

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Steven and Sam experienced a similar feeling of caution because they also had to be cautious about making negative comments to the students, which the students might perceive as being insensitive and discriminating.

Frank's experience about feeling cautious was different from the others because his experience revealed that it is not only what one says which he or she should be cautious about but also about what one does.

Every time he comes into the class you need to make sure that, you remember to take this device (voice recorder) from him and put it closer to you obviously for proper recording but that does not seem to be the case all the time. You've been dealing with people who are like normal students and you know, quite frankly, I would forget. (Frank)

Frank's previous teaching experience was that of sighted students until recently when a student with a visual "disability" became part of his class. This meant he had to be careful and to always remember to press the record button, speak louder and to place the student's tape recorder next to him for clear recordings. Since there was now a tape recorder, which Frank had to be cautious about, his classroom movements were bound closer to the recorder for audibility purposes. As this was not a habit, Frank would forget at times to take a recording, which meant that for that lesson this student would not have a recording of the lecture for review later.

The four participants' experience about their feeling revealed that in one way or another there was some degree of caution they had to exercise at all times in what they did or said. Their cautiousness was in relation to their perception of these students being sensitive. The lecturers had to be mindful of their words and their teaching strategies which meant more explanations than usual were needed to accommodate the blind students.

4.3.3 Feelings of anxiety

The lecturers experienced feelings of anxiety when they had to teach students with visual "disabilities" for the first time. Anxiety is different from cautiousness because anxiety, in this case, refers to being nervous about something especially when the activity is for the first time.

In the beginning, I must say there was some level of anxiety because there is someone now in this condition and you are expected to assist this person [the National Certificate

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Vocation level 2 student]. *The first thing you ask yourself, how am I going to do this, I've never done it before. So, the feeling of worry was there.* (Frank)

At first glance, I was afraid, I won't lie. I was afraid, I was panicking. In my first encounter, I didn't even know how to refer to them [the Public management students registered as a project class of students with visual "disabilities" only.] My first day, mmmmm! I still remember my first day, we didn't even do anything when it comes to teaching and learning. Because I was trying to understand them. (Sam)

It was for the first time to see visually impaired learners in the classroom [the Public management students registered as a project class of students with visual "disabilities" only.] I was a bit nervous, I would be honest with you. (Steven)

The participants' response to their feelings of anxiety pointed to different causes. In Frank's case, nervousness was caused by the condition of the student being blind, as he had no knowledge of how to assist yet was expected to do so. The second factor was lack of experience because he had never taught a student with this condition before. These two factors contributed largely to Frank's feelings of anxiety. It suggests that when a lecturer lacks knowledge and experience about the condition of the student or how to deal with the student feelings of nervousness arise.

In Sam's case, anxiety was aligned firstly to the correct address to refer to students with visual "disabilities". Sam's lack of knowledge about the correct address to use to refer to these students might be caused by the two factors. It could either be because of the vast preferences used to refer to these students such as visual "disability", visual impairment and blindness. Or it could also be that he was afraid to use just any reference to refer to them because he was afraid of offending them as he constantly indicated that these students are sensitive. Sam's feeling of anxiety affected him quite intensely upon his encounter with the students because he could not even manage to perform his contractual obligated duties of teaching the students. Since no teaching took place, Sam opted to rather utilise the time to understand the students. The use of teaching time to understand the students suggested that there was no orientation prior to actual teaching and learning between Sam and the students. If Sam had met the students prior to class, he would not experience such feelings of anxiety. To convey his feelings, Sam used two words, which are synonyms (afraid and packing) to convey his state of mind at that time. This suggests that when a

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lecturer is faced with a situation for which he/she is not prepared he/she experiences similar feelings of nervousness.

In Steven's case, feelings of anxiety probably stemmed from not being exposed to a classroom environment with only students with visual "disabilities" because he is used to teaching sighted students. Furthermore, finding himself being surrounded by only these students, where others have eyes opened yet they cannot see could arise some anxiety in a person. Feeling a bit nervous in that situation could be expected, as this was his first encounter. When Sam and Steven were articulating their feelings of anxiety, they used phrases: *'I will be honest and I can't lie.'* Their utterance of these phrases communicated how they really felt at the time and they did not want to hide those feelings.

It could thus be inferred that when no exposure or orientation is provided to lecturers about the environment unfamiliar to them, the environment becomes overwhelming for them and they can experience feelings of nervousness.

4.3.4 Feeling neglected and stressed

The lecturers in their teaching practices experienced feelings of neglect from the management, which then caused them stress. The lecturers outlined different factors contributing towards their feelings of being neglected and stressed.

Teaching these students (igcina ngisho isikuqgilaza engqodweni yakho) [meaning it ends up depressing you psychologically.] It's so unfortunate that I am a Black man, if ever I was a White guy I would have tried some psychiatrist or psychologist all those kind. (Sam)

It was not easy in the beginning, we were expected to perform. And I would say it a general feeling that we've been left alone, we have been expected to perform without any assistance. Whatever, we do it comes from us. You must make your own arrangements to assist the students. We were thrown in the deep end and you are expected to swim, whether you swim, it just depends on you. I try and do my best, but your best obviously, cannot always be your best. (Frank)

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I just got an Honours Degree in Inclusive Education. I didn't receive anything that pertains to my studies, I didn't receive anything from management (bursary or financial funding for studies). What I did, I did it from my own pocket. (Steven)

Sam's points to the teaching of students with visual "disabilities" as the cause of his feeling stressed. Of course, Sam would not feel this way if he was not neglected by the management to see to it that he is coping well in teaching these students. Sam seemed to struggle to cope with the level of stress he is experiencing with teaching these students because he longs for an intervention of a psychiatrist or a psychologist to assist to off-load all his stress. Nevertheless, Sam's cultural practices could also be a barrier for him because, from his perspective, a Black man will not consult a psychologist. He suggests that it would be abnormal for a Black man to go for counselling. With Sam's case, it is clear that teaching students with visual "disabilities" are stressful more so when you are even deserted by the management.

In Frank's case, feelings of stress arose from the fact that the management only expects good performance from them, yet they have abandoned them to figure out how to deal with the students themselves. Frank felt about being neglected by the management, was like being thrown in a pool to drown. Despite, feeling so neglected Frank applauds himself for not allowing himself not to rise against the situation by performing to his utmost best to assist the students, though he feels his best is not always the best, he is trying. Frank felt that the management has left him to deal with pedagogical issues by himself.

Steven on the other hand experienced being neglected financially. He assumed that if the management saw that he was passionate about Inclusive Education and did an Honours Degree on it, he would be financially supported, but no financial support was provided. Then, he had to pay for his studies though the institution would also benefit from the knowledge received from his studies. Therefore, it could be concluded, that when no financial support is provided for staff development especially in their field of work, they feel neglected and financially stressed. Moreover, if lecturers feel neglected by management as lecturers teaching students with "disabilities" they feel stressed, which could have negative consequences on their performance.

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4.3.5 Negative and positive feelings about training

The lecturers felt that most of their negative feelings about teaching students with visual disabilities emanated from the fact that they have not received any training that prepared them to deal with or be able to teach students with visual disabilities.

In the beginning, when this thing was introduced, it was as if we were going to be capacitated in terms of training to be given proper training of how to deal with these particular students. But there was no training provided whatsoever. We try our best. The issue is in the way it was introduced. It was walk so long we will find you along the way with the assistance. And it never happened, in other words, we will provide training but just start so long and do something but sadly as I said there is nothing. (Frank)

When we started there was no training. At the moment, there is a three day [March 2017] Inclusive Education workshop that is run by UNISA. (Steven)

I've never been trained to do it. One doesn't have experience in doing it, but you try to use your own thinking. I am not used to teaching the non-visual. We have asked several times [from management] for the trainings or workshops or empowerment whatever that can help us. In order to be able to work with these people in a proper way. (Linda)

The three participants confirmed that there has been no training prior to them teaching students with visual “disabilities”. Frank expressed that they were promised that they would be trained but sadly as he claimed, that did not take place. Steven also confirmed that there was no training apart from the three days training which only took place in March 2017 when the project had already started two years before in 2015. It, therefore, implies that though such a workshop was provided it only came two years after when one would have expected it prior to the commencement of the project for students with visual “disabilities”. The workshop itself as its name suggests ‘Inclusive Education workshop’ might have not addressed issues to deal with students with visual “disabilities” directly to capacitate and empower the lecturers but addressed inclusive education in general. Therefore, a need for a training workshop to address issues pertaining to teaching students with visual “disabilities” remains a necessity.

In Linda’s case, unlike the other participants, she became an agent for change in which she engaged with management requesting training not only for herself but for other lecturers as well. Linda’s

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engagements with management on training issues was because she perceives training and workshops as the fundamental element that could prepare them, empower them and assist them to cope with these students. Frank and Linda declared that though there has been no training provided to them, they ‘*try our best and try to use your own thinking.*’ Their claims suggested that though they have not received any training to deal with the students they are using their own discretion to cope with these students. It could be inferred, therefore, that when lecturers are not trained to teach students with visual “disabilities” they apply their own discretion which could have serious consequences as they try to do their best in teaching these students. For lecturers to be confident in teaching students with visual “disabilities” and to not exercise trial and error methods with these students to examine what works, they need to be trained.

