



**The role of a community learning centre in
addressing students' needs:
The case of Nokukhanya community learning centre**

by

Siphiwe Wilfred Chonco

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Supervisor: Dr Lulama Mbatha

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Supervisors' Authorisation

I, Dr Lynette Lulama Mbatha, the candidate's supervisor, ~~agree/do not agree~~ to the submission of this thesis for examination.

Signature: _____

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the supervisor.

Date: 11/12/2024

Declaration

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in the Graduate Programme in Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Sipiwe Wilfred Chonco, declare that

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STUDENT NAME: Sipiwe Wilfred Chonco

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation

To my mother, Buselaphi Kombani Chonco

To my wife, Mapholoana Anna Chonco

To my children Sakhile Rearabetswe, Sandile Reitumetse, Sithembiso Lesego.

This is the result of your prayers, support and love that I have achieved this.

Abstract

This thesis utilised Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as the theoretical framework to investigate the role of Nokukhanya (a pseudonym) Community Learning Centre (CLC) in addressing students' needs. Data were collected through document analysis, observation, focus groups with students and semi-structured interviews with lecturers, revealing significant insights into the effectiveness and limitations of the CLC's educational provisions. Findings indicate a disconnection between the programmes offered and the needs of students, who often seek practical skills and vocational training that are not available at the CLC. This misalignment contributes to high dropout rates and student dissatisfaction. While the centre has made some effort to collaborate with local stakeholders, such as municipalities and NGOs, these partnerships have not been fully sustained or effective in meeting student needs. The lack of essential resources, such as computers, internet access, and vocational training equipment, further hampers the centre's ability to deliver on its mandate. At the microsystem level, direct interactions between students and educators are crucial for effective learning, yet the current curriculum offerings do not address student aspirations. The mesosystem level highlights the potential benefits of stakeholder collaborations, though these have been inconsistently implemented. Exosystem influences, including policy mandates from the Department of Higher Education and Training, underscore the importance of flexible and relevant programmes, which are currently inadequately supported due to resource constraints. The macrosystem analysis reveals a gap between policy intentions and practical implementation, necessitating better support and resources for CLCs. Chronosystem analysis shows the impact of historical and temporal changes on CLC programming efforts. The study concludes with recommendations for adopting a holistic approach to programme provisioning, enhancing stakeholder collaborations, aligning curricula with student needs, and empowering students through practical and vocational training. These findings and recommendations aim to inform policy and practice improvements to better meet learners' educational and developmental needs at community learning centres.

KEYWORDS: community, community learning centre, needs, assets, adult education, continuing education, curriculum

ACRONYMS

AET	Adult Education and Training
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CET	Community Education and Training
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ETDP SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
GET	General Education and Training
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GETCA	General Education and Training Certificate for Adults
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZN-CETC	KwaZulu-Natal Community Education and Training College
KZN CET College	KwaZulu-Natal Community Education and Training College
LED strategy	Local Economic Development strategy
NASCA	National Senior Certificate for Adults
NCLC	Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre
NEETs	Not in Education, Employment, and Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UZDM	uMzinyathi District Municipality

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Chapter 1 - Introduction and Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province is home to the most significant number of adults who are illiterate in South Africa—870,000 (Khuluvhe, 2022). In KZN, 12,6% of people aged 20 and above do not have Grade 7. This means that they are illiterate and need to be more functionally literate. This indicates that KZN, as a province, must encourage its citizens to participate in the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme at various community learning centres. Hence, this study investigated the role community learning centres play in addressing the needs of students.

This chapter introduces and provides the background to the study. It commences by elaborating on the background of the study. The purpose of the study follows this, followed by the research objectives, questions, and rationale. The significance of the investigation comes next, followed by a definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations and an overview of the dissertation.

1.2 Background and motivation of the study

The end of apartheid in 1994 marked a pivotal moment in South Africa's history, requiring the newly formed government to embark on an extensive endeavour. Their challenge was establishing a comprehensive system that would embrace all races and uphold individual rights, particularly within the education sector, focusing on adult education. This thesis explores the Community Education and Training (CET) programme implemented by the South African government to support and enhance adult education, especially in historically disadvantaged communities.

KZN, a predominantly rural province, faces persistent challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and a dearth of skills, particularly among middle-aged adults (50–59 years old) and young adults who are primarily illiterate due to a lack of access to education in their formative years (Khuluvhe, 2022). In response to this pressing situation, establishing Community Learning Centres (CLCs) and tailored programmes becomes imperative to tackle the pervasive issue of illiteracy.

The study was located within the uMzinyathi District in KZN. This district has 11 CLCs and

30 satellite centres that offer adult basic education and training programmes. However, a critical concern arises regarding whether these CLCs provide programmes that the communities need and whether needs analysis was conducted to understand their students' requirements comprehensively.

Rakoma (1999) advocates for investigations into students' needs that encompass social and cultural backgrounds, asserting that the context significantly guides and influences articulating these needs. To bridge this gap, CLCs must engage with local municipalities and other organisations that provide adult education to discern community needs outlined in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Furthermore, CLCs should provide platforms for students to express their preferences, ensuring that the programmes offered align with their identified needs (Rakoma, 1999).

1.3 Contextualising the study

As already alluded to, KZN is home to the most significant number of adults who are functionally illiterate in South Africa. KZN has low levels of education, high levels of unemployment and a lack of skills, leading to extreme poverty (Nsele, 2019). The number of students attending the CLCs in KZN has decreased sharply over the years. This trend shows that programme offerings do not align with students' interests and needs (Mthethwa & Land, 2022). This indicates that KZN as a province must encourage its citizens to participate in the community colleges' adult literacy and vocational programmes. Hence, this study considered the community college's role in addressing students' needs.

The KwaZulu-Natal Community Education and Training (KZN CET) College has committed itself to offering formal, non-formal and skills training programmes that respond to illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty (Nxumalo, 2017). The formal and non-formal programmes provided in the community college will empower students with skills in the academic, vocational, and occupational fields of study (KZN CET, 2017). This commitment brings hope that the college, with its CLCs, will provide an integrated, flexible programme that addresses the different needs of students. This mission can only be achieved if the needs of students are assessed to allow their voices in curriculum choices.

According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2020), KZN CET college has 40 CLCs and 260 satellite centres. These centres offer post-literacy programmes, General Education and Training Certificate (GETC)-ABET Level 4, National Senior Certificate, and occupational and non-formal programmes. These courses are available in

KZN as per the KZN CET Brochure (DHET, 2022). At Nokukhanya (a pseudonym) Community Learning Centre, GETC-ABET Level 4 is the only available programme.

According to the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) (2021), the KZN CET college had an enrolment of 24,445 students registered for ABET Level 4 only. This translated into 56,2% of the total enrolment of the college.

1.3.1 uMzinyathi contextual factors

According to KZN CET (2018), uMzinyathi District Municipality (UZDM) is one of the 10 districts in KZN which is profoundly rural and is ranked the second poorest in the province. Due to its rurality, there are few job opportunities in this area. Youth dependent on economically active people make up 69% of the population. This means more programmes should be directed towards youth empowerment (UZDM, 2018). Unemployed youth is at 69%. These students are primarily found in CLCs, hoping to gain skills that will empower them and help them escape poverty.

The district's largest and most significant numbers of young people are in rural areas where education, skills, and opportunities are the least available (Umzinyathi Municipality, 2020). Msinga, where the Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre (NCLC) is located, is highly rural and has a high illiteracy rate. This area, because of its rurality, has a high unemployment rate. Community colleges should invest in this area more by providing programmes to help students establish their businesses, find employment, reduce illiteracy, and motivate them to further their learning.

1.4 Statement of the problem

The White Paper for Post-School Education Training (DHET, 2013) calls for a community education system. To give effect to this policy pronouncement, nine CET colleges were established, one in each province. The CET colleges were established to provide responsive programmes such as functional literacy, occupational, and vocational skills programmes. Under each of the colleges, there are learning centres and satellite centres. These satellite centres aim to offer a second chance to those who have never attended school before, never completed primary education, and need skills for livelihood. A study conducted by Akintolu et al. (2022) examined the challenges faced by adult CLCs in South Africa; and discovered that CLCs need more study materials, infrastructure, and qualified personnel.

The KwaZulu-Natal Community Education and Training College (KZN-CETC), in its mandate, has committed itself to “serve youth and adults by providing formal, non-formal and skills-based programmes that are responsive to socio-economic problems such as illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty” (Nxumalo, 2017, p. 14). This is only possible if the CLCs provide flexible programmes that address the diverse needs of students. Lack of skills, a high unemployment rate, and low levels of education are the significant causes of poverty in KZN (Nsele, 2019); hence, KZN-CETC has identified these as the target for their programmes.

According to the National Plan for CETs (DHET, 2019), CLCs must raise the base of learning of about 19 million youth and adults aged 20 and above and enable them “to articulate into a programme of further education, entrepreneurship, employment, or sustainable livelihood” (p. 11). However, various research studies like Danke and Mkhize (2021), Rivombo and Motseke (2022), and Matlabe (2016) show a disjuncture between the programmes offered in centres and the aspirations of students. Rivombo and Motseke (2022) indicate that CLCs cannot develop relevant skills programmes that would attract youth and adults to study and improve their chances of employment. Their reason is that CLCs do not have the necessary resources and qualified staff to develop relevant curricula.

The failure of CET colleges to empower students with practical skills to create employment, provide second chance programmes, and offer a flexible programme that addresses students’ needs will mean that youth and young adults will remain disempowered, not be able to further their learning, and therefore will not play a part in the reduction of unemployment in their communities. Students will stay away from the CLCs. That will not be good for the country, which has many youths and adults who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). Hence, this study sought to investigate the role the CLC plays in addressing the needs of students at Nokukhanya Satellite Community Learning Centre. The study focused on the needs of students and the programmes offered at the centre by looking at the following factors: the programmes’ content, centre linkages with other organisations, resources in the centre, teaching and learning approach and centre governance.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of community learning centre in addressing the needs of its students. This will be done through exploring the perceptions and experiences of both students and lecturers. The study examines the programme and services offered at the centre in relation to the needs of students. This study focuses on the needs of

students and the programme offered at the centre by looking at the following factors: factors informing programmes offering, needs of students, relationship between programme offered and needs of students.

1.5 Research objectives and questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role the CLC plays in addressing the needs of students. The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To examine factors that inform programme offerings at the NCLC.
2. To find out the needs of the students.
3. To establish the relationship between the programme offered at the NCLC and the needs of students.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What informs programme offerings at NCLC?
2. What are students' needs at NCLC?
3. What is the relationship between the programmes provided and the requirements of students?

1.6 Rationale and significance of the study

ABET was transferred through a function shift from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to the DHET (2013). Adult education and training (AET) were provided through public adult learning centres (PALCs), which were changed into CLCs at each community education and training college. After the failure of the PALCs, it was assumed that CLCs would provide the target group with flexible programmes that would respond to the diverse needs of students, get funding and resources to support lecturers and improve working conditions.

The Community College is responsible for implementing programmes in the CLCs. Therefore, the college should empower lecturers to design relevant programmes that respond to students' needs and appreciate the value of involving other role-players in providing responsive programmes.