Sam, on the other hand, was a different case because he had received some form of training.

When it comes to training, there are some other trainings that we do attend with some other universities or colleges who have students with disabilities. Whenever I’m in those trainings I get to know other people who are teaching the same students as I am teaching. That is where we start to share some challenges that we are facing and good practice. (Sam)

Sam’s response revealed he had numerous training because he stated ‘*some other training*’ suggesting that it was more than once. Attending training had assisted him to mingle with other lecturers and make friends with them. This suggested he had support from people who are more experienced than him and who would guide and share best practices with him to improve his teaching strategies. From Sam’s experience when lecturers attend training they can network with other colleagues from other institutions possessing similar experiences as theirs which builds a strong foundation of their support system. Furthermore, they can apply the knowledge gained in training in their teaching practices for it to improve.

4.3.6 Feeling unsupported by College management and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

Apart from being neglected by college management lecturers also stated that they did not receive any assistance of any kind from the college management and from the Department of Higher

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Education and Training since they were teaching these students. The participants perceived a lack of support as the major contributing factor to most of their challenges.

Actually, this is the sad one hey, there is nothing, because whenever you ask for help [from management], the response is, make a plan, and see what you can do. There has been like those sort of encouragements and motivation, well! I know you guys you can do something to make sure that this project succeeds. Do whatever you can. It was as if, do something but we are behind you. We are going to support you. Whatever we know is through our own experiences. Lack of support is creating a lot of difficulty for us. I will apportion the blame to the management for the lack of support because we've never been trained. (Frank)

So, far there is no support system, just using our own discretion. To help ourselves. So far there is no support from management but if they can at least provide us with resources if they can at least train us. (Linda)

Basically, I'm getting my support from my family, friend because sometimes when I'm relaxing or chilling with my friends. I just have to talk about all these things because I can't keep these things within myself. (Sam)

Nothing from management. There is no support. They only say they like this thing to work but they are not practical. (Steven)

All four participants unanimously confirmed that they have not received any support from management as lecturers teaching students with visual “disabilities”. In Frank’s view, management should take all the blame for their failure because he believes that had they supported or trained them, they would have been doing things in a different way. Frank outlined that though they did not get support from management they constantly provided motivational comments. These comments from Frank’s view are not enough but merely the management’s agenda of ensuring that the project of students with visual “disability” was a success. Considering Frank’s comment, support from management is needed to teach students with visual “disabilities”.

In Linda’s view although the management has not provided the necessary support for them at least necessary resources could be provided as well as training their teaching could improve. In view of

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Linda's comment, two factors, management support, and training are vital in successfully teaching student with visual "disabilities".

In Sam's case due to lack of support from management, he had to look elsewhere for support. His major support system was his family and friends, who assisted him in offloading some of the challenges he experienced while teaching these students. Expressing his feelings to his primary reference group, his family and friends and people he trusts, Sam finds relief as he explained it assisted him. Sam's view about using immediate family and friends is probably one of the best support systems one could ever find to offload experiences encountered while teaching students with visual "disabilities" or when one does not receive support from management.

All four participants when asked about the kind of support they have received from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) stated:

For now not yet, but we [Sam and Project Co-ordinator through campus management] have tried in writing some memos or requests stating resources [teaching resources such as computers with Jaws, voice recorders] but the challenge is that we have not got any support from DHET. (Sam)

No support from DHET. (Linda)

Nothing from the DHET. (Steven)

The only thing that we have been told is that students who are blind must actually indicate their condition so that they are given extra time in examination to cater for their situation. There is nothing. And I wonder how serious they are [Department of Higher Education and Training] or they have never sat down and thought about students that we have and the challenges that we are facing. I do not think that it ever cross their minds. Given what we see. I really don't think so and I'm tempted to say they never think that we got blind students here. (Frank)

All participants in unison confirmed that they have not received any support from the Department of Higher Education and Training. In Sam's case, he had communicated with them in writing to request assistance and resources, but the department seemed to have not responded. The silence by the department, demotivated and discouraged the lecturers.

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In Frank's case, he felt that the department of education takes no interest in their work to teach students with visual "disabilities". Frank believes that it is not that they are not aware because they do apply for a concession of extra time for students during examination where students indicate their specific needs but still there is no support. It could be deduced, therefore, that when lecturers feel they have no support from the department their assumptions are that the department does not care about them and their work as lecturers teaching students with visual "disabilities".

4.3.7 Feeling discouraged and encouraged about the learning resources

The lecturers also felt that there were inadequate resources to assist the students with their academic learning and that teaching "disabled" students increased their workload.

Students have to share the computer to listen to the record while the other wants to use it to listen to another record. There will be some conflicts there. (Steven)

Because we do not have the resources, visually impaired people need their own resources [individual computer with jaws programme, audio textbooks, etc.] where they can learn easily. Since we do have that you just use anything to explain. I feel discouraged because of the lack of resources but then I become encouraged again to see him working so hard. (Linda)

When the project started [in 2015] we had no resources so for me that was a huge challenge. The college does not have sufficient resources. My only worry is that the college is trying to accommodate all students with disabilities where else the resources are not sufficient. (Sam)

At the moment he's got his own device [voice recorder] that he is using to record lectures but had we had support from our management his books would be converted into electronic copies. Well, I would have thought instead of having someone reading for him, there was a computer which was supplied and he had access to that computer [a computer with a JAWS programme to read for the student.] He would be able while we are reading. If I tell him on a page so and so that would assist him in terms of being on par and on the same page with all the students in the class (Frank)

The participants reported that resources are not available to assist them in teaching students with visual disabilities. Steven highlighted that the sharing of laptops by the students created conflict

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amongst students which would not have existed if there were enough laptops for each student. This implies that if there were enough computers there would be no conflict as each student would listen to their own recording in their own time from their own computer. Therefore, having individual resources for each student is important for these students' learning.

In Linda's case, having no resources brings about discouragement. Her encouragement, she said, is drawn from observing her National Certificate Vocational student's hard work. It is, therefore, assumed that lecturers become encouraged when their effort of teaching students even without resources yields expected result. The hard work Linda affirms to have observed in her student suggested that she also deposited extra hard work into assisting the student otherwise the student could not do it alone. Linda believes that if students could have resources to assist them in their learning, they could learn easily. Therefore, if students are learning easily with the assistance of resources the lecturers' workload will be lightened. One could then conclude that the availability of resources for students with visual "disabilities" assists them in their learning while simultaneously reducing the workload from lecturers in trying to explain more for the student to understand.

In Sam's view teaching students with visual "disabilities" without assistive resources is a huge challenge as it makes teaching and learning difficult. Sam further raised a concern about the practice of this college to accept students whilst it is not fully furnished with resources to assist the students academically. It, therefore, suggests that resources should first be available prior to the enrolment and acceptance of the students in the institution.

Frank revealed that due to a lack of resources supplied by the college, to students they are obliged to provide their own resources to assist them in their learning. Frank assumes that if a resource such as a computer with audiobooks could be made available to students it would provide them with some independence because students would be able to read for themselves rather than rely on someone else to read for them. Frank also viewed unavailability of resources as depriving students with visual "disabilities" the opportunity to be on par with their classmates in terms of content. Therefore, in view of Frank's claim unavailability of resources to students with visual "disabilities" have very the negative consequence on them such as lagging behind and dependency on others.

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4.4. THEME 2: Lecturers' reflections of teaching students with visual "disabilities"

This section captures the reflections of lecturers about the experiences acquired from teaching students with visual "disabilities". Reflection in this case means an act of looking back into the experience and indicating what one has learnt from that experience. The lecturers stated their views on what they had learnt from teaching students with visual "disabilities". They reflected on their actual teaching practice of students with visual "disabilities", the teaching strategies employed in teaching these students, the experiences they have acquired from teaching students with visual "disabilities" and reflections about students with visual "disabilities" themselves.

4.4.1 Lecturers' reflections about teaching students with visual "disabilities"

The lecturers reflected on their experience of teaching students with visual "disabilities" when they started and after some time teaching these students. The first encounter of teaching students with visual "disabilities", the lecturers discovered that teaching was difficult and draining.

Teaching students with a disability you just can't lie, I just can't say it something that is easy to do, no it's not easy, because it energy-draining, it is a challenge on its own. (Sam)

It was so difficult, I was so frustrated (Linda)

I must really say it's difficult. I must say it is a challenge. (Frank)

The lecturers' reflection about teaching students with visual "disabilities" being challenging was understood to emanate from several factors such as not being trained, not supported, lack of resources and more.

Nevertheless, the lecturers' later reflection of teaching students with visual "disabilities" revealed a completely different outcome from their first encounter of teaching students with visual disabilities.

It was difficult, but then as time went on I got used to it. I now enjoy it. It is nice to work with them. [Students with visual "disabilities"] (Linda)

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Currently, I'm okay, I'm so used to it. In fact, I just love doing it. I won't lie I'm so grateful that I'm bringing a positive change in our society. I won't lie, for me, they are my everything, if I can say that. I just love doing it. And, I'm so passionate about it. (Sam)

Once you have started and you realise that this student understands my subject and is passing it then you start to enjoy it. I'm enjoying it and really going into the future I really have no problem dealing with the blind students. (Frank)

The three lecturers with the exception of Steven revealed that with time they became comfortable to teach the students with visual “disabilities” and they enjoyed teaching them. The enjoyment in teaching students with visual “disabilities” stemmed from different factors. In Sam’s case, it comes from assuming that he was making a positive contribution to the lives of these students and the society at large. In Frank’s case, it arose from the student’s good performance in his subject. Therefore, it could be learnt from the lecturers’ experience that during the first teaching encounter with students with visual “disabilities”, lecturers may experience teaching them as challenging and difficult especially when they are not trained on teaching students with such a condition. However, with time they develop coping mechanisms which result in them enjoying teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

4.4.2 Reflections about teaching strategies for students with visual “disabilities”

The lecturers also reflected on the teaching strategies they employed in teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

So in terms of strategy and accommodation of the student. It is difficult from that point of view. We have never been trained or assisted in any manner. But, since this student was not born blind [the National Certificate Vocational student]. In a way that helps because he is in transport now [a National Certificate Vocational course], so obviously you would expect him to know what a truck is, how a warehouse looks like. So some of the things you explain along the lines of him having been sighted before and use examples that are closer to that so that he understands. But I must say it is a challenge, a big challenge because sometimes you draw a diagram on the board and really it's a challenge. That is one of the things I'm really struggling with, how do you explain a diagram? (Frank)

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That one [teaching strategy] is for me is a challenge, I won't lie, its challenging but obviously you get mechanisms and try. The teaching strategy when it comes to teaching them [students with visual "disabilities"] computer is so difficult, it makes things difficult for me. I just can't say that I have mastered this strategy I'm using whatever that comes my way. (Sam)

The area of explaining was a bit of a problem because there are other things which you cannot explain. Really, you fail! The issue of the tables, maps, the graphs. It is difficult but then you try and explain beyond explaining. There are things that you can't explain. It's very difficult. Very, very difficult. As you try to explain it, you not sure whether you saying it the correct way, the way they are supposed to hear it. (Linda)

The lecturers' reflections about the teaching strategies revealed that they experienced challenges and difficulties as they were not trained to teach students with visual "disabilities". In Frank's view, challenges related to teaching strategies would be eliminated if they were trained to teach students with visual "disabilities". Teaching strategies for Sam were a great challenge that he even declared he has not mastered any teaching strategy as he uses anything that comes his way. This suggested that Sam used trial and error to establish which teaching strategy could work at that time and employed it, failing which he changed the strategy. Sam explained that he experienced major difficulties in teaching computers to students with visual "disabilities". Perhaps he felt it, to be difficult because the student might be visually "disabled" and computer illiterate as well. Therefore, Sam had to first orientate the student on the computer before he could teach content of Computer Practice as a subject.

Linda and Frank on the other hand accord that an auditory teaching strategy was problematic especially with visual texts such as tables, maps, diagrams, etc. Linda's difficulty of explaining visual texts originated from her uncertainty of the picture the student will imagine by the manner she explained the text to the student. While Frank's difficulty emanated from a lack of knowledge on how to explain a visual text altogether. It could be inferred, therefore, that when lecturers are not trained or equipped with appropriate teaching strategies for students with visual "disabilities" they use their own discretions, which could leave them feeling uncertain.

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4.4.3 Lecturers' reflections of the experiences learnt from teaching students with visual "disabilities"

The lecturers also reflected on the experiences they acquired from teaching students with visual "disabilities". Through teaching students with visual "disabilities", lecturers learnt new skills and approaches to doing things.

Teaching him [a National Vocational Education and Training student] has taught me something. I learnt something for myself of late I do workings in my mind more than before. When I read for him, I read once then I repeat it without refereeing to it. Read it again for him so he can work it out in his mind. I'm also using my mind a lot now than before. Mathematical Literacy has a lot of scenarios; I can now create my own picture in my own mind now [Of the scenario being read] (Linda).

One main thing I've learnt from my teaching experience is that the biggest mistake that the teacher must not make is to go to class unprepared with a lack of information. That is what I've learnt that the students will always respect the teacher who is knowledgeable. You go to class not knowledgeable you will have a problem. You will have to dodge the class, not the class [students] dodging you. (Steven)

What I learnt from them is that they are not as hard as they seem. The only thing that I learnt from them was that you must not pity and try to sympathise with them. (Sam)

From the lecturers' responses, it became evident that teaching students with visual "disabilities" had an impact on their lives. In Linda's case she learnt to apply her mind more frequently in situations than she usually did. After observing the student with a visual "disability" applying her mind in the calculation of scenarios in Mathematical Literacy, she also learnt to apply hers. Steven, on the other hand, learnt that a lecturer's respect is gained through the demonstration of subject content knowledge delivery in class. Steven viewed lecturer's subject knowledge as a vital aspect in teaching because when a lecturer lacks subject knowledge, they experience problems, which might result in them absenting themselves from class. Therefore, according to Steven, it is vital for a lecturer to be prepared for class and bring recent information into the classroom in order to gain respect from the students. Sam's reflection was more of a social reflection as opposed to Linda and Steven who reflected on academic matters. Sam learnt that dealing with students with visual "disabilities" was easy and that they did not appreciate being pitied and sympathised with

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because of their “disability”. Therefore, from Sam’s case, it could be learnt that a lecturer teaching students with visual “disabilities” should not feel pity for the students because of their “disability” but rather treat them as they would treat any student.

4.4.4 Reflections on students with visual “disabilities” themselves

The lecturers further reflected on what they discovered about students with visual “disabilities”. Based on their teaching experience of students with visual “disabilities”, lecturers were able to make conclusions on what they saw students with visual “disabilities” to be.

They are just normal people [students with visual “disabilities”]. It just that when you are not closer to that situation you see it as a very difficult thing. But then when you get closer to the situation you get used to it and you understand them. They are human beings like us. They do not have to be treated in a different way as if there is something wrong with them. Actually, there is nothing wrong with them just that they cannot see as we do. They are very good at capturing information. You read once, you say things once, he captures that then he works it out in his mind. How to calculate it then will provide you with an answer. They rely on hearing, he should hear you well so you also should have provided him with the correct statements. His hands are in his mind he must write in his mind. His eyes, visual eyes are in his mind. (Linda)

I found out that they are normal people like everyone [students with visual “disabilities”]. I found them as lovely people. In my experience I found that they could cope, they are easy to listen, they can grab each word that you are saying in fact, I realised that their hearing senses are more active as they can never see. And, they have a memory I don’t know like what! [Steven could not compare the students’ memory to anything] such that when you teach them to be sure that you are prepared otherwise whatever you tell them [students with visual “disabilities”] if it is wrong they will go the wrong way because they will grab each information that you are giving to them. (Steven)

These people [students with visual “disabilities”] are sensitive, so you never know when and how to approach them. They are so sensitive in such a way that it takes time for them to get used to normal students [abled bodies]. As a result, even if a normal student is trying to help, they will feel like they are sympathising with them. But with that, we still need

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disability awareness, training, etc. That is why I said we strongly need government intervention. (Sam)

Linda and Steven's reflection about students with visual "disabilities" revealed that they had three similar discoveries about them. Firstly, they (Linda and Steven) discovered that students with visual "disabilities" were normal people. By 'normal people' Steven and Linda perhaps implied that they could not identify anything that was abnormal when they were teaching students with visual "disabilities" apart from being blind. Secondly, Linda and Steven discovered that though students were visually "disabled" and could not take notes they were able to grasp information as is and reproduce it when required. Lastly, they (Linda and Steven) discovered that students with visual "disabilities" relied on their sense of hearing and that they were good listeners. Apart from shared discoveries, Linda further pointed to another discovery, a student with visual "disability" processing a Mathematical sum, did a calculation in his mind and provided a correct answer. Linda then concluded that *'his hands are in his mind he must write in his mind. His eyes, visual eyes are in his mind'* (Linda). Linda's expression about this student, having eyes and hands in his mind suggested that she was amazed that a student without vision would without working out by writing down could do the workings with his mind to produce required responses. Linda's comment suggested that getting close to the situation to understand better suggested that when she had to teach these students, she had a different perspective about them but what she discovered about them was completely different. Therefore, it is clear from Linda's perspective that when a lecturer is to teach students which he/she is not trained to teach he/she perceives it as something as difficult, and he/she may experience the opposite.

Sam on the other hand discovered that students with visual "disabilities" were sensitive people, who should be treated with care, as one may not know when he or she has offended them. Sam believed that an intervention by the government in terms of providing "disability" awareness and necessary training could be a solution in understanding both abled and "disabled" bodies how to treat one another. It could be learnt from the participants' response that when lecturers teach

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students, they discover new knowledge and reflect on it which, assists them in their teaching practice because of the learnt experience.

4.5 THEME 3: Lecturers' thinking about teaching students with visual "disabilities"

This section outlines various aspects lecturers conceptualised as could be contributing positively to the way in which they taught students with visual "disabilities."

4.5.1 Thinking about necessities required to teach students with visual "disabilities"

The lecturers through their teaching experiences of students with visual "disabilities" indicated what they perceived as necessities required in teaching students with visual "disabilities".