As a Senior Education Specialist based at the uMzinyathi District Office of Education, my professional role is situated within the General Education and Training (GET) band, specifically focusing on Early Childhood Development (ECD). My primary responsibilities

involve developing, supporting, and monitoring curriculum implementation in ECD. Although my expertise is in foundational education, my position provides valuable insights into educational structures, policy implementation, and the broader South African education system. It is important to note that Adult Education falls under the purview of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and I am not directly involved in this sector. However, my engagement with this research was driven by a broader commitment to understanding and improving education across diverse contexts, enabling me to critically analyse and reflect on the intersections between early education and lifelong learning initiatives.

My interest in this study was motivated by my visit to the satellite CLCs during examinations. I have observed that, since 2012, many centres have closed, yet the DHET wants to reach one million student enrolments in 2030. I wanted to know why centres are closing. However, Community Education and Training College according to the DHET promised to offer flexible programmes that would address the needs of its clientele.

Most students enrol if responsive programmes are provided in CLCs. They will appreciate it if programmes that address their needs are developed, and they can apply these in real-life situations and improve their livelihoods (Rule et al., 2015). This research study, therefore, sought to investigate the role the CLC plays in addressing the needs of students.

This thesis will reveal the challenges the CET colleges experience in pursuing their core mandate: providing flexible and responsive programmes to their students. It will also assist policymakers in understanding that CLCs should be community-based institutions serving the interests of people in their contexts, not just the extensions of the college. The thesis will reveal strategies CET colleges can use to provide relevant programmes, especially in rural areas.

The provision of flexible programme to students in the community learning centre could empower more people in the area. The study may help lecturers and policy makers understand the value of adopting holistic approach in curriculum provision at Community College. Flexible programme may attract more potential students, improve retention in adult education. Empowering students with skills may assist them to participate fully in the labour market.

1.7 Location of the study

The study took place at the Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre (NCLC), 3 km from Tugela Ferry, under the Msinga Local Municipality. uMsinga Local Municipality is a rural area of KZN and has minimal employment opportunities. No significant industries are within the municipality, and people are employed mainly in the social or informal sectors. The informal sector comprises subsistence farming and small/micro enterprises such as micro-manufacturing (Msinga Local Municipality, 2017). Government aid is relied on by 44.03% of the population as a source of income. The economy of uMsinga needs to be stronger and provide more opportunities for the residents to earn an income of their own (Msinga Local Municipality, 2012).

Nokukhanya (pseudonym) Community Learning Centre is located in the Makhankane area. This centre is based at Amandla Municipal Building (pseudonym) and operates in buildings previously used by the local college. The centre runs from 12h00 to 17h30. This CLC only offers AET level 4 programmes.

1.8 Research design and methodology

This qualitative research study was located in the interpretivist paradigm, and a case study was used as a research style. According to Cohen et al. (2011), the case study is the study of the case in context, and it is essential to set it within its context. Qualitative case study research focuses on providing a detailed account of one or more cases (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

The study used a purposive sampling technique. The purpose was to ensure that data were collected on the perceptions and experiences of the participants in the study. This study obtained data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observation and document analysis. Discussions were held with the supervisor of the satellite centre, three lecturers and five students. More detail will be provided in Chapter 3.

1.9 Definitions of terms

In this section, the key concepts are defined.

1.9.1 Community

The term *community* can be divided into three main areas. According to Tett (2010), it can refer to a social group of any size whose members live in a specific locality, such as a

neighbourhood or village, and this geographical space is what they share. It can be a group sharing similar interests and values—people linked together by factors such as religious beliefs, sexual orientation or ethnic origin, such as being a member of Hindu, Gay or Chinese communities. Lastly, it can function in groups with the same profession, such as teachers, by engaging in actions together. They acquire a shared sense of identity (Kgobe et al., 2012).

The function group was chosen for this study because community refers to students enrolled at Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre. They share the same identity as students enrolled for AET Level 4 programmes to further their education and acquire sustainable livelihood skills to advance their personal development.

1.9.2 Community learning centre

CLCs are the delivery sites of CET colleges that are expected to respond to the needs of the communities in which they work (OECD, 2019). As already discussed, these centres were known as PALCs before their incorporation into new CET colleges. This transformation was done to offer relevant and responsive programmes to meet the needs of students (DHET, 2017b). Furthermore, Ngubane (2023) defines a CLC as an education, training, teaching, and learning centre for adult learners to improve their lives. In this study, a CLC is a site that provides basic literacy programmes and occupational and vocational skills to adults and out-of-school youth under the auspices of the DHET.

1.9.3 Needs

Needs refer to something necessary or required to accomplish a purpose (Sava, 2012, p. 31). Similarly, Mwangi and Rutatora (2002) define a need as “the difference of the actual knowledge, skills and attitudes of students from the desired ones” (p. 415).

1.9.4 Assets

Eloff (2006, p. 27, as cited in Venter, 2013), defines assets as “skills, talents, gifts, resources, capacities and strengths that are shared with individuals, families, schools, associations, the community and organisations.”

1.9.5 Adult education

Baatjes and Baatjes (2008, p. 8) define adult education as a “broad field that includes basic and continuing education, vocational and technical education, higher education, and professional development offered through formal, non-formal and informal education means

and by a variety of actors—the State, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), business and industry and private” (p. 8). This definition was the most appropriate for this study because it emphasises various organisations' roles in providing different types of education in their communities.

1.9.6 Continuing education

According to UNESCO (1997, p. 2), continuing education is a “broad concept which includes all of the learning activities all people need outside of the basic literacy and primary education.” This definition implies that learning takes place in all contexts. Youth and adults can benefit from this type of education as it is not confined to one place but to every place. Similarly, Onchari (2016) sees continuing education as classes that can be offered in nonformal settings on evenings, weekends, or on agreed days to accommodate the schedule of students. This means that adult education happens everywhere and at any time. Non-formal education provides flexibility which accommodates student preferences. For this study, continuing education means second-chance courses and non-formal programmes offered by the CLC and other local agencies to address students registered in the CLC.

1.9.7 Curriculum

According to the National Policy on Curriculum Development and Implementations in Community Education and Training Colleges (DHET, 2017a, p. 11), the DHET views a curriculum as a “statement of intended outcomes to be achieved, what knowledge content is to be acquired, which competencies and skills are to be developed and the levels of performances that are expected from students. It defines what is to be taught, what students must learn, and what is to be assessed.”

1.10 Overview of dissertation

This thesis is composed of five chapters. A synopsis of each chapter is provided below.

Chapter 1 provides the overview of the study. It presents background information about the research problem. It specifies the research problem, presents the aim, objectives and significance of the study, framework used, clarifies concepts and summarises the research methodology.

Chapter 2 contextualises the study and offers a literature review providing empirical evidence on the key concepts. The chapter also provides the study's theoretical framework and justifications for its relevance to the study.

Chapter 3 presents the research design and the methodology of the study. It outlines and details the use of the interpretive paradigm, the case study, the research style, the research approach, the sampling, the data collection methods, the data analysis, and the trustworthiness issues. The chapter concludes with ethical issues about the research study and its limitations.

Chapter 4 is a presentation and discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5 analyses and discusses findings that emerged from research the participants. The theoretical framework (Bronfenbrenner, 2000) is used to analyse the data as the framework that underpins the study. The study addressed three sub-questions: What informs programme offerings at NCLC? What are students' needs at NCLC? What is the relation between the programmes offered and the requirements of students? The chapter further presents the study's conclusion, summary, and recommendations for further research.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter presented the historical background of adult education provision in South Africa. The section demonstrates the historical relationship between curriculum provision and student needs. The focus and the purpose of the study followed this. The study's rationale was outlined briefly, along with the site and participants' setting to be studied. I further discussed the methodology used and how data collection and analysis would be conducted. I discussed ethical and trustworthiness issues to be attended to. I ended the chapter by looking at the overview of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gave a brief background of the study. This chapter reviews literature published by different scholars to establish a relationship between what is known about the topic and what the research study wants to achieve. International literature on community colleges was reviewed and compared with what is happening in South Africa. The main focus of this study was to investigate the community college's role in addressing its students' needs. The study primarily sought to understand how CET contributes to skills development, employability, and lifelong learning. The study focused on the college's programmes in relation to students' needs. This study used ecological systems theory that was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in relation to human development.

2.2 Evolution of community learning centres and their educational functions

This section presents the global evolution of community colleges and learning centres internationally, in Africa and South Africa. UNESCO promoted the establishment of CLCs during the 1990s. They did this believing that these centres would provide easy access to out-of-school youth and adults with little or no literacy skills (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2014). The main functions of the CLCs are to provide 1) education and training, 2) community information and resource services, 3) community development activities, and 4) coordination and networking (UNESCO, 2008). CLCs are usually outside of the formal education system. They are set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improving people's lives (UNESCO, 2008).

2.2.1 CLCs in Europe

In Europe, some institutions provide a wide range of education and training programmes. For example, community colleges or learning centres in Sweden and Denmark are known as Folk High Schools. They offer second-chance education, non-formal education, and vocational programmes (OECD, 2019). Sweden's government and municipal authorities primarily fund and oversee Folk High Schools. These schools are known for offering a wide range of non-formal adult education programmes, often emphasising personal development, civic engagement, and cultural enrichment. They provide short and long courses to youth aged between 18 and 24. Students are largely satisfied because their studies assist them in

entering the labour market and allow them to continue their education and training (OECD, 2019).

Folk High Schools in Denmark are non-formal adult education institutions. They were established to respond to the need to teach rural people who would not have a chance to go to higher education institutions (Bagley & Rust, 2009). They are outside the formal education system. Students who attend these schools do not receive formal academic credits for their work. They take courses which lead them into a career. According to Pantzar (1988), Folk High Schools in Denmark offer long-term courses, which almost 15,000 students attend, and short courses attended by 42,000 students. They look for activities and subjects that are important and interesting to their students. In Denmark, various popular movements like labour unions, religious groups, and cultural organisations play a significant role in their operation and decision on the programme offerings.

While popular movements and organisations exist in Sweden, they have a different direct role in running Folk High Schools than in other countries like Denmark. Folk High Schools have a certain degree of autonomy in designing and delivering educational programmes. Popular movements and organisations may still participate in specific courses or activities Folk High Schools offer, even though these schools' overall governance and funding are primarily the responsibility of government authorities.

In Georgia, adult education centres follow holistic development approaches to assist learners in meeting the daily challenges they encounter in life. They offer employment and poverty reduction education, civic education, cultural education, health education and sport (Sanadze & Santeladze, 2017). Adult education centres offer thirty different vocational courses to learners. These are short courses starting from three to five months where students are involved by doing practical skills. Course selection is based on research that is done by centres each year and requested by learners (DVV International, 2017).

Courses have made a significant impact on learners. It has been highlighted that many learners have found employment, while others are self-employed, have been promoted and have kept their jobs (DVV International, 2017).

It is clear from the practices of CLCs in European countries like Sweden, Denmark and Georgia that they provide flexible programmes that address the needs of their students. Folk High Schools provide second-chance education, non-formal education and vocational programmes, and short and long courses for the youth. The programme has assisted youth

in entering labour markets and continuing their education. This is the mandate that CET colleges, through their CLCs, should accomplish. South Africa can learn a lot from these countries.

Georgia follows a holistic approach to addressing the needs of its students. They, like Sweden and Denmark, offer short and long courses, vocational courses, and courses for employment and poverty reduction. A country like South Africa, which has a high unemployment rate, can learn good practices from Georgia to address unemployment and poverty reduction.

2.2.2 CLCs in Asia

In Asian regions, many CLCs are established with names like Reading Centres or gonokendras and continuing education centres (UNESCO, 2003b). These CLCs are essential in providing functional literacy, vocational skills, and work-related skills to disadvantaged youth and children who cannot continue to learn in the formal education system (ACTED, 2018). For example, CLCs in Bangladesh serve as literacy centres for rural illiterate adults. They target out-of-school girls and women. They provide opportunities for local people to study and read newspapers and impart livelihood skills in cattle-raising, sewing, tailoring, fish culture and vegetable cultivation (UNESCO, 2003b). CLCs in Bangladesh provide the following activities: (a) Functional literacy and continuing education. These include remedial measures for children with difficulties as well as providing community libraries; (b) Skills development, and human resource development. Training in the following skills is provided: livelihood skills, income-generating activities and leadership, savings and credit services, early childhood care and agricultural extension services; (c) Community development services; and (d) Awareness and cultural development (UNESCO, 2008).

Similarly, in Uzbekistan, CLCs provide preschool services for children between 4 and 6 years old, introductory computer courses, reading English and Latin courses, vocational training, and training on small-scale enterprises for youth and adults. Uzbekistan has a highly literate population. CLCs also focus on improving access to information via the Internet and parent training on preschool education (UNESCO, 2003b).

Most people in Nepal are poor and underprivileged. They live by farming. Therefore, their CLCs focus on agriculture-based income-generating programmes in kitchen gardening, horticulture, raising poultry or cattle and cultivating spices. Short- and long-term agribusiness and vocational training programmes are offered to the community. Literacy

classes are also provided to empower learners to execute income-generating activities (UNESCO, 2003b).

It is evident from the above countries' experiences that CLCs provide adult education programmes geared towards addressing their communities' needs in different contexts. The flexibility of programmes allows the community members to benefit according to their varied needs. They provide programmes like functional literacy, vocational skills, work related skills, livelihood skills, information and communication technology, income generating skills, and short and long courses. They are relevant to my research, which sought to investigate the role CLCs play in meeting the needs of its students.

2.2.3 CLCs in Africa

In this section, I will review African literature related to programmes in CLCs and how they address the needs of learners.

The government established a pilot project in Morocco in two provinces to mitigate low literacy levels that hindered socio-economic development (OECD, 2019). They created four community education centres run by communities. They were given equipment, and managers were trained. These centres' activity programmes were based on community needs. Participants received pre-vocational training based on the needs of participants and opportunities available in their respective areas. Some programmes included supporting women's groups in income-generating activities, such as carpet making, beekeeping, sewing, and horticulture (DVV International, 2017). Their s included small economic projects and the establishment of cooperatives (OECD, 2019). There were also modules designed to empower men and women facilitators of community learning centres with technical skills to manage post-literacy programmes and promote income-generating activities (DVV International, 2017). The findings showed that the CLC assisted women in forming cooperatives and served as meeting places where participants shared information and resources and strengthened their life skills (OECD, 2019).

In Ethiopia, CLCs offer the following programmes and services: Integrated functional adult education, agriculture and other livelihood skills training, business skills training, saving schemes and cooperative training, libraries, kindergarten, sports activities and games for young and old (DVV International, 2021). Before presenting their programme to the communities, CLCs conduct needs analysis to determine the needs and interests of the community. They have well-established centre management committees comprising

community leaders who mobilise and interact with government technical committees to ensure that CLCs are well-managed (DVV International, 2021). This has benefitted many youths who have started their businesses, and others have engaged in farming. These CLCs have also allowed older people to enjoy discussions with their peers and hold elder council meetings. Furthermore, they have served as a place for intergenerational learning (Belete et al., 2022). In Uganda, CLCs provide additional support to school-going children. They provide integrated adult literacy classes that combine literacy and numeracy with livelihood skills training, business skills training, and life skills training. CLCs also facilitate market days where trainees promote and sell their products (Belete et al., 2022).

It is clear from Morocco, Ethiopia, and Uganda that their CLCs provide different types of programmes that empowered their communities. Morocco provides programmes based on community needs. CLCs provide post-literacy programmes and income-generating skills. The participants are able to establish cooperatives and strengthen their life skills. Ethiopian practices were relevant to my study as they offer integrated functional adult education, livelihood skills training, and cooperative training, and they conduct needs analysis before implementing their programmes.

2.2.4 CLCs in South Africa

Understanding the importance and intention of introducing CET colleges is essential because they are institutions established closer to the people to offer education, training, and skills training that empower its communities.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013) called for the introduction of community colleges. The DHET, in implementing the prescripts of the policy, established nine community colleges, one per province. The main objective of the CET programme is to improve livelihoods, enhance chances of inclusion in the labour market and support individual needs (DHET, 2017a). Under each college, there are several CLSs where teaching and learning take place. These CLCs were previously called PALCs. These PALCs focused more on general education, which was academic. It is argued that these did not help youth and young adults who wanted to gain occupational skills for self-improvement (National Planning Commission, 2020).

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013) proposed the following programmes: The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC), the National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA), Sector Education and Training Authority

(SETA) accredited and occupational programmes and non-formal programmes. These programmes should build on academic offerings by expanding vocational, skills development, and non-formal programmes. According to the National Policy on Community Colleges (DHET, 2015), colleges must adopt a holistic approach to education and training. Learning hard and soft skills must be “Developed within an integrated development framework which seeks to improve livelihoods, promote inclusion into the world of work, and support community and individual needs” (p. 14). It is hoped that introducing flexible programmes in the CET sector will help reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality in South Africa (OECD, 2019).

In South Africa, as mentioned previously, community colleges are institutional types established under the DHET to offer literacy, basic and secondary education, and vocational and occupational programmes to address the needs of adults and out-of-school youth (DHET, 2016). Structurally, the community colleges are government institutions that fall under the DHET. There are some public colleges in South Africa, but they must register with the government. CLCs are the teaching and learning institutions of community colleges. They were established to cater to the needs of youth and young adults who had not finished school or had never attended school before (DHET, 2017a). This study aimed to investigate the role community colleges play in addressing the needs of students, and looking broadly at adult education policies is essential.

2.3 The role of CLCs in meeting students' needs

CLCs are essential in providing functional literacy, vocational skills, and work-related skills to marginalised youth and children, especially those who cannot continue to learn in the formal education system (ACTED, 2018). According to the Service Delivery Framework for CET (DHET, 2017b), CLCs must provide programmes that are in demand. Therefore, this means that programmes should be based on local needs and linked to local employment and community development (Bridge, 2020). This notion is supported by UNESCO (2012), which states that the role of community colleges and CLCs is to “provide opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community” (p. 9). Thus, according to the OECD (2019), non-formal programmes should be directed towards the needs and desires of the local communities, including community-based organisations (CBOs), cooperatives and local businesses.

According to the OECD (2019), CLCs must also provide employment, entrepreneurship, management, digital, and life skills programmes. Students want centres that offer programmes like computer skills, baking, sewing, mechanics, and learners' licences (Land, 2021). Tawiah and Ngmenkpiewo (2018) concur that these job-related practical skills empower students to generate income to survive and create self-employment opportunities. Students want programmes to equip them with skills to generate revenue and help their families (Rakoma & Schulze, 2015). Rule et al. (2015) believes the curriculum must be relevant to learners. They allude to the fact that academic subjects that students are doing in CLCs must relate to different roles that students perform as adults. These roles include teaching children, being caregivers, income providers, and community activists at home.

The White Paper on Post School-Education and Training (DHET, 2013) also expects colleges to provide quality programmes to their clients so that they can make meaningful progress in learning, training, and development. To achieve this mandate, colleges must train new educators, retrain existing lecturers, and appoint suitably qualified personnel with pedagogical knowledge to teach adult learners. According to Aitchison and Land (2019), lecturers in the CLCs must be well-trained to respond to students' needs, get material online and adapt it to match students' needs. The Policy on Qualifications in Higher Education for Adult Education and Training Educators and Community Education and Training College Lecturers (DHET, 2014, p. 13) further emphasises that CLC lecturers must possess specific expertise, general pedagogical knowledge, and specialised content knowledge. These qualifications enable educators to understand the lived experiences of their students and provide them with the necessary skills for improved livelihoods.

However, most of the programmes offered in South Africa focus on academic programmes and ignore other programmes (DHET, 2015). It is, therefore, essential for the CLCs to adapt parts of the programmes they offer to be relevant to the local circumstances of each specific area.

According to the National Policy on Curriculum Development (DHET, 2017a, p. 15), CET colleges

will have to link directly with the work of public programmes to provide appropriate skills and knowledge. These include the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the Community Works Programme (CWP), the state's infrastructure

development programme, as well as economic and social development initiatives such as the Community Development Workers (CDW) and Community Health Workers (CHW) programme.

CLCs are expected to partner with CBOs, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations, and other stakeholders. They are also mandated to offer skills and nonformal programmes, but they cannot do so. They lack resources and do not have competent staff. According to Mginywa (2021), this collaboration will assist the CLCs in providing courses to its students with resources and expertise from these partners.

The academic programmes that community colleges must offer are expected to provide vocational programmes that are informal but based on local needs. Short programmes in areas like cooperatives, entrepreneurship, and Learner driver's licences can be made available through partnerships with other organisations (Bridge, 2020).

Students have specific learning needs in order to fulfil their adult roles (Rule et al., 2015). They enrol at the centre because they expect it to empower them with skills to solve their problems. Students need skills that are related to their lives and environment. They need practical skills that will help them generate income, self-employment, or get jobs. Therefore, CLCs must offer practical subjects like sewing, baking, knitting, computer skills, gardening, carpentry, and poultry farming. This will motivate students to learn as they experience the needs and interests that learning will satisfy.

CLCs lack an infrastructure of their own. There is a lack of teaching and learning support materials in centres. This disturbs the attainment of curriculum outcomes. There are no libraries, no computers, a lack of connectivity, and no electricity. Students cannot be equipped with information and communication technology as the DHET has recommended. The plethora of challenges, especially the lack of material resources, compromises CLCs' ability to provide flexible programmes that addresses students' needs (Land, 2021).

However, studies by Akintolu et al. (2022) and Rivombo and Motseke (2022) reveal that most CLCs have unqualified lecturers to teach adult learners. Some of them are trained in basic education, which differs from adult education. This poses a challenge to the CLCs in providing flexible programmes that are relevant to students' needs.

It is clear from the above that students want courses and programmes that have immediate relevance and impact on their lives. They want a programme that will assist them in solving

their real-life problems (Molema, 2022). They have specific learning needs for fulfilling their roles as work seekers, community activists, employees, etc. (Rule et al., 2015). Therefore, CLCs must ensure that students get the relevant skills they need. A recommendation is that the CLC must conduct a needs analysis of students before designing a programme, and the programmes must be flexible to respond to the diverse needs of students (Taylor, 2006). This is relevant to my study as it sought to investigate the roles the CLC plays in addressing the needs of its students.