If they [the college management] can at least provide us with resources, if they can at least train us. You know empower us so that we know what to do. That can help us a lot. If we can also be trained on Braille as well, how to use it. At least things that we are failing to explain to them it might be easy to explain using that kind of a resource. Only if the management can do something, come to our rescue. If they can at least provide us with resources. Visual impaired people need their own resources where they can learn easily. (Linda)

It would be appreciated if management could support us in terms of training then we can teach even much better. (Frank)

I am expecting this institution, which I'm working at to do more trainings for the staff. When we started, there was no training. I envisage that this college would try to have more trainings. (Steven)

I strongly believe that we as lecturers or teachers who are dealing with students with disability we still need like some kind of psychologist. I would love that one day lecturers teaching students with disabilities get some kind of therapy or psychologist because trust me we do experience like various challenges. (Sam)

The lecturers' responses revealed that there are four necessities, they perceived as crucial in teaching students with visual "disabilities". The lecturers outlined training opportunities, teaching resources, support from management, and psychological support as necessities. Nevertheless, training opportunities superseded all because three of the four lecturers indicated it moreover; they

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even provided how training will assist them. Linda stated that it would empower them with knowledge of *'what to do'* whilst Frank affirmed that it will assist them to *'teach even much better.'* Therefore, it could be concluded from the participants' experience that lecturers think of training as the major necessity in teaching students with visual "disabilities". Linda, Frank, and Steven singled out college management as the one to provide all necessities to teach students with visual "disabilities". Linda even pleaded that the management *'come to rescue'* them, because she is of the view that it is only the management that can assist them. Linda further viewed resources as crucial because where they fail to explain they can use resources to explain those aspects, which could make learning easy for students. Sam proclaimed that psychological support is also important because as lecturers accumulate stress from teaching students with visual "disabilities", there should be psychological therapy to assist them to manage all that stress.

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4.5.2 Thinking about Technical and Vocation Education and Training college curriculum and the inclusive education policy

When the lecturers were asked about what the TVET curriculum stated about inclusive education and how they implement inclusive education policy in teaching students with visual "disabilities", their responses were:

TVET curriculum says nothing. There is nothing in place. (Linda)

To be honest the college curriculum, says nothing it goes back to what I said earlier that there is still more that needs to be done. But I think our curriculum should accommodate every candidate. Regardless of whether you are able or disabled. (Sam)

No according to the college I cannot say I know anything, but what I know is that according to DHET the curriculum should be the same. There is not yet anything in the TVET curriculum that address inclusive education. (Steven)

Actually nothing. In our programme when this student was introduced it was this was a trial we will see if it works. So the curriculum says nothing about inclusive learning. (Frank)

It became apparent that lecturers are not aware of what the TVET curriculum states about inclusive education and how it ought to be implemented in TVET colleges. Therefore, if lecturers are not aware of what the curriculum states then they are bound to make mistakes, as they do not have a

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reference policy that guides them on how they need to implement the curriculum. In Sam's view since the TVET, the curriculum is not addressing inclusivity it means it has a gap, thus he proposed that something should be done to address this issue. In Frank's case, the student with a visual "disability" was admitted purposefully not to practice inclusive education but as trial and error, which will determine the continuation or discontinuation of admission of students with visual "disabilities" in future. Though lecturers indicated that the TVET curriculum is silent about inclusive education, they anticipated how the policy would assist them if it was in place.

Inclusive education policy for TVET colleges can help us [lecturers] a lot. Because at least everything that concerns these people will be catered for. That can help all of us you talk about the resources, you talk of the training, you talk of everything that concerns them. That can help us if the policy is there. The management will be forced by the policy to provide all the help that we need. (Linda)

It will have a huge impact on the day that it is introduced, that will be the day that all these challenges that I have referred to earlier will be solved. Because the policy will be clear because that will be a formal document. The policy will say this is how it is going to happen what sort of resources are needed, what sort of training is needed and I am sure that from that day proper and formal training will be provided to whoever will be involved in teaching these students in question here. Definitely, a policy that is the answer. I think that is the answer. (Frank)

Inclusive education will assist the students to close the gap, the skills gap which leads to poverty, poverty which leads to crime. It will just close the skills gap, because research says that disabled people were not given enough chance to go for education. It will also loosen the burden from the government when they now can sustain and stand on their own. (Steven)

We do have a policy a White paper 6 which specifies more on inclusive education. It so unfortunately that the white paper 6 is good on paper but when it comes to actual implementation, it's not practical. So that is why I'm saying even also the white paper 6 it still needs to be revised. I strongly believe that if ever they are revising the white paper 6 they will have to go back to the grass root or to the communities to ask the students or

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people who are living with a disability what are their concerns. I'm not saying they did not do that before they formulated that policy. (Sam)

Linda and Frank viewed the presence of a TVET curriculum as that which might be beneficial to them as it will stipulate the kind of resources and training, they should receive to teach students with visual “disabilities”. Linda even added that it will enforce the management to provide necessities (training and resources) for them to be able to teach students with visual “disabilities” successfully. Steven, on the other hand, though having a TVET curriculum which addresses inclusive education would be beneficial to the students because it will alleviate poverty by providing equal education opportunities to students with visual “disabilities”, who were previously disadvantaged. Steven believed that once students with visual “disabilities” are educated, they become employees as opposed to being government grant beneficiaries which awards them financial independence. Sam, unlike the other three participants, declared greater understanding of the inclusive education policy because he indicated that there is a White paper 6 which deliberates more on inclusion of students with visual “disabilities”. Though Sam was knowledgeable about White Paper 6, he suggested that it needs to be revised and to be practiced rather than being theorised on. Sam further advised that when policies are formulated it is crucial for policy developers to consult with people who will be affected by it, in this case, people with “disabilities”. It became evident from the participants’ responses that there is a great need for a TVET curriculum which addresses the inclusion and diversity of all students in terms of race, gender and “disability.” Furthermore, if that curriculum could be in place it would address and strive to eliminate most of the challenges lecturers are currently experiencing.

4.5.3 Thinking about fruitful outcomes that inclusion of abled and “disabled” students would achieve

The lecturers further indicated positive results that could be achieved if abled students and “disabled” students studied together.

It would be a good idea for students to study together [abled and disabled students]. To the point that they need to socialise with other people. They need to know how to work and stay with other people because we are preparing them for the workplace. So there is no

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company that will say this company is for disabled people only. So they need to come closer to these people make friendship live life like other people live. (Steven)

The presence of this blind student alone motivates these students [abled students]. How does it do that if like this particular student performs so well, as I have explained that he is my best student to other it's like if a blind student can do it why can't I? In the sense that they [abled and "disabled" students] are in the learning institution now, but they will go out and work. I think this is preparing them [abled and "disabled" students] for the workplace because should they get to the workplace and find fellow employees who are blind they've been there they know it. If one day there should be promoted it's not the first thing. They know how to deal with them. I think that is helping a lot. It sorts of instils some soft skills in them [abled students]. (Frank)

When they [students] go to workplaces (kungabi ukuthi bazofica abantu) [meaning to only find people] that are abled only. They ["disabled" students] will be working with the normal people. As the result this should start from here especially to interact with other abled students so that they ["disabled" students] would get to know them better. (Sam)

The three participants (Frank, Sam and Steven) were in support of the notion of abled and "disabled" students studying together. They assumed that if abled and "disabled" students studied together in one classroom, they would learn to live together, build friendships with one another, understand "disability" better and become prepared for the workplace. They viewed a classroom as a platform that assists students to be prepared to work together and to know how to deal with one another. This suggests that through inclusive education a social gap between abled and "disabled" bodies will be narrowed. Aabled students will learn more about "disability" and begin to treat it as part of diversity. Therefore, it could be concluded that when abled and "disabled" students learn together, they learn from one another which equips them for the future.

4.6 THEME 4: Lecturers' actual preparation and teaching practices of students with visual "disabilities"

This section discusses the lecturers' teaching of students with visual "disabilities". Actual teaching covered lesson planning, teaching strategies as well as an assessment of students with visual "disabilities". While elaborating on teaching experience, the lecturers also outlined challenges which originated from not being trained or supported by college management.

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4.6.1 Lesson planning

A lesson plan for lecturers is a vital tool, which provides detailed descriptions of the content to be taught in class. Lecturers daily develop lesson plans as a guide of what they will teach in class. All four lecturers described how they planned their lesson to teach students with visual “disabilities”.

I plan my lesson like any other normal lecturer whereby I have to prepare prior, when I’m home. In planning my lesson sometimes, I record whatever that I’m going to teach that day or the following day at home, so that I just give them the recordings. Sometimes, I quickly go through the textbook and make my own notes to make things easier for them. (Sam)

The lesson plan is the same you do not have to change anything. I just refer and remind myself of what I will teach the following day and prepare activities. The only thing that you need to look at is to make sure that the lesson plan will enable everyone including the visually impaired one to understand the lesson. (Linda)

Well, a lesson plan is a lesson plan because that is what you are going to teach that cannot change but what can change is your approach in terms how you are going to deliver it. You try to accommodate this student in terms of the pace. Because your pace of lecturing is not the same because you got somebody who is different. If I am not sure about something, I always go to my colleague, who has been teaching the subject to ask how to teach that topic. (Frank)

So, the first thing I would do was to do a lot of research because I learnt that they were also doing their own research in their own way. So the main strategy was to go through all documents, know my story outside even the book [the prescribed textbook] (Steven).