2.4 Best practices and success stories in CLCs

In South Africa, good examples of CLCs have improved adult learners' lives in different parts of the country. A few centres are presented below. Ilungelolethu CLC offers a formal programme which includes AET levels 2—4 (GETC) and Grade 12 subjects. This centre also provides skills training on beadwork, making floor and table mats from cattle skins, candle making, gardening, sewing, hospitality, plumbing and electrical (Lyster & Land, 2019). A CLC can work with other organisations, which helps their students get practical experience. The centre offers driver's learning classes to its students.

In some CLCs, Early Childhood Development is one of the modules because it equips students with knowledge and skills related to childcare, enhances their chances of employment, provides them with opportunity to work in creches, generates income and qualifies them to become child-minders (Rule et al., 2015). This is corroborated by Land (2021), who says that including Ancillary Health Care gives students a greater chance of employment or income generation. In a multi-case study conducted by Rule et al. (2015) investigating efficacy in adult learning centres, they found that NGOs provide non-formal programmes developed to meet the needs of learners and their families. These programmes include literacy, health, children's development and livelihoods. Their curriculum is built around themes relevant to the learners' lives.

A state-funded CLC in the Western Cape performs very well in the GETC examinations year after year. This centre offers a flexible programme that includes AET Levels 1 to 4 and matric classes made up mainly of GETC graduates. They offer a skills programme in partnership with a local Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college. Students are trained as artisans. They also provide plumbing, bricklaying, carpentry and painting as apprenticeships. The centre's skills training programme has helped its students start businesses and get employment opportunities (Rule et al., 2015). The centre understands the

need to link education to training and employment opportunities. Students can progress from formal to skills development, further their studies at TVET, or work opportunities.

Similarly, the CLC in Limpopo province offers ABET Level 4. Graduates could move towards National Certificates or enrol in TVET colleges. Students could make connections between the subjects offered and their everyday lives. The centre's curriculum helped expand their knowledge (Rule et al., 2015).

2.5 Curriculum provision challenges by learning centres

There is literature that provides significant information about the curriculum provision in adult education centres. Literature includes the works of South African scholars like Hendricks and Aploon-Zokufa (2021), Molema (2022), Danke and Mkhize (2021), Dhlamini and Heeralal (2014), Tawiah and Thusi-Sefatsa (2022), Land (2021), Rivombo and Motseke (2022).

In a study conducted by Tawiah and Thusi-Sefatsa (2022) on the value of adult and community education and training with regard to the empowerment of rural women in South Africa, the authors opine that community education and training colleges are supposed to offer programmes like bead making, cloth weaving, computer skills, dressmaking and others. These practical skills can assist students to improve their living conditions. Authors argue that CLCs have failed to provide these skills to their students.

In Molema's (2022) study on the role of adult and community education and training in equipping the youth with employable skills, the case of Mashashane-Maraba area of Limpopo, the author found that programmes that were offered at CLCs were not effective because they did not equip students with skills needed in the labour market. CLCs failed to carry out their mandate because they did not have the infrastructure, there was a lack of qualified teaching staff, and a shortage of resources.

According to Danke and Mkhize (2021), in a qualitative study conducted in North West province, the curriculum offered at the adult centre did not meet the needs of adult learners. Danke and Mkhize (2021, p. 69) argue that there is "no alignment and resonance between learner aspirations and adult education curriculum." This means that a lack of connection between the provided curriculum and the needs of students leads to the latter leaving the centre without achieving their goals.

In a study conducted by Dhlamini and Heeralal (2014) on factors that lead students to drop out of community college, it was found that the curriculum design provided at the centre focused more on theory and neglected practical parts. The authors maintained that the offered subjects could have been more attractive to students. They further argued that the curriculum provided did not relate to students' work needs, and their economic and social problem needs were not addressed. They recommended that the curriculum be reviewed to cater to learners' needs.

Most CLCs offer Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Life Orientation and Ancillary Health Care. According to Hendricks and Aploon-Zokufa (2021), these subjects are irrelevant to the needs of students who want to get employment. The authors further argue that young students prefer work-related skills to the CLCs' current academic programme. The curriculum that is provided at the CLCs is still academic. That is fine for students who want to pursue their studies, but it is a disadvantage for those who wish to develop skills to improve their livelihoods. I agree with Mginywa (2021), who says that CLCs do not have qualified staff to teach these skills or the infrastructure and equipment to meet these needs.

The expectation that the CLCs must offer occupational, and skills programmes as stipulated in the policy document is unattainable. CLCs do not have the infrastructure to provide programmes like bricklaying, plumbing, welding, sewing and others, according to the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority Report (2019). CLCs lack an infrastructure of their own. There is a lack of teaching and learning support materials in centres and This affects the attainment of curriculum outcomes. There are no libraries, no computers, a lack of connectivity, and no electricity; thus, students cannot be equipped with information and communication technology, as the DHET has recommended. The plethora of challenges, especially the lack of material resources, compromises CLCs' ability to provide flexible programmes that address students' needs (Lyster & Land, 2019).

In the study conducted by Rivombo and Motseke (2022) on the failure of a community college to address unemployment in Free State Province, they found that CLCs could not develop skills development programmes that would attract the youth and empower them to get employment. The authors mention that CLCs need to have suitably qualified personnel. Consequently, they need to develop relevant skills programmes for the students.

In a qualitative case study conducted by Matlabe (2016) in the North West province, she found no connection between learners' needs and what was offered in the centre.

Furthermore, teaching and learning support materials were scarce. Another study by Taylor (2006) on the criteria needed to establish a model of a CLC concluded that the CLC should conduct a needs analysis before any programme is provided. The CLC should empower the community and promote economic development.

The above arguments suggest the need for CLCs to offer a relevant curriculum, and further paints a bleak picture that the community education and training system is failing to meet the needs of its clients. However, I have yet to encounter any study conducted in the KZN college, and this study sought to find out if these results apply to this context.

The following section discusses the theoretical framework that was a lens for analysing and interpreting the findings of data generated in the study.

2.6 Theoretical framework

This section will present Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. I will first present the theory's history, define it, argue why this theory is relevant to the study, and then discuss some of the critiques.

2.6.1 *History of systems theory*

This theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979. He believed that various environmental systems influence every person. This theory helps us to understand why people act the way they do in different environments. This is a theoretical framework adopted by Bronfenbrenner using ecological systems theory to study people in their contexts (Neal & Neal, 2013). Bronfenbrenner saw the system as nesting within each other. Each system is connected.

I present the first two definitions by Johnson (2008) and Neal and Neal (2013). According to Johnson (2008), Bronfenbrenner developed his ecological systems theory to define and understand human development within the system of relationships that form the person's environment. For Neal and Neal (2013), this is a theoretical framework adopted by Bronfenbrenner using ecological systems theory to study people in their contexts. In other words, Bronfenbrenner saw the system as a nest within each other. That is, each layer directly impacts the next layer regardless of the layer's position. The ecological systems theory was relevant in studying the phenomenon that this study sought to explore.

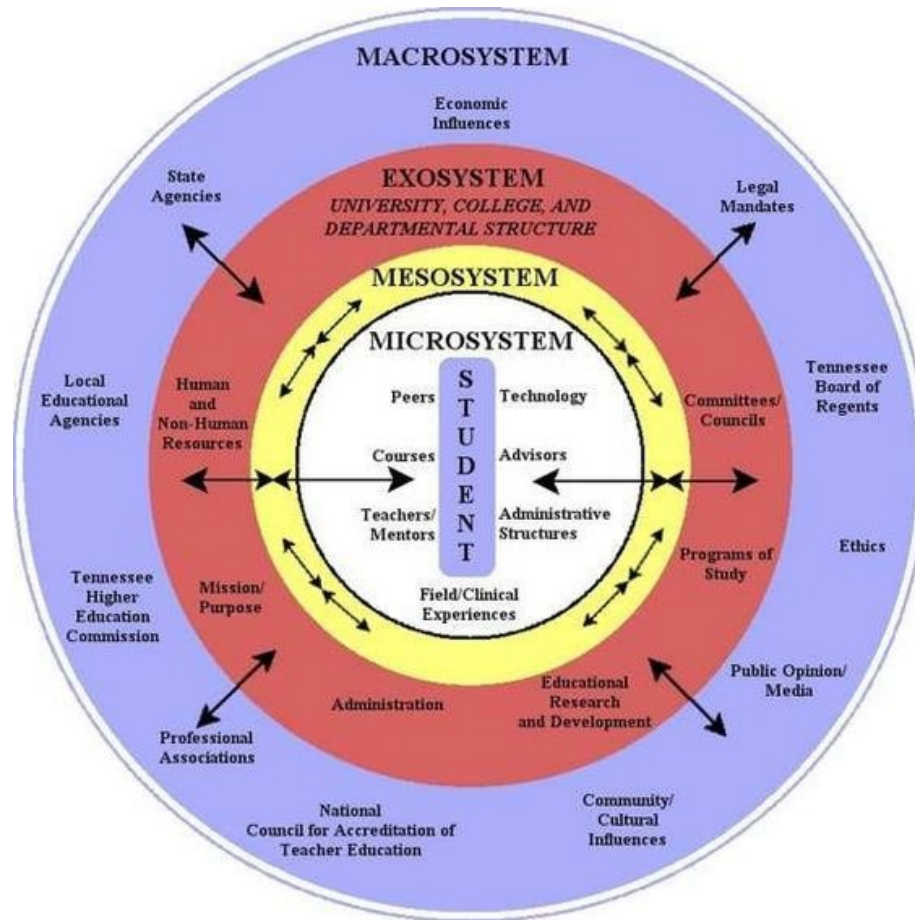
Bronfenbrenner (1979) states, “The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives” (p. 21). This process is affected by relations between these settings and the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), five systems form part of the ecological systems theory. This theory views various relationships in context/environment as systems where the functioning or lacking depends on the relationships between different levels. These relationships are known as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.

This study uses Ecological systems theory as a lens through which to examine the multiple layers of influence affecting the CLC’s operations and effectiveness. It sees Community learning centre not just as isolated educational institution, but as dynamic entity embedded within broader social, political, and economic contexts. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory is particularly relevant to this study as it underscores the importance of context and interconnectedness. There are multiple interconnected dimensions from micro level student-lecturer interactions to macro-level policy influences. It shows how various systemic factors influence CLC’s ability to meet students’ needs. The ecological systems theory highlights the multi-dimensional nature of their challenges and opportunities. It enables a nuanced exploration of how students, community, and systemic factors influence the accessibility, relevance, and sustainability of CLC programmes. This framework ensures that the findings and recommendations are comprehensive and sensitive to the diverse layers of influence impacting non-formal education provision.

Figure 1

Bronfenbrenner Primer



Microsystems involve direct interactions within the CLC environment, including the relationships between students and educators. The holistic approach affects students' immediate learning experiences. Furthermore, Ryan (2001) states that the microsystem is the layer closest to the child and contains structures with which the child has direct contact. Relationships in this environment have impacts in two directions. For this study, the microsystem, which involves the central part of the ecological system, included the biographical details of students, their perceptions and experiences of adult education programmes, their voices in the programme design, and students' interactions with lecturers in the centre. They provided information through focus groups.

The mesosystem is the layer that involves the interactions between the CLC and external entities such as local authorities, SETAS, and NGOs, impacting the CLC's ability to offer diverse and relevant programmes.

The exosystem involves experiences in another social setting where the individual does not have an active role. According to Ryan (2001), the exosystem defines the more extensive social system in which the child does not function directly. Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013) assert that the exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the learner as an active participant but in which events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in the setting containing the students. For this study, the exosystem represented the broader social structures that influence the CLC indirectly, such as educational policies and community needs assessment that shape programme offerings.

The macro system in Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is considered the outermost layer in the child's environment (Ryan, 2001). Furthermore, Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013) refer to the macro system as a larger cultural world surrounding learners with any underlying belief system, including government policies, political ideology, cultural customs, and economic systems. For this study, the macrosystem reflected the larger cultural and policy environment that dictates educational standards and priorities, potentially leading to a disconnect between what is offered and what students need.

The chronosystem represents a time-based dimension that influences the operation of all levels of the ecological systems. The chronosystem can refer to both short- and long-term time dimensions of the individual over a lifespan and the socio-historical time dimension of the macrosystem in which the individual lives. The chronosystem of the individual school may be represented by day-to-day and year-to-year developmental changes that occur in students' bodies, teaching staff, curricular choices, and the number of years in operation (Johnson, 2008). For this study, the chronosystem included time, reflecting how educational programmes and policy changes affect students' perceptions and opportunities for empowerment.

2.6.2 The use of theory in other studies

In South Africa, some scholars have used systems theory in curriculum studies. Phala (2019) conducted qualitative research on reading support for Grade 3 learners in a full-service school in Gauteng. The study aimed to explore how Grade R teachers support learners who experience reading problems in full-service schools. The study showed that the relation between Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and reading support was established by "showing different systems interact with one another when supporting learners with reading problems" (Phala, 2019, p. 244).

In a phenomenological qualitative study by Filander (2015) on investigating the needs and challenges of underachieving Grade R learners in Mitchell's Plain primary school, the author found that practitioners did not have formal educational training, negatively impacting learners' learning and development needs. The study highlighted that all systems must work together to meet the needs and address student problems. Collaboration partnerships among stakeholders must be encouraged to support underachieving Grade R learners.

International scholar Nand (2017) conducted a study on applying ecological systems theory to understand the determinants of early school leaving and second-chance education in a socio-economically disadvantaged area in Sydney, Australia. The research highlights that many factors affect young people's school engagement and learning. These factors should be understood well in order to "understand school drop-out and re-engagement better" (Nand, 2017, p. 207).

Leonard (2011) used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to understand community partnerships. The study highlighted the importance of school–community collaboration in improving student development.

The above studies were essential and relevant to this current study, which adopted ecological systems theory to investigate the CLCs' role in meeting students' needs. Similarly, the researchers mentioned above all used ecological systems theory to emphasise the importance of partnership and systems working together to assist students. To meet students' needs, the CLC must partner with other stakeholders to share resources and their expertise.

2.6.3 Critique of systems theory

O'Toole (2016) contends that the links between the schools and communities where CLCs are based are essential elements of a strong mesosystem for students and families. She notes that adults working in various industries volunteered to help students learn about maths and science. This approach is complex because it is time-consuming to engage with community groups. This will require new training for the lecturers in the proposed new community driven type of education.

Neal and Neal (2013, p. 723) view ecological systems as "networked" rather than nested, as proposed by Bronfenbrenner. They argue that these systems should be seen as social relationships surrounding the individual. They view all the systems as related to one another.

For Leonard (2011), Bronfenbrenner's theory is the most important one because it enables one to look at student development on one side and the complex roles of different ecological systems on the other. He posits that the needs of the students are more significant than what each school can offer. He further argues that the needs of students are met through relationships between teachers, parents, peer groups and other members in the microsystem. This benefits the students. The exosystem's partnership helps students and teachers access resources they would not have acquired otherwise.

The community college must retrain the existing cohort of lecturers to prepare them to implement the new mandate of the college. For CLCs to effectively deliver on their mandate to provide a flexible curriculum, increased community ownership of centres is suggested, where people with different expertise come together to assist the centre. CLCs must adopt a holistic education approach.

2.7 Conclusion

The chapter began by looking briefly at the evolution of CLCs and their educational functions. The history of CLCs in Europe, Asia, Africa and South Africa was discussed. The role of CLCs in meeting the needs of students was considered, followed by best practices and success stories in CLCs. Curriculum provision challenges followed. The theoretical framework, history, use in other studies, and critique were examined.

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the research design and methodology used in the study. This chapter begins by defining the research paradigm, style, and design. There is also a section on sampling, data collection methods, and why they were chosen. A section also discusses data analysis, more specifically, inductive analysis. The last part of the chapter examines trustworthiness issues, ethical considerations, limitations, and conclusions.

3.2 Research paradigm

According to Tracy (2020), paradigms can be defined as “the preferred ways of understanding reality, building knowledge, and gathering information about the world” (p. 49). A paradigm is the way that I choose to view the world. It serves as a guide on what methods, techniques, and processes to be followed to meet the purposes of the research study. Chonco (2023) defines a paradigm as “the guiding rod throughout the study that helps interpret the opinions of the research world” (p. 58). This study employed an interpretivist paradigm because it enabled me to understand the reality and perceptions that participants in their context created. It was chosen because it enabled me to interact and have dialogue with participants.

This study leaned towards interpretivism paradigm because it investigated students and lecturers’ experiences and perceptions on the role of CLC towards addressing needs of students. There was expectation that students and lecturers would give different interpretation about programme in the centre. The interpretivist paradigm allowed students and lecturers in Nokukhanya community learning centre the opportunity to freely express their opinions on the questions. They were able to express the perceptions and experiences they had regarding the curriculum provision in their centre

3.3 Research style

Tracy (2020) defines a case study as “an in-depth contextual analysis of one or few instances of a naturalistic phenomenon that may draw from qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse data at the micro, meso and macro levels” (p. 72). Therefore, this study employed a single case study design. The choice of the case study was influenced mainly by its characteristics and the relationship it has with the purpose of the investigation. My main

objective was to investigate the CLC's role in addressing students' needs. This required a small group of students and lecturers, which matched the case study features of understanding their behaviours and thoughts. In this study, I chose a case study because I wanted to understand the roles of the CLC in its natural setting to understand students' and lecturers' subjective experiences regarding the programmes provided in their centre. The case study was Nokukhanya CLC, which provides a programme for AET Level 4 students. The case study was conducted based on the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants in the NCLC. This research style was most appropriate because it afforded an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. It also provided me with thick, descriptive data, and I was able to capture the participants' real-life experiences and thoughts about a particular situation.

One of the advantages of the case study is that it creates a platform for the participants and me to engage face-to-face on issues under the research study. This study aimed to get better insights and understand students' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of their experiences in the CLC. It was also used to highlight the use of available assets in the community and linkages with other structures to share resources to assist students.

3.4 Research design

A qualitative approach was used in this study because it was appropriate to investigate the phenomena under study. Qualitative research is “a form of social science that focuses on understanding peoples' world, interpreting their experiences and making sense out of it” (Gupta & Awasthy, 2015, p. 13). Soiferman (2010) defines qualitative research as a study conducted in the natural environment. Furthermore, Creswell and Poth (2016, p. 32) define qualitative research as “an approach for exploring and understanding meaning individuals or groups ascribe in society.” Therefore, this study was conducted in the natural setting of the participants, that is, Nokukhanya CLC.

The choice of qualitative approach was related to the research problem. This study investigated the role of the CLC in addressing the needs of students; hence, I used the qualitative approach to gather data. This allowed me to experience the real-life situation of the lecturers and the students who were involved in the ABET Level 4 programmes. As an in-depth study, I conducted face-to-face interviews with participants and observed and analysed DHET-relevant documents related to the research phenomenon in the CLC.

Through qualitative data from the participants, I got rich, detailed descriptive data.

3.5 Sampling and sampling procedure

This research study used purposive sampling. The purposive sampling technique involves selecting sample participants based on specific reasons associated with answering research questions and selecting a small number of cases that will yield the most information about a particular phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2016). I used the purposive sampling method because I wanted a sample representing some attributes of the population to serve the purpose of the study and because I did not want to generalise beyond the sampled group (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The target population of this study was the students and lecturers at Nokukhanya CLC. This study purposively selected three lecturers and a supervisor who is also a lecturer for semi-structured interviews with six students for a focus group. The inclusion criteria for lecturers focused on their extensive experience, selecting those who had over ten years of service at the centre. For students, the study included individuals enrolled in AET Level 4 programmes to ensure relevance to the research objectives. They were experienced and, in a position, to provide in-depth data. This technique was chosen because the research questions had to be answered by participants who had the experience of working and studying in the centre. This enabled me to explore their views about the programmes and services offered in the centre. This research study was conducted at Nokukhanya CLC in the uMzinyathi District in KZN. This centre is in the Msinga Local municipality. This learning centre was purposively chosen because it was convenient for me to minimise travelling costs. It was also selected because it offers ABET Level 4 programmes. Classes commence at 12h00 in an unused block in the local municipal offices. Most of the students in this centre are unemployed.

Table 1

Summary of research participants

Type of participants	Number of participants	Gender
Students	5	Females
Lecturers	3	Females
Supervisor	1	Male
Total	9	1 Male + 8 Females

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

This section presents my data collection methods to answer the research questions. This case study used semi-structured individual interviews, focus groups, observation and document analysis. Below is a table detailing the tool and the number of participants.

Table 2

Data collection techniques

Data Collection Technique	Participants	Number
Observation	Conditions where the learning takes place	
Interviews	3 Lecturers 1 Supervisor	4
Focus Group	Students	5
Document Analysis	Policies and Centre documents	

3.6.1 Pilot study

Before the entire study, a pilot study was conducted with four students and two lecturers from another local CLC. A pilot study is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 206) as a “small-scale study in which a small sample of the population is used, but not the same group in the actual research.” The pilot study formed part of the preliminary stage, where the research instruments were tested with people like the actual study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The main aim of the pilot study was to provide information which could contribute to the study's success as a whole. This helped me identify the deficiencies in my interviewing skills, check that the tape recorder to be used during in-depth interviews was in working order, estimate the probable length of the interview, and pre-empt any logistical problems that could arise.

The pilot study also assisted me in recording instances where the participants appeared uncomfortable and did not understand questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) support this view, indicating that a pilot study is necessary to check for procedure bias.

After the pilot study, I corrected and adjusted my interview techniques and the research tools. I removed the part that asked students about the support the centre receives from

organisations outside education. During the second phase, I had a greater understanding of the focus of the study and the issues that needed to be investigated.