Three out of four participants (Linda, Frank, and Sam) understood and defined what a lesson plan is. It was established from participants’ responses that lesson planning is an activity they had to perform before the actual teaching took place in class. Such a conclusion was derived from the phrases they utilised: ‘*prepare prior, when I’m home* (Sam), *what I will teach the following day*, (Linda) *what you are going to teach*, (Frank) *go through all documents*’ (Steven). Three out of four participants (Linda, Frank, and Sam) with the exception of Steven, compared their lesson

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planning prior to teaching students with visual “disabilities” and after they had these students and they could not identify any discrepancy in terms of the way they prepared their lessons. They continued to plan their lessons as they always did. Based on the participants’ experiences, teaching students with visual “disabilities” or visually sighted made no difference to the planning of lessons. In Sam’s case, planning a lesson was in two forms, taking of recordings and development of notes. Sam prepared his lessons whilst he was still at home which suggested that he would consume his family time preparing for what he would teach the following day. Sam used recordings as handout notes for students with visual “disabilities” because he would simply hand them out to students because written notes are not suitable for these students. Apart from recordings, Sam would also develop his own notes, which he claims assisted the students to grasp the content easily.

In Linda’s case, a textbook was used as a reference to remind herself of the content she already knows. In Linda’s view, a lesson plan that is well structured should cater to the needs of all students including, the students with visual “disabilities” to equally benefit from the lesson as their peers. Therefore, from her perspective, when a lecturer plans a lesson to teach in an inclusive class the lesson must accommodate all students with their diverse needs.

Frank on the same notion of lesson plans being structured to accommodate all students advocates for the accommodation of students with visual “disabilities” in terms of teaching pace. Furthermore, Frank presented himself as a humble individual, who acknowledges veterans before him in the subject; consults them for accuracy of content to be delivered so that he is confident while delivering that content to students.

In Steven’s case, planning a lesson meant searching for further information beyond that which is contained in the prescribed textbook. Steven’s motivation to do such stemmed from the observation that the students were also searching for information on their own. Thus, Steven had to ensure that his content knowledge expands beyond the prescribed textbook.

4.6.1.1 Challenges of planning lesson

When lecturers were asked about the challenges, they encountered in preparing lessons to teach students with visual “disabilities”. They explained:

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I don't have any challenge. As for the lesson plan, it's just a paperwork. The lesson is normal the difference is when you are teaching that is where you must accommodate him. He must also feel accommodated when you are teaching. (Linda)

When the project started, we [the college] had no resources so for me [as a lecturer], that was a huge challenge. Gradually come. So now there are no challenges. (Sam)

There are no challenges. The main thing is that you [as a lecturer] must be knowledgeable when you go to the classroom because you will be teaching one and the same thing (Steven)

There are no challenges. When I am executing my plan I must know that there is this particular student. In that execution, delivering in class. I must accommodate him. (Frank)

All participants unanimously expressed that with regard to planning the lessons they experienced no challenges. However, they pointed to other contributing factors as having an impact on delivering the planned lessons. With Linda and Frank, the only challenge was with the accommodation of the student in class during the presentation of the lesson. They experienced this challenge because they had only one student with a visual “disability” in their class. In Sam’s case the challenge was at the commencement of the project for students with visual “disabilities” caused by unavailability of resources. Steven pointed to limited subject content knowledge as being challenging, because if the lecturer is not fully knowledgeable about the subject, he/she might not have different strategies of delivering the same content in different approaches.

4.6.2 Teaching strategies and evidence for claiming its effectiveness

The lecturers elaborated on the teaching strategies they employed in teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

Sam elaborated on the teaching strategy he employed for a practical subject (Computer) and a theory subject (e.g. Public Administration)

Sam’s teaching strategy in Computer Practice as a subject:

While I am teaching a visually impaired student to master the keyboard for me it takes about an hour. I have about twenty students, so I must go to each one of these twenty. It is time-consuming but I have no other way around, so I have to go through that because at the end of the day, they must pass. (Sam)

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Sam in teaching computer used an individualistic approach as his teaching strategy because he provided individual attention to each of the twenty students for them to master a keyboard. Teaching a keyboard to a student without vision could mean holding their hands to make them feel the keys of the keyboard for them to master where a specific key is. For that reason, Sam also used a sensory approach where he held the students' hands to make them feel the keyboard. A sensory approach is an approach that advocates for meaning which is communicated through a sense of touch, feeling, or body movement. That is why, Sam used an hour to teach one student to master a keyboard because he must make each student touch and feel the keyboard. Furthermore, since he taught Computer Practice, which is a semester module if twenty hours are solely spent on teaching a keyboard then there will be very little time left for teaching the content of the subject, which might result in the syllabus not being covered timeously. Despite Sam's comment of an individualistic strategy being time consuming he felt obliged to give individual attention in order to ensure that the students passed. Sam's teaching strategy of providing individual attention revealed him to be a dedicated lecturer who would do whatever it takes to assist his students to pass.

For theory subjects where Sam had to teach difficult concepts.

You have to spell for them, for example like those concepts because we know khona amanye amagama asengathi anzinyanyana [meaning there are other words which are a bit difficult.] If ever I see that this concept is tricky, it's a Greek or it's a French concept I will have to spell it out for them. So that they know it. I try to make as many examples as possible so that they can get the picture of the content of that particular module I will be teaching on that current day. (Sam)

For theory subjects Sam used an auditory teaching strategy where he spelt out the words and explained to students in a manner that created a picture in their minds. An auditory teaching strategy is one that advocates the use of words in order to create an image in a person's mind. Sam also recognised providing more examples as assisting the students to create more vivid pictures of what is being discussed. Therefore, it could be assumed that the more examples and descriptive explanations are provided to students with visual "disabilities", the better chances there are for them to comprehend what is being discussed.

Sam is confident that his teaching strategies are effective:

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They are so fruitful like in reference I just told you some of them have graduated and they are working. For me that is one of the signs that it is working. (Sam)

Sam's comment suggested that he has pride in the effectiveness of his teaching strategies being effective because they have produced graduates of students he has taught employing auditory and sensory teaching strategies.

Steven elaborating on his teaching strategy:

Mainly it was a lecturing system. Where I would come and stand in front of the class and talk to them. They [students with visual "disabilities"] will listen to me and then they will give back the information to me. They would record [using tape recorders] whatever work we were doing. (Steven)

In Steven's case, a lecturing teaching strategy was used which is a normal strategy for most lecturers. With this teaching strategy, students with visual "disabilities" were compelled to provide their undivided attention during the lectures, because they had no means of taking down notes other than making a recording of the lecture to act as their notes. This suggests that for student with visual "disabilities" making recordings are their means of taking notes.

Nevertheless, Steven believed that using a lecturing teaching strategy was suitable for students with visual "disabilities" because he explained:

The talking and responding strategy was the successful strategy for me, still today it is. Talking to them was working for me because what I found about them [students with visual "disabilities"] is that really they are good listeners. They grab the information as it is. (Steven)

Steven's discovery of the lecturing teaching strategy was that though students were not taking down notes they could listen well and regurgitate information when needed. Hence, he concluded that a lecturing strategy was successful. It could be concluded therefore, from Steven's experience that students with visual "disabilities" are good at listening and they can grasp information and reproduce it when needed.

Frank's teaching strategy:

When I explain a concept, I try to be as broad and as wide as possible. I try and repeat where it is necessary or I see it fit to repeat. I try to assist him to picturise this thing [content being discussed], theoretically because he cannot see the picture and create his own

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picture. You make a picture so that he has a picture of this thing [content being discussed] in his own mind he turns it into to his own description that he understands it better. (Frank)

Frank's constant utterance of the word 'try' suggested that he was not sure if the strategy he employed would work. His doubts were understood as he was never trained to teach such a group of students. Frank mainly used an auditory teaching strategy, though it was indifferent approaches. This was evident because he would explain the concept broadly to students, repeat the content and explain to create a picture in a student's mind. In all these instances Frank was using words in order to assist the student to create his own image from which he would understand. From Frank's teaching strategy, it was learnt that lecturers of students with visual "disabilities" could use words to describe content being discussed and to assist students to create their own image of the content being discussed.

Despite, Frank's doubt of his teaching strategy, he still provided concrete evidence of his teaching strategy yielding required results.

I'm saying it is working, because if I ask a question I get the correct answer. So that is evidence that it was understood. He is one of my best students. (Frank)

In Frank's view, his teaching strategies are effective because the student can respond appropriately and the student's performance attests to it hence, he was proud to say the student is one of his best.

Linda's teaching strategy:

When I teach I teach like normal, because I don't want him [the National Certificate Vocational student with visual "disability"] to feel his excluded, I want him to feel like he is accommodated. I come closer to him to explain some of the things especially because I teach Maths, there are drawings, chart, graphs things like that. That he has to see but then because he is unable to see I come closer to him to explain. At times, I even touch him. Use his hands so that he can make something visual in his mind. (Linda)

In Linda's case two teaching strategies were used interchangeably -an auditory approach and a sensory approach. A sensory approach was used when Linda physically touched the student and assisted the student to draw perhaps a graph or a chart for Mathematics. This suggested that Linda identified that using only words to explain a visual text did not have an impact on the student hence she had to physically touch the student to assist the student to draw a visual text using her hands yet creating it in his mind. Linda also used an auditory approach where she came close to the

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student to explain content, which meant she used words in explaining. From Linda's experience, it could be learnt that lecturers teaching students with visual "disabilities" should strike a balance between an explanatory approach and a sensory approach where necessary especially for visual texts, which requires students to visualise the text in their own minds.