3.6.2 Semi-structured individual interviews

Individual interviews were the first method used to collect data in this study. They are used in the interpretivist paradigm. I preferred to use semi-structured individual interviews because they enabled me to explore and describe participants' perceptions and understanding unique to them and supplied me with additional and more detailed information. It helped me to establish good relationships with participants to get detailed information. Semi-structured interviews, according to Creswell (2013), are a technique where researchers utilize an interview outline but allow participants to express themselves freely. This method offers flexibility in thoroughly examining topics and makes it easier to generate rich qualitative data. According to Patten (2016), semi-structured interviews provide qualitative researchers with a great deal of flexibility by letting them investigate a wide range of subjects while still keeping the interview organized with pre-planned questions. This method makes it easier to gain a deeper grasp of the viewpoints, experiences, and behaviours of participants, which advances our understanding of human phenomena in great depth. Semi-structured interviews used in this study because they gave participants a chance to share their thoughts, emotions, and experiences (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, semi-structured interviews for the study consisted of questions that enabled me to access, probe, follow up on certain interesting information that has emerged in the process, and clarify answers (Creswell, 2013).

I used the interview schedule (Appendix F), which contained a predetermined set of questions related to factors that inform programme offerings in the centre, relationships between the programme and the needs of students, and the programme's impact on students' lives. I asked the participants questions to assemble information about their experiences, understandings, and feelings, then probed them for deeper meanings and interpretation of responses.

The interviews were conducted in one classroom that the centre supervisor had prepared. Interviews lasted about 50 minutes per session. All the interviews were audio recorded after participants provided consent, and notes were recorded. The digital recorder was used so that I could concentrate on the interview proceedings without disturbance. It also helped to establish a good rapport between the participants and me.

Table 3

Labels used for semi-structured interview participants

Labels	Meaning
CLA	Semi-structured interview with Lecturer A
CLB	Semi-structured interview with Lecturer B
CLC	Semi-structured interview with Lecturer C
CSCL	Semi-structured interview with Supervisor

3.6.3 Focus groups

McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 363) define a focus group as “a variation of the interview used to obtain a better understanding of a problem or an assessment of a problem, concern, new product, programme or idea.” Similarly, Chilisa and Preece (2005, p. 151) define a focus group interview as “a discussion-based interview in which five or more research participants selected together contribute to the information on a specific topic needed by me.” Focus group discussions are believed by Nieuwenhuis (2007) to be a helpful technique in qualitative research that widens the range of responses given to me by participants because of the presence of other participants and as a result of debates between the participants. In this research study, there was a focus group of five students who were all females. One student did not come.

The focus group interview was conducted after students had finished writing their final examination (Appendix D). I explained the study's purpose and requested permission to record the discussion. The focus group discussion enabled me to understand the relationship between the programmes offered at the centre and the needs of students. Permission to record the interview was sought from the students before interview started. They gave permission to be recorded. The interview took place in a quiet councillor's office. I arranged the seating in such a way that participants all sit in front of me with the audio recorder to record them properly.

The focus group interview was suitable for this study because it delved deeply into the participants' experiences and enabled me to better understand how they felt about the programme and services in the centre. Data from the focus group contributed effectively to information about what students think and feel about the CLC programmes. The discussion

was based on their context, and the atmosphere was relaxed so that they could voice their opinions without intimidation. Focus group interviews also enabled the participants to discuss issues not on the predetermined list of questions.

According to Patten (2016, p. 172), the benefit of using focus groups is that “the method reveals the evolution of perceptions in a social context.” This was most appropriate because I could understand and talk about how participants perceive matters. Information gleaned from focus groups, semi-structured interviews and document analysis served as triangulated collected data. Patton (2002) further maintains that a focus group allows the participants to freely talk about what they think is essential and is a helpful guide to further data collection. I was thus able to follow up on issues that emerged during a focus group interview.

I reminded the whole group of the importance of giving each a chance to contribute, as each input was essential for the study. Focus groups also challenged me as I managed the group by encouraging shy members to contribute. I collected a massive volume of information during focus group interviews. This took 1 hour and 20 minutes. Some participants felt uncomfortable with the use of a digital recorder. I had to make them forget about the recorder. After that, they became free to engage in the topic under discussion. I encouraged each participant to state their views without focusing on what other people thought about their responses. I made them understand that there were no wrong or right answers.

Table 4

Labels for focus group discussions

Labels	Meanings
SS1	Student A
SS2	Student B
SS3	Student C
SS4	Student D
SS5	Student E

3.6.4 Observation

During the visit to the research site, I recorded the activities that happened in and around the centre. Observations were open-ended, as I asked general questions (Creswell & Tashakkori,

2007). This enabled me to get insights into actual experiences as they happened on-site. I observed the exact context where lecturers and students work. I could see the conditions of the building surroundings, other people working there, and the resources available in the centre (Appendix E). Consent from the participants was sought. Pictures were taken, and notes jotted down. It took me about 45 minutes.

The interview with the lecturers and observation were done on the same day. This saved me time and money for travel. I used this opportunity to observe the movement of students and lecturers before they went to classes. Arrival and starting times were essential to see whether participants observed time on task and on time. The centre operates from Monday to Friday. Classes start at 12h00 and finish at 15h00. I observed one classroom where teaching and learning took place. Period was thirty minutes. Classroom arrangement was such that each student seated in each desk in a row facing the chalkboard. No student-lecturer was taking place. Students were copying life skills notes from the board.

This was the third data collection method used in this study. It was conducted to corroborate what was collected from focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews. In this study, observation was helpful because it provided an opportunity to get a detailed description of the centre.

Table 5

Observation protocol

Item	Observation
Location of the centre	Housed in old Municipality skills development centre.
Infrastructure	Three classrooms were allocated to CLC. No office. One classroom was used staffroom. It was a challenge when community meeting was held during class time
Resources	No machines, computers, a workshop for skills subjects, no connectivity.
Curriculum	Students registered for GETC formal programme only. No non formal programme
Daily activities (arrival, departure, start and end of teaching)	Classes start at 12h00 and finish at 15h00. Students and lecturers do not honour the starting time. Start about 20 minutes late. Students do not attend regularly

Staffing (Lecturers & Students)	Nine lecturers (one male and eight females); Lecturers have got academic qualifications. Not qualified to teach practical skills
Challenges	Limited resources, personnel from municipality stopped offering computer lessons and learners drivers licence
Classroom interactions	Students seated in rows, one in each desk. Chalk and talk. No groupwork observed
Other organisations occupying other offices	Gcina printing company, counsellor's office

3.6.5 Document analysis

“Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic documents” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). Document analysis is one of the qualitative data collection methods to corroborate findings gained through semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

The research question focused mainly on the programmes that the CLC provides and how these meet the needs of students. I read the following documents to understand their relevance to my research study: The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013), National Policy on Curriculum Development and Implementation (DHET, 2017a), National Policy on Community Colleges (DHET, 2015), and Service Delivery Framework (DHET, 2017b).

The abovementioned documents/policies were analysed in line with the objectives of the study, which were:

- To examine factors that inform programme offerings at NCLC.
- To find out the needs of the students.
- To establish the relationship between the programmes offered at NCLC and the needs of students.

3.6 Data analysis

I used both inductive and deductive theme analysis. In inductive data analysis, I used a thematic approach. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p.395) define inductive analysis as “the process through which qualitative researchers synthesise and make meaning from the

data, starting with the specific data and ending with categories and patterns”. Thematic analysis aims to identify relevant themes and patterns to answer the research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). I read the transcripts several times to understand better what they were all about. I jotted down notes, listened to audio recordings, and re-read documents used for answering research questions. Through coding, I reduced data into small, manageable bits of meaning. I analysed the codes and fitted together those that seemed to have something in common that related to the research question (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). I revisited all the themes that had been developed to see if they were relevant. I copied and pasted themes that fitted together and colour-coded them. Themes were gleaned from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis and observation. I gained a sense of what each theme entailed. I started with data that were collected and discovered patterns and regularities that helped me at the end to make conclusions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Finally, this resulted in three themes and six sub-themes, which will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), deductive analysis involves analysing data based on pre-established concepts, frameworks, or theories. It is a structured approach where the researcher applies existing knowledge or theoretical constructs to categorise and interpret the data systematically, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives. For this study the deductive analysis, I developed five categories: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. I applied these theoretical constructs to categorise and interpret the data systematically, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives.

3.7 Trustworthiness

In this study, the following strategies for ensuring trustworthiness were employed:

3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility is a measure applied to ensure trustworthiness. It refers to accountability for the entire research, including actions taken in preparation for the field of study, keeping a reflective journal and peer group evaluation (Creswell, 2013).

I performed transcript checking to confirm if what was transcribed during interviews was what the participants had articulated. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), member checking means giving participants feedback on the preliminary findings and

interpretations of the findings. After the interviews were recorded, the recordings were played to the participants to check and verify that they meant what they said and to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretation of the data between the researcher and participants. The transcriptions were also given to the participants to double-check if the interview recordings had been correctly transcribed. Data collected using different data collection instruments enhances the credibility of the data. Both the interviews, focus groups and document analysis were believed to generate reliable data.

3.7.2 Dependability

Dependability ensures that the research findings are consistent and can be repeated (Yin, 2012). I used an audit trail to make sure that the research findings are reliable. According to Creswell (2013), an audit trail is a thorough record of the steps followed throughout the creation and analysis of data during the research process. Additionally, as Creswell (2013) points out, the audit trail acts as an open record that makes it possible for researchers, editors, and readers to follow the evolution of the research findings and confirm the validity of the study. By using this plan into my research, it has improved the reliability of research findings and boost confidence in the study's conclusions.

3.7.3 Confirmability

I reduced the effect of my biasness by emphasising the role of triangulation throughout the study. I recognised the shortcomings of the research methods and their possible impact on the findings. To achieve confirmability, I linked my research findings to a literature review. That was another way of ensuring the objectivity of the study.

3.7.4 Transferability

The context of the case study requires that background information be provided. I provided the number of participants who contributed to the research and the data collection methods (semi-structured interviews, focus groups and document analysis) used. Thick descriptions of the participants' perceptions and experiences with the programme provision were used to achieve transferability.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

All the ethical principles underpinning this research were followed throughout the research. The following ethics were applicable: An approval letter was obtained from the KwaZuluNatal Community College Principal (Appendix B). Ethical clearance was obtained from the Department of Humanities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal for this research study (Appendix A). Letters were sent to the Department of Higher Education and the Centre Manager of the CLC to request permission to conduct the research.

Before embarking on my study, I had to get the written consent of the participants (Appendix C). I told the participants that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. They were also told beforehand what the research study expected of them so that they could make informed choices. They were told that there were no favours they would receive as a result of their participation.

I assured the participants that the research study would not physically, emotionally, or socially harm anyone participating. I also assured them that their personal information would not be made public. Any information that the participants provided was kept confidential. Their identities were protected by using pseudonym instead of their real names. The name of the centre and the participants were also changed.

3.9 Research quality and limitations

The study was confined to one satellite CLC out of 30 in the uMzinyathi District. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to all CLCs. The limitation was the small sample size which does not allow for the generalisation of findings. Since this was a case study, it was acceptable (Maree, 2007). Another limitation is that the participants had to distinguish between the researcher and the departmental official. Some information may have been withheld for fear of victimisation or have been used to appease myself. These will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3.

The focus was on the programmes' content, resources in the centre, linkages with other organisations, teaching and learning approach and centre governance. The study does not include other factors like lecturers' professional development, funding, or the conditions of service of lecturers.

I am a Senior Education Specialist based at uMzinyathi District Office of Education. I am employed in the General Education and Training) (GET) band under Early Childhood

Development (ECD). My core function is to develop, support and monitor curriculum implementation in ECD. I am not directly involved in Adult Education as it falls under the DHET, Department of Higher Education and Training. However, I know the centre manager personally. I will be ensured that I do it as a complete outsider when I entered the centre as a complete outsider, I would suspending any bias or preconceived ideas I learned through literature. I will used recording devices, transcripts, focus groups, interviews, observation and document analysis. I will let participants know that the information that will be obtained would be used for academic purposes only, and their identity would be kept anonymous.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented a detailed description of the research design and methodology used in the study. I started by defining the chosen research paradigm, the chosen research style of the case study and the rationale for using it, purposive sampling, and data collection methods. Inductive data analysis was presented. I concluded the chapter by describing the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the findings of the research study conducted at Nokukhanya CLC to investigate the role the CLC plays in addressing the needs of students. This chapter analyses, interprets and discusses data derived from four data generation methods: semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, document analysis and observation of AET Level 4 students, lecturers, and supervising lecturers. This research study sought to answer the main question: “What is the role of Nokukhanya CLC in addressing the needs of students?”

The objectives of the study were the following:

- To examine factors that inform programme offerings at the NCLC.
- To find out the needs of the students.
- To establish the relationship between the programme offered at NCLC and the needs of students.

The first section of this chapter presents the biographical information of the research site and participants, followed by an inductive presentation of findings according to the three themes and six subthemes, as presented in Table 6 below. Direct participant quotations and empirical evidence from the literature review support the findings. The latter part of the section will present a deductive analysis following the ecological systems theory, which was selected as the theoretical lens for the study.

4.2 Demographic information of research site and participants

The purpose of this section is to briefly describe the context of the research institution where the study was conducted. The research was conducted at the CLC, looking broadly at the roles it plays in addressing students’ needs, focusing on the microsystem (individual students and educators), mesosystem (interactions between CLCs and their stakeholders), exosystem (external influences on CLCs), and macrosystem (broader societal context) of ecological systems theory.

This centre is in the Makhankane area, 24 kms from the Msinga local municipality offices. It is accessible as it is near the tarred road R33 via D1271, 2 km from the Pomeroy shopping complex. It is a peaceful area. There are a few primary schools around this area and a few

high schools. There are informal markets where people sell their products along the road at Pomeroy. The area is slowly developing as the mall is being built. The Table 6 shows demographic information of participants:

Table 6

Demographic information of participants

Demographic Category	Subcategory	Number of Participants
Gender	Male	1
	Female	8
Age	20-29 years	2
	30-39 years	3
	40-49 years	3
	50-59 years	1
Education Level	Not completed matric	4
	Completed matric	3
	Post-matric certificate/diploma	1
	Degree	1
Employment Status	Employed full-time	1
	Employed part-time	3
	Unemployed	5
Geographic Location	Urban/Rural within Umzinyathi District Municipality	9

This table summarises the demographic distribution of the study participants, highlighting the diversity in gender, age, education level, employment status, and geographic location.

4.2.1 Information of sites

My observation revealed that Nokukhanya CLC does not have its own building. It uses an unused municipal building which was earmarked for skills development.

Figure 2

A photograph of the NCLC building



Three unfurnished classes have been allocated to the Nokukhanya CLC. One of the classes is used as a staffroom. Since the municipality uses this building, and sometimes community meetings are held inside the premises, this can cause disruptions. Classes are not locked, and there are no computers or connectivity.

Figure 3

A photograph of one of the classrooms



This centre only offers academic programmes, offering Isizulu, English, Natural Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Life Orientation, Ancillary Health Care and Early Childhood Development as electives. Classes are held from Monday to Thursday during the day starting at 12h00, and each subject runs for 30 minutes a day.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, data were collected using four data-generating tools (interviews, focus groups, observation and document analysis). Interviews and focus group discussions had one male and eight female participants. Five of the participants were students.

4.3 Inductive analysis and presentation of findings

The study's findings reveal that Nokukhanya CLC plays different roles in addressing the needs of students. Table 7 presents the three themes and sub-themes under which the findings will be discussed.

Table 7*Themes and sub-themes*

Research question	Theme	Sub-theme
What informs programme offerings at NCLC?	Enhancing CLC effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holistic education approach in CET colleges 2. Collaboration with stakeholders for skill development
What are students' needs at NCLC?	Provisioning of a flexible curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum giving hope to students 2. Seeking an empowering programme
What is the relation between the programme provided and the needs of students at NCLC?	Connecting available programmes and students' needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Challenges in meeting student needs and community involvement 2. Mismatch of curriculum and students' needs

4.3.1 Theme 1- Enhancing CLC effectiveness

Enhancing the effectiveness of CLCs is crucial for addressing students' diverse educational and vocational needs. By aligning curriculum offerings with student aspirations and ensuring adequate resources and qualified personnel, CLCs can better fulfil their mandate. This theme explores the challenges and strategies for improving CLC operations to provide more relevant and impactful education and skills training, focusing on two sub-themes: the holistic education approach and collaboration with stakeholders.

Holistic education approach in CET Colleges

A holistic approach in education typically encompasses a comprehensive strategy that integrates various aspects of learning, including academic, vocational, and life skills, as well as addressing students' physical and emotional well-being. It ensures that education is about imparting knowledge and preparing students for all facets of life. In pursuit of a meaningful impact, CET colleges aim to make a significant impact, “they need to have a holistic approach to education and training” (DHET, 2017a, p. 14). This means they must provide general education, which includes functional literacy/numeracy programmes such as the General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA), secondary education like

NASCA, vocational/occupational programmes in partnership with organisations, and community-based non-formal programmes.

The study revealed that the Nokukhanya CLC lacks a holistic education approach, as the centre only offers Isizulu, English, Life Orientation, Natural Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Ancillary Health Care and Early Childhood Development directed by the office. This was confirmed by one lecturer in the face-to-face interview.

Msinga Cluster Centre Manager called the supervisors' meeting and told them that our centres should offer the same subjects. Our supervisor said the Department from the District told them centres must offer the same subjects, but centres were allowed to add if they were capable. (CLA)

Msinga cluster supervisors were told to offer the same subjects in their satellites (CLC).

The Centre manager called us in the meeting. She told us that the Department said satellite centres must offer the same subjects. She also indicated that centres are free to provide additional courses if they have the power to do so. (CSCL)

This contradicts what the National Policy on Curriculum Development and Implementation has mandated the CLCs. The mandate is that the CLCs must add non-formal programmes to their offerings: school governing body training, civic and citizenship education; small, medium and micro enterprise training, co-operative training; learner driver's licence life skills; voter education; and consumer education (DHET, 2017a).

In conclusion, not adopting a holistic approach significantly undermines the effectiveness of CLCs, leading to limited student development, inadequate resources, high dropout rates, missed community collaboration opportunities, and failure to meet educational policy mandates. This concurs with the findings of the study conducted by Dhlamini and Heeralal (2014) on factors that lead students to drop out of community college, highlighting curriculum design as one major cause.

Collaboration with stakeholders for skill development

Collaboration with stakeholders is essential for CLCs to provide skill development programmes effectively. This approach involves partnering with various organisations, including CBOs, NGOs, faith-based organisations, local businesses, and government agencies, to enhance students' educational offerings and resources.

Stakeholder collaboration allows CLCs to leverage additional resources, such as expertise and equipment, that they might not have access to on their own. For instance, collaborations existed with the municipality to prepare students to write their learner's licences. Lecturers mentioned that the first group was taught, but they did not go to write tests. When asked about the reasons for not writing the test, they said they did not know why students failed to turn up for tests. As a result, the programme was discontinued. Another collaboration was for computer lessons, and this was discontinued.

Our centre has a good relationship with local municipality. Although we do not have a skills programme, a guy from the municipality trained our learners in computer skills. He comes with his laptops and trains a certain number of learners in a term. It's an introductory course of three months. (CLB)

Our centre has good relations with Little Elephant (LETCEE) [a non-profit organisation], which trains our students in ECD. They take one group for three weeks, train and give them toys. After three months, students get certificates. We also work well with the municipality because they gave us this space. When we came here, they trained students on computers and learners. (CSCL)

Students go to LETCEE to learn about Early Childhood Development. They are given toys, learn how to establish their own creches, and get certificates. (CLC)

Students who do Ancillary Health Care visit Philanjalo NGO to do research. (CLA)

The quotes from the participants above illustrate that this centre does collaborate with stakeholders like the local municipality and NGOs, although it faced challenges that led to its discontinuation. These partnerships highlight the potential benefits of resource sharing, although they sometimes do not benefit the learners. The reason for limited benefits may be a lack of community ownership, which Mginywa (2021) has highlighted as important in enhancing the capacity of CLCs to offer relevant courses. He advocates that this can increase community involvement and investment in the centre's success. Bridge (2020) and Molema (2022) advocate for programmes that will assist students in solving their real-life problems, such as cooperatives, entrepreneurship, and learner driver's licences, and these can be made available through partnerships with other organisations.

The White Paper on Post School-Education and Training (DHET, 2013) and the National Policy on Community Colleges (DHET, 2015) both emphasise the need for partnerships to

enhance educational quality and relevance. Therefore, collaborating with stakeholders helps CLCs align with government policies and educational mandates, ensuring that they meet the DHET standards.

In conclusion, collaboration with stakeholders is crucial for CLCs to expand their skill development offerings, enhance resource availability, and improve student outcomes. Such partnerships not only diversify and enrich the curriculum but also align CLC programmes with market demands and community needs, ultimately leading to better educational and employment prospects for students.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Provisioning of a flexible curriculum

Provisioning a flexible curriculum is crucial for CLCs to meet the diverse needs of their students effectively. This theme explores the strategies used by CLCs to align their programmes with student demands.

Curriculum giving hope to students

A well-structured curriculum can significantly impact students' lives, providing them with the skills and knowledge necessary for personal and professional growth. This sub-theme examines how the curriculum at CLCs offers hope to students by enabling them to improve their academic standing and acquire valuable skills for future opportunities. The findings from this study revealed contradictory results. Some students are happy with the programmes offered; these students are the young ones who have dropped out of school. Many of these students enrolled seeking a second chance in education, having previously struggled in traditional educational settings with aspirations to enhance their matric symbols or pursue tertiary education. Both the students and the lecturers agree the curriculum at the centre gives students hope for a better future.

They gave us these subjects, but I think if I can improve my maths, I will be able to go to university to do teaching. (S4)

I am happy with the programme because I will go to university. I will go to university. (S3)

I am happy with the programme because I think if I pass maths, I will do nursing. (S1)

Similarly, the lecturers concurred with the students and mentioned that

They come to this centre because they want to improve matric symbols. (CLB)

Learners come here because they want Malusi Certificates so that they can go to TVET College. (CLC)

Students who wish to get an AET Level 4/Umalusi certificate and others who want to improve their symbols so that they can go to TVET College. A few want computers, baking, small business management, accounting, and tourism. We do not have these. (CSCL)

Furthermore, incorporating modules like ECD equips students with skills relevant to childcare, fostering employment opportunities and income generation. Rule et al. (2015) advocates a curriculum that resonates with learners, addressing their roles as adults. Furthermore, the White Paper on Post School-Education and Training (DHET, 2013) underscores the importance of CLCs providing quality programmes to facilitate learning, training, and development.