Linda affirmed that using both these teaching strategies was effective:

The strategy of touching him is the best for me because he is my best student. He is able to say the correct answers. He is one of my best students. So it is working for me. Also explaining in the manner that draws a picture in his mind. This is my best strategy because at least for him he was visual before. So when I try to explain and give him some pictures does come back. [content being discussed in class.] (Linda)

In Linda's view, no teaching strategy supersedes the other between the explanatory and the sensory approach, because both these strategies are able to produce a student Linda claims as her best. Nevertheless, if the student perhaps was born blind maybe it would be a different case because Linda is capitalising on the student's previous experience of being sighted hence, she says the student is able to relate. It should be noted that the student, who is claimed to be the best by Linda and Frank is the same student. Which suggests that when relevant and appropriate teaching strategies are employed in teaching students with visual "disabilities" they outshine academically. It could be inferred from the lecturers' teaching strategies that two teaching strategies are effective in teaching students with visual "disabilities". An auditory approach where they had to use words in order to create a picture in the student's mind and a sensory approach where they had to physically touch the students in order to make them touch and feel the object being discussed.

4.6.3 Teaching strategies not suitable for students with visual "disability"

Apart from teaching strategies outlined as being effective, lecturers also indicated that there were some teaching strategies which were not suitable for teaching students with visual "disabilities".

You [as a lecturer] write on the board. This person [a student with a visual "disability"] cannot see that you are writing and suddenly you ask the students okay! Does everybody see what I have written, can you read? He has not seen that I have written something on the board. The moment you put something that is visual that everybody must look at and express their own opinion and interpretation it becomes really difficult. (Frank)

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When you [as a lecturer] writing something on the board, mind you he [a student with a visual “disability”] does not see right! So! you have to read everything the way you have written on the board. You have to read so that he knows what you have written. So, that he knows what you are talking about. (Linda)

Mainly the strategy that was not working for me was mainly note taking. Because they-can't take notes so you rather record for them. Note taking wasn't working for them. You [as a lecturer] could read but know that nobody will be writing in the class. (Steven)

Frank and Linda agreed that the use of the chalkboard for students with a visual “disability” is not suitable because the student is not able to see or read what is written. Frank outlined that visual text which demands students' interpretation are excluded for students with visual “disabilities” who cannot see the text. Linda on the same notion of exclusion of students with visual text advised that the lecturer should read the text as is for the student to visualise the text. Steven on a different note pointed to note taking as the teaching strategy that is not suitable for students with visual “disabilities”. He advised that the lecturer should rather make a recording than expect the students to take notes. It should be declared therefore that any written texts be they on the board, textbook or anywhere else and taking of notes are not suitable teaching strategies for students with visual “disabilities.”

4.6.4 Assessment approach for students with visual “disabilities”

The lecturers after teaching the students had to assess them to ascertain whether content taught has been grasped. Lecturers elaborated on the assessment approaches they used in assessing students with visual “disabilities”.

When they write their tests we use scribes. Scribes are people who write for them. So the scribe will read the question and the learner will give the answer. You read for them the instruction they grab it. You read the question they grab it. Then they give back the answer. There will be those tests during the class. The main thing is the exam at the end. With their tests, we use the scribes. We do the same with exam. The scribe will read for them and then write for them. (Steven).

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Like all other students, they are also assessed. The only difference is that they cannot read they cannot see anything. You have to find a scribe to assist you [the lecturer]. The scribe will read the question to him and he responds to the question. (Linda)

When I set the assessment, it will be one assessment for everybody. At the end of the day, I teach one syllabus, its one subject. So it will be exactly the same questions that I have set, the only difference is that we will need to arrange that there is somebody who is a scribe who would assists him in writing a test. When we write a test, I must prepare for him [the student with a visual “disability”]. I must get someone who will be a scribe now to do all the reading and write for him. You have to find a different venue because he must be at a different venue whether it’s a test or it’s an exam (Frank).

We have three assessments but in assessing them. I will have to get the scribes to scribe or who would read the question for them and then the candidate who is visually impaired will give the answer to the scribe. That is the method that I am using for assessment. I sometimes have to enlarge the font for them [student who are partially sighted] when it comes to the assessments. So that they will be able to go through the assessment accordingly. (Sam)

All four participants unanimously advocated the scribe as the assessment approach used to assess students with visual “disabilities”. All the participants demonstrated that they understood the roles and responsibilities of a scribe. Frank and Steven seemed to be aware that students are assessed mainly in two forms of assessment strategies, namely summative and formative assessment. Their responses indicated tests which are conducted during the class (formative assessment) and the examination at the end (summative assessment). With Sam, the focus was on formative assessment only whilst Linda did not mention it at all. Having knowledge about these forms of assessments assists the lecturers to plan for assessment on time especially for students with visual “disabilities” because the scribe must be arranged timeously. In Frank’s view, it is not only scribes who must be arranged but also a separate room where the student will write the assessment. This suggests that in order for the student with a visual “disability” to write an assessment additional factors other than question paper and answer sheet are required which are the scribes and the venue.

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Despite all of them using the scribes, Sam also used large print font for partially sighted students. The use of large print font assessment approach for partially sighted students provides them independency because they write for themselves, which simultaneously saves the lecturer from looking for a scribe and a separate venue. Therefore, it could be inferred that to cater for partially sighted students in an assessment, a large print font of the question paper is required.

It became explicit from the participants that from the five assessment approaches recommended for students with visual “disabilities” as discussed in chapter two, only two assessment approaches were used by the lecturers (human reader and large print font). The human reader was solely used for summative and formative assessments of students with total blindness whilst large font print was used for partially sighted students only.

4.6.4.1 Challenges encountered by lecturers from using human readers (scribes)

The lecturers expressed that although the scribe assisted them, they were some challenges they encountered with using them.

Sometimes the scribes, while they are scribing they were whatsapping on their phones. So students would get intimidated. Students were complaining that the scribes do not give them proper chance to express themselves when it comes to answering to questions. So communication or communication barrier between the scribe and the students would exist. (Sam)

When you have to ask somebody who doesn't understand the subject. He [the scribe] would read the question and give him a wrong picture of a question. Then as he [the student with a visual “disability”] responds he doesn't respond correctly because he did not understand the question. (Linda)

Others [scribes] can't read proper. One day we had a scribe who was reading wrongly to the learner. When the scribe was to write, the scribe was writing wrongly. Whatever the scribe wanted to write was just writing it. Spellings were wrong, other scribes come drunk during the examination. Sometime they write what they want and not what they are told to write. They [the scribes] just assume that that the learner, should have written like this yet they are giving the wrong information. When the learner has the correct information.

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Others were so impatient with the learners. If the learner says read this [the student with a visual “disability”] read again and then they [the scribes] wouldn’t repeat. (Steven)

From the participants’ responses three challenges were identified namely behavioural challenge of scribes, language semantic challenge, and technical subject challenge. The behavioural issue challenge of scribes took place where scribes conducted themselves in an unprofessional and improper manner like coming drunk to work and WhatsApping while on duty. There was a language semantic challenge where the scribes could not read correctly, spelt words incorrectly or wrote incorrect information other than that provided by the students. Lastly, technical subject related challenge where a scribe lacked subject knowledge and misled the student to create a wrong image of what the question requires. All these challenges if not given urgent attention could have a negative impact on the students’ performance.

4.6.4.2 Overcoming challenges of the scribes

The lecturers specified how they overcome the challenges they experienced with using the scribes.

It led us to train the scribes before the write assessments for students. (Sam)

It’s easier for somebody who knows the subject so that he can read correctly as Maths Literacy is full of scenarios. So that he gets the proper picture so that he is able to respond correctly. He only relies on the picture in his mind. (Linda)

I said to him I don’t want you to get an assistance like an advantage by someone who knows the subject than that person is helping you, you say this and the person write their own correct answer maybe you have given the wrong answer. I have said to him listen when you get someone to write. When I get someone to assist you, I will make sure that it must be somebody, anybody who has never done your subjects so that person writes what you have said not what he or she think you have said. (Frank)

In Sam’s case, training of scribes is the solution to all the problems they experience by using them. Linda on the other hand suggested utilisation of scribes who know the subject. While, Frank felt that knowledge of subject is not important, the scribe must be a good listener and write what is given.

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4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data that has emerged from the semi-structured interviews of four lecturers teaching students with visual “disabilities.” The lecturers’ experiences were analysed influenced by Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory. The lecturer elaborated their feelings, reflections, thinking and actual teaching of students with visual “disabilities”. The next chapter will present the findings of the experiences of Technical and Vocation Education and Training college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability” provide recommendations for future studies and a conclusion to the study.

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CHAPTER 5

Findings, recommendations, and conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented an analysis of data gathered from semi-structured interviews with four participants (Linda, Sam, Frank and Steven). This chapter will provide findings of this study, the insight of the study and make recommendations for future studies. This study was aimed at exploring the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability.”

5.2. Findings of the study

The findings of this study are presented under themes aligned to Kolb’s four stages of the experiential learning cycle, tweaked to accommodate the contextual realities of the research site. The findings were organised thematically to demonstrate how the TVET College lecturers (Linda, Frank, Sam and Steven) experienced the learning process, which transformed and acquainted them with new skills and knowledge, influenced by Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Lecturers’ experiences of teaching students with visual “disabilities”

An experience as explained by Dewey (1925) is an acquisition of new knowledge through empirical or experimental attitude of the mind. It requires an individual to be involved in learning and that a person’s background influences how one interprets the current situation based on the previous experiences. An individual makes sense of the knowledge gained over time. Similarly, the lecturers acquired new knowledge and skills through actual involvement in teaching students with visual “disabilities” which then changed their attitude about students with “disabilities”. Each lecturer’s experiential learning journey took place upon the personal encounter with the students with visual “disabilities” that occurred at different intervals. Then it was understood from that perspective that experiential learning is a construction of new knowledge and experience through perceptions of personal encounters and interpretation of the current situation (Yardley, Teunissen,

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& Dornan, 2012). Similarly, all four lecturers in the study had different encounters, perceptions and interpretations about what it meant to teach students with visual “disabilities” based on their personal encounter with these students. For example, in Frank’s case, because he had met the student before, at registration he had feelings that the student admired him. His encounter and interpretation of students with visual “disabilities” was different from the other three lecturers (Sam, Linda and Steven) who met the students in the classroom. Thus, Yardley et al. (2012) claim about perceptions being based on personal encounters and interpretations become evident here. Furthermore, each lecturer made sense of the experience from their encounter of the number of years teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Concrete experience: teaching students with visual “disability” is emotional work

The four lecturers (Frank, Sam, Linda and Steven) aligned with Dewey’s definition of experience, became involved in the learning process where they took the challenge of teaching students with visual “disabilities” despite “*never been trained*” (Frank) to do so. But their willingness to accommodate these students allowed them to explore new learning. Although in the beginning, they were surprised, shocked, and anxious and had other negative feelings, it was part of their first stage of the learning process, which Kolb referred to as concrete experience. Their fear came with actual interaction with the students where they had to relearn how to speak, how to avoid using language which referred to being able to see because they had to constantly accommodate none seeing students in the classroom. They found that this impacted on their planning and teaching because they had to relearn new teaching strategies that were more accommodating to students with visual “disabilities”. Nevertheless, their personal background of being qualified professionals in their fields of study because not all of them were qualified teachers, assisted them to interpret their new experience of teaching students with visual “disabilities” as a challenge they could overcome. These lecturers drew on their concrete pedagogical experience of teaching visual students to be their foundation for teaching non-visual students. They already possessed classroom management skills within a context of visual students, which they had to apply in relearning to accommodate and teach students with visual “disabilities”.

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5.2.3 Theme 3: Reflective observation: learning from teaching students with visual “disabilities”

Teaching students with visual “disabilities” allowed the four lecturers (Sam, Steven, Frank and Linda) to make meaning of the experiences they acquired and negative feelings they felt from teaching students with visual “disabilities”. Just as Dewey explained, experience allows an individual makes sense of the knowledge gained. Making reflections about their experiences and feelings of teaching these students was their second stage of learning which Kolb explained as reflective observation. Their reflection of teaching students with visual “disabilities” revealed that in the beginning they perceived teaching these students as something that was “...*difficult...and a challenge*” (Frank). Feeling this way was to be expected, as they were not trained to teach these students. Despite all the challenges and negative feelings experienced, the lecturers allowed themselves to learn new approaches that could assist the students; they began to be reflective after they learnt that students with visual “disabilities” were informed about most things, which encouraged them to research and prepare well for their classes. Thus, Steven stated that, “*the biggest mistake that the teacher must not make is go to class unprepared with lack of information*” (Steven). Such reflections were made after interactions with the students and observations of what it entails to teach students with visual “disabilities”.

Reflections, made months later, revealed that the four lecturers had developed positive feelings and admiration for these students thus they said: “*as the time went on I got used to it. I now enjoy it. It is nice to work with them.* (Linda). *I won’t lie, for me they are my everything. I just love doing it. I’m so passionate about it* (Sam). It was evident from the lecturers’ later reflections of teaching students with visual “disabilities” that experience as expressed by Dewey does develop over time because it took some months for these lecturers to actually understand how to deal with students with visual “disabilities.”

5.2.4 Theme 4: Abstract conceptualisation: conceptualising the teaching of students with visual “disabilities”

Based on their reflections of teaching these students, the lecturers (Linda, Sam, Frank and Steven) began to make their own conceptualisations of how they could restructure their teaching

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methodologies to accommodate students with visual “disabilities.” They redefined how teaching students with visual “disabilities” should be which gave birth to the third stage of their learning experience, which according to Kolb was abstract conceptualisation. They conceptualised on necessities, they thought would make a positive impact of how they taught students with visual “disabilities”. For example, Frank conceptualised that, *“if management could support us in terms of trainings then we can teach even much better”* (Frank). Being able to conceptualise suggested that these lecturers were actively and committedly involved in the learning process, which aligned with Dewey’s (1925) views of experience being acquired through experimental attitude of the mind and about being personally involved in learning. They conceptualised that the presence of necessities such as training, resources, support from management and a TVET College curriculum that is inclusive were missing and that its presence would assist in improving the way they taught these students. Their conceptualisation was in line with Frankel, Gold, and Ajodhia-Andrews (2010) who outlined that for teachers to implement inclusive education effectively they should have “adequate training, sufficient support, and resources” in the absence of all these, teachers struggle to implement inclusive education (p.4). From their list of necessities, support from management was prioritised as the most crucial aspect from which all challenges emanated. Because Frank explained, *“I will apportion the blame to the management for the lack of support because we’ve never been trained”* (Frank). Such comments were evidence that support from management was the core aspect because management is the one that should plan for staff development, procure resources and provide emotional support to lecturers. The view that support is the most important aspect aligned with Lomofsky and Lazarus’ (2001) discoveries, which support implementing an inclusive policy supersedes all other aspects and that it should be continuous.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Actual experimentation: teaching students with visual “disabilities” in a TVET college

From conceptualising about teaching these students, the lecturers then moved to the final stage of the learning process where they met the students and taught them in the classroom. The four TVET College lecturers (Frank, Sam, Linda and Steven) could have refused to teach students with visual “disabilities” because they were not trained to teach them. Instead, they took the challenge,

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overcome their fears and taught the students. They put into practice what Huxley (2008) explained an experience being not what happens to you but what you do with what happens to you. These lecturers took the students before them, included them and made the best of the situation. Through teaching these students, they developed new skills and knowledge such as new methods of planning lessons (*record whatever that I'm going to teach the following day*, Sam), new teaching approaches (auditory and sensory approaches) and assessment approaches (usage of human readers), which they never had prior to teaching these students. Therefore, in relation to the lecturers' experience, it could be learnt that experience is the only source of knowledge (Einstein, 2013). If these lecturers were never awarded an opportunity to teach students with visual "disabilities", they would not have gained all the knowledge that they did which came from teaching these students.

The four lecturers after having experienced all the different stages of learning new knowledge of teaching students with visual "disabilities" came out transformed and better individuals, with a completely diverse mentality about students with visual "disabilities". They had pride in the knowledge they acquired which boosted their confidence and brought them hope for the future, thus proclaiming, "*going into the future I really have no problem dealing with the blind students*" (Frank). From the lecturers' experiences above, it was evidence that experience is indeed a product of what one goes through (Dewey, 1925). The lecturers in the study went through different stages of learning which at the end accumulated an experience, which was the product of what they went through in teaching students with visual "disabilities".

5.3 Insight of the study

This study has revealed that learning is a process where each individual experiences transformative stages of unlearning, learning and relearning new knowledge and skills that abides with that person permanently (Yardley et al., 2012). The TVET College lecturers (Linda, Sam, Frank and Steven) had to experience the transformative stages of learning in how to teach students with visual "disabilities" as they were used to teaching visual students. They experienced all these stages of learning (concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation) on their own and through their own discoveries. It was discovered in the study

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that these lecturers were not trained or acquainted with knowledge and skills of dealing with these students. Yet, Joyce and Showers (2012) argued that providing teachers with training enables them to acquire new skills and knowledge that they could transfer into their practices. However, with these four lecturers, it was a different case because there was no training provided to them of how to deal with these students. As Frank confirmed whatever they *'know is through our own experiences, whatever, we do it comes from us!'*(Frank). The knowledge and skills, which they transferred into their practices, was from their own trial and error methods, trying to discover what worked or did not work for students with visual “disabilities”. McCarthy and Wright (2004) viewed this kind of learning experience as new knowledge gained through self-discovery, because they were not trained.

Since, the four lecturers were not professionally trained on how to deal with students with visual “disabilities” they experienced many negative feelings such as anxiety, stress, uncertainty etc. that made them conclude teaching these students as challenging and strenuous. Thus, Sam explained, *“teaching students with disability, I just can't say it something that is easy to do, no it's not easy, because it energy draining, it is a challenge on its own* (Sam). They felt abandoned by management and felt like *'thrown in the deep end and expected to swim.'* (Frank) because they received no support from management. Experiencing such negative feelings (anxiety, stress, uncertainty, etc.) from teaching students with visual “disabilities” according to Fraser and Maguvhe (2008) is felt when teachers do not possess relevant competencies and skills to deal with non-visual students because they have undergone only general education and have not specialised in inclusive education. Although these lecturers were not specialists in inclusive education, they managed to get their own agency and at the end they discovered, they could cope. Thus, Frank confirmed, *“I'm enjoying it.”* (Frank). Such a comment could only come from a person who has discovered concrete coping mechanisms that are efficient in teaching students with visual “disabilities”.

The four lecturers in the absence of any training or support, faced many challenges. They still presented themselves as mature professionals, who are hardworking and decent people. They really tried their best to make a difference in these students' lives as Frank confirmed, *'I try and*

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do my best' (Frank). Most importantly, the introduction of students with visual “disabilities” in the system enabled these lecturers to explore new learning to take place about what it means to be a professional. It also allowed them to find their own agency and to discover that ethics of care within them because the care they showed to these students emanated from their ethics of care. They depended on their own sensitivities in wanting to do something for the students even when they received no support. Hence, Slote (2007) mentions that ethics of care is demonstrated by the way a person performs his obligations to a stranger without compromising the standards. Similarly, these lecturers (Linda, Sam, Steven, and Frank) performed their contractual obligation of teaching these students who were strangers to them the best way they could. They showed empathy towards these students by the way they satisfied their needs and allowed students to use their full potential, which alleviated their painful experiences of being discriminated against by their “disability” (Engsyer, 2007). Their sympathetic culture could not have just come automatically but come from their ethics of care.

These four lecturers took the challenge on and learnt new methods of teaching students with visual “disabilities” through their own self-discoveries. What we can learn from these four lecturers is that maybe throwing lecturers into the deep end of the water is not such a bad thing because they overcame their negative feelings and began to appreciate the students in the classroom. It helped them to plan better, to be more aware of the way they spoke and what they did in the classroom. It improved their teaching and assessment strategies as Sam explained, *“I try to make as many examples as possible so that they can get the picture of the content of that particular module.”* (Sam). It further improved their lesson planning as Linda explained that she planned her lessons in a manner that *‘enabled everyone including the visually impaired one to understand the lesson’* (Linda) which was her means of practicing and implementing inclusive education.

Below is a theoretical framework figure 5, based on this study, which was aimed at exploring the experiences of TVET college lecturers in teaching students with visual “disabilities”. The learning cycle below is an expectation of what might happen or how learning could take place within the TVET context. It illustrates the expected feelings that could to be experienced *“At first glance, I was afraid, I was panicking”* (Sam). The possible reflections about the learnt experience *“this*

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student understands my subject and is passing it then you start to enjoy it,” (Frank). Their conceptualisation of how to improve teaching these students as Linda said, *“training or workshops or empowerment whatever that can help us. In order to be able to work with these people in a proper way* (Linda. and actual teaching that could be hope for the future to see them completing their qualification as Sam said, *“some of them have graduated”* (Sam).

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TV ET College lecturers’ experiential learning cycle of teaching students with visual “disabilities”

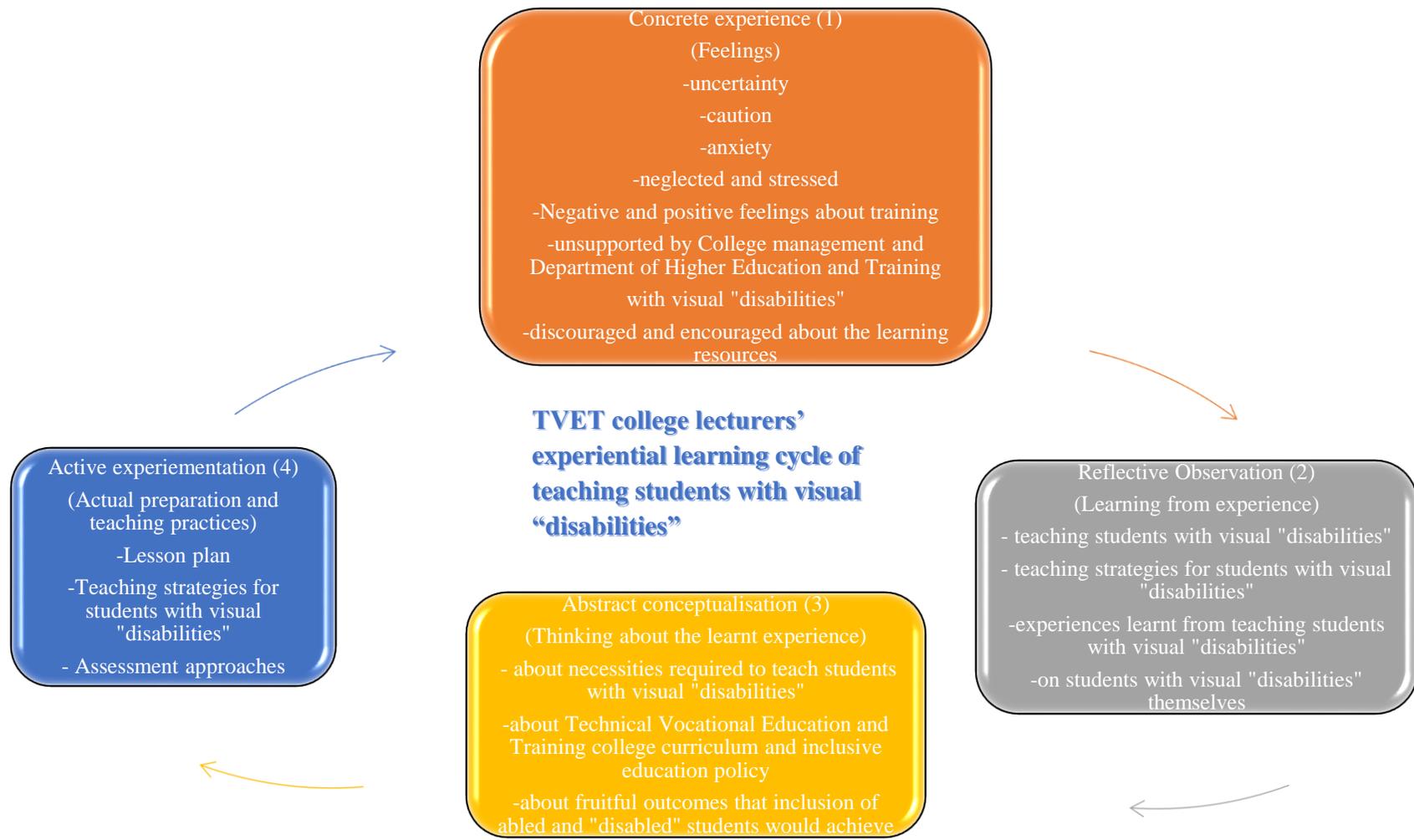


Figure 5. Contextual detailing of Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory in a TVET institution

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5.4 Recommendations for future studies

Recommendations are drawn for multiple reasons amongst others is to identify an area for future studies Mouton (2001). Similarly, I have made recommendations of this study to outline the areas for future research. This study focused on the experiences of TVET College lecturers in teaching students with visual “disability”, it has not interrogated the view of the students to ascertain if teaching strategies, classroom accommodation of students with visual “disabilities”, assessment approaches used by the lecturers are of assistance to students’ learning. It has emerged from the data that at times the lecturer would forget having a student with a visual “disability” in their class, *been dealing with people who are like normal students quite frankly, I would forget.* (Frank). Therefore, it would be crucial to explore the views of the students to get their feelings, about the treatment of lecturers and other students at large. Furthermore, to explore the students’ views about using scribes (people who write for them) during assessments, to establish the impact of using scribes.

It was noticeable that most of the literature used in the study was within the school context literature which has been adapted from mainstream schools to suit the context of the TVET sector. This, therefore, calls for more studies, which will be from the context of a TVET sector. Moreover, most literature reviewed was international on the issues of teaching students with visual “disability” in the TVET context. This is due to the limited availability of literature within the South African context, which covers this phenomenon. It would then be recommended that more articles be written on TVET Colleges especially following the announcement by the president of South African that TVET College students would receive bursaries as the government initiative to providing free education to students. Therefore, this leaves TVET Colleges as the potential tertiary education institution to experience an influx of students with “disability”. However, to date, there have been no announcements on how lecturers are made to prepare for what waits ahead for them. Therefore, the government needs to provide adequate training in preparation for this. It has emerged from the findings that thus far there has been no support or training provided to lecturers in preparation for inclusive education. Their preparedness becomes a priority for them to embrace and implement inclusive education.

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5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings of this study in-depth, which emerged from the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews of four TVET College lecturers. The experiences of TVET College lecturers were understood and analysed through Kolb's theory of Experiential Learning Theory. The chapter also provided recommendations for future studies. It was amazing to see that some lecturers are passionate about their work and will do everything possible to assist their students with no resources and support.

Being a researcher in this study, I discovered that there are very limited current research studies on students with "disabilities" within the TVET sector, which led me to adopt the use of old literature, in the school context to fit the TVET context. Therefore, studies such as this might add some value to the body of knowledge that already exists within the TVET sector regarding teaching students with visual "disabilities." I have developed academic writing skills and discourses used in the academic world. The experience of making new discoveries through this study has humbled me yet gave me a different perspective about many different things. I must confess that this journey had not been a smooth one, but I have learnt that perseverance gives birth to success. Completing this dissertation for me meant the start of a new chapter of the journey of new discoveries, which exist in research.

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