As discussed in the previous theme, collaboration with various stakeholders, as Mginywa (2021) advocates, can enhance CLCs' capacity to offer courses tailored to students' needs. Nokukhanya also provides courses such as Early Childhood Development in partnership with LETCEE to equip students with practical skills relevant to childcare, fostering employment opportunities. This will allow graduates to bridge the gap between the subjects offered and their daily lives, as noted by Rule et al. (2015). The quote from a lecturer supports this finding

With the skills they learn from the programme, they can be caregivers at homes.
(CLC)

Other students, after completing, can teach in creches and get income. (CLB)

After finishing with LETCEE, they are employed by the Department of Education.
Others continue doing diplomas at the colleges and universities. (CLB)

They said they want skills to help them find jobs and other students. After getting certificates, they go to FET [sic]. (CLA)

Students who have passed AET Level 4 can further their studies. There is one lady who was our student who is at the University of North West doing teaching. The other ladies are working at Cosh Hospital and Shoprite. With assistance from

LETCEE, some started their creches in communities. (CSCL)

Skills will help if you want to apply for jobs at hospitals. (S3)

One other support for the finding was from a student and was highlighted in the focus group discussions:

Life skills have taught me communication skills, which I can use in daily engagements. (S2)

The White Paper on Post School-Education and Training (DHET, 2013) underscores the importance of CLCs providing quality programmes to facilitate learning, training, and development.

From the above findings, one can conclude that students are driven by a desire for practical skills that address real-life challenges, motivating them to engage in learning. As such, CLCs must align their programmes with students' needs and aspirations, empowering them to thrive in their personal and professional endeavours. Tawiah and Ngmenkpieo (2018) further concur that job-related practical skills enable students to generate income and create self-employment opportunities. Rakoma and Schulze (2015) also found that students desire programmes that equip them with skills to support themselves and their families.

Seeking empowering programmes

While many young students at the CLC find hope and satisfaction in the programmes offered, believing these will help them improve their academic qualifications and pursue further studies, others experience significant disappointment. For instance, several students enrolled with the expectation of enhancing their matric results to gain university admission, as reflected in comments like, "I am happy with the programme because if I improve my maths, I will go to university" (S3). This optimism illustrates the CLC's academic offerings' positive impact on certain students' aspirations.

Conversely, some students are discontented with the limited scope of the curriculum, which fails to meet their needs for practical skills and vocational training. These students seek programmes that directly enhance their employability and livelihood opportunities. Some students from the focus group discussions expressed frustration, saying,

There are no skills here. If they can bring back the computer class. (S4)

They told us that there would be skills like sewing, baking, and computer skills, but there are no skills subject esiwafundayo [which are offered]. (S5)

We were told there would be a skills programme in the centre, kodwa awekho [but there was nothing]. (S2)

Another student highlighted the necessity of vocational subjects by stating,

Many people can join if the college can introduce skills programmes like plumbing, sewing, and baking. (CLB).

A few students want computers, other learners baking, small business management, accounting, and tourism. Unfortunately, the centre does not provide them. (CSCL)

When probed further about what happens to this group, the supervisor said:

They continue doing the certificate, but some gradually disappear during the year. (CSCL)

This dissatisfaction underscores a critical gap in the CLC's provision, revealing that not all students' needs and expectations are being met, thereby limiting the centre's overall effectiveness in serving its diverse student body.

CLCs must offer various programmes and services, including integrated functional adult education, agricultural training, business skills, and sports activities (DVV International, 2021). OECD (2019) emphasises the importance of employment, entrepreneurship, and digital and life skills programmes. Students desire courses like computer skills, baking, sewing, mechanics, and learner's licences (Land, 2021), believing these skills will enhance their employability.

The findings reveal that students enrol at CLCs to acquire skills relevant to their lives and environment, seeking practical subjects like sewing, baking, gardening, carpentry, and poultry farming. However, they are frustrated when they discover their preferred subjects, such as business management or vocational skills training, are unavailable. CLCs typically offer subjects like English, Mathematics, Life Orientation, Natural Science, Ancillary Health Care, and Early Childhood Development. However, these subjects often do not align with the needs of students seeking employment (Hendricks & Aploon-Zokufa, 2021). Students desire programmes such as computer skills, baking, sewing, mechanics, and learner's licence training.

While subjects like Ancillary Health Care and ECD provide income-generating opportunities (Land, 2021), there remains a significant gap in vocational offerings. While CLCs are expected to provide flexible and relevant programmes, Nokukhanya predominantly offers academic courses, which, according to the National Policy on Community Colleges (DHET, 2015), do not sufficiently equip students with practical skills essential for their livelihoods.

The above findings demonstrate the need for the centre to provide programmes that will empower students so they can create their own small businesses to get out of poverty or create opportunities for job seekers. This aligns with UNESCO (2003a) as it advocates literacy classes that empower learners to execute income-generating activities. Moreover, the main objective of the CET programme is to improve livelihoods, enhance chances of inclusion in the labour market and support individual needs (DHET, 2017a). Findings from this study reveal that the centre does not offer such programmes, as confirmed by lecturers.

Sometimes, students ask for subjects like Business Management, Economic and Management Sciences, and Cooperatives. We tell them that we do not have those subjects. (CLA)

They said they want skills which would help them find jobs. (CLA)

When lecturers were asked about the outcome for these students, they mentioned that some of them left the centre, and it is unfortunate that all the satellite centres offer the same subjects.

The findings alluded to above align with the findings of Tawiah and Thusi-Sefatsa (2022) on the value of adult and community education and training in empowering rural women in South Africa. They argue that CET colleges should offer bead making, cloth weaving, computer skills, and dressmaking programmes, which can significantly improve students' living conditions. However, their study reveals that CLCs have failed to provide these essential skills to their students.

Another interesting finding is that some students at Nokukhanya are high school dropouts hoping to improve their results. However, the centre only offers GETCA (AET Level 4), not matric, which may confuse students about its equivalency, disillusioning them about their academic advancement prospects. This discrepancy means the centre cannot meet the needs of students seeking to improve their matric results. As indicated earlier, while some students

enrol to gain skills for employment or self-employment, the centre fails to provide any vocational programmes.

In essence, there is a concern that very few CLCs offer vocational skills programmes like welding, auto mechanics, sewing, baking, and computer skills (OECD, 2019), indicating a significant gap between policy expectations and actual provisioning. The absence of skills development programmes underscores the urgent need for Nokukhanya CLC to realign its curriculum to serve its student body better. Aligning programmes with students' aspirations is essential for CLCs to empower students to thrive personally and professionally.

The conclusion I draw from the above themes and sub-themes is that the department decides to tell the centres what programmes they will offer. This is contrary to their mandate, which states that “the Community Education and Training Colleges shall be flexible in their programme offerings and include programmes driven by the community developmental priorities, as well as the priorities of the State.” (DHET, 2015, p. 14). This negatively impacts students who want skills to get jobs or create their own employment and who will leave the centre. This is confirmed by Hendricks and Aploon-Zokufa (2021), who argue that academic subjects are not helpful to the needs of students who do not need formal programmes. They argue that focusing on academic knowledge in the CLC makes young students lose interest as they prefer work-related skills.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Connecting available programmes and students' needs

Connecting available programmes and students' needs delves into the alignment between the courses offered by CLCs and the requirements of their student body. This theme explores how effectively CLCs cater to their students' diverse educational needs and aspirations and how they involve the community.

Challenges in meeting student needs and community involvement

The mission of Nokukhanya CLC is to provide a flexible curriculum tailored to its students' diverse needs. Still, it faces significant challenges due to the mismatch between student aspirations and the centre's programme offerings. In the previous sections, it was clear that there are varied student aspirations, from academic improvement to acquiring vocational skills for employment, highlighting the disconnect between student desires and available courses.

Despite comprehensive needs assessments that the centre says they conduct annually, as Taylor (2006) has emphasised, there appears to be a discrepancy between the perspectives of students and lecturers regarding this exercise. Below are some of the different perspectives. In the focus group interviews, all students agreed they were not asked which subjects they wanted. The students mentioned that they were given a list, and this list came from the Department.

No community was ever involved in establishing which programmes we wanted. (FG).

Another lecturer during the face-to-face interview said.

In our meetings, we tell them the subjects we offer. We tell them the value of enrolling in our programmes. We give them pamphlets from CET College. They come to our centre knowing what programme we offer. (CLA)

KZN CET College pamphlets also showed all the programmes available in the CLC; however, data show that these are not offered. One reason could be that the centre struggles to provide the necessary programmes, hindering its ability to align with students' genuine needs. This discrepancy underscores the failure to fulfil the DHET's mandate for flexible and relevant programme offerings. The disparity between students' desires and the centre's programme offerings leads to dissatisfaction and even dropout rates. Course selection should be informed by annual research conducted by the centres and based on learner requests (DVV International, 2017).

Qualified personnel

The research conducted by Rivombo and Motseke (2022) illuminates a persistent challenge highlighted in the preceding paragraph regarding the disconnect between student needs and the curriculum offerings of CLCs, emphasising the critical importance of suitably qualified personnel within CLCs. Their findings underscore how this discrepancy also extends to the failure of CLCs in adequately designing skill programmes that effectively engage and empower youth for the job market. This emphasises the critical importance of having appropriately qualified personnel within CLCs. Aitchison and Land (2019) have argued that CLC lecturers must possess comprehensive training to address student needs and adapt materials accordingly. The Policy on Qualifications in Higher Education for Adult Education and Training Educators and Community Education and Training College Lecturers (DHET, 2014, p.13) further emphasise that CLC lecturers must possess specific expertise, general

pedagogical knowledge, and specialised content knowledge. These qualifications enable educators to understand the lived experiences of their students and provide them with the necessary skills for improved livelihoods. One respondent stated that

Skills courses may be introduced if the community college can employ more qualified facilitators. (CLB)

Colleges must employ more facilitators and provide resources such as stoves and machines. (CLA)

Our challenge is that we do not have qualified facilitators to teach skills subjects, and there are no resources like stoves, workshops, or machines. These learners can learn baking, beading, sewing, and making money. But nendawo akusiyo eyethu [place is not ours]. (CSCL)

Thus, it becomes imperative for community colleges to ensure that each centre employs suitable, qualified educators capable of delivering flexible and relevant programmes.

Infrastructure

Infrastructural limitations further exacerbate challenges faced by Nokukhanya CLC, hindering its capacity to deliver relevant programmes. Shortages of essential resources like tables, chairs, and stationery impede the realisation of policy expectations and limit the centre's ability to offer occupational and skills programmes. This was evident through my observation of the centre, as I explained at the beginning of this chapter.

Despite attempts to introduce courses like computer skills, unforeseen challenges have led to their discontinuation, widening the gap in skills provision. These limitations impede the achievement of curriculum objectives and prevent the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into teaching practices, as the DHET recommends. Lyster and Land (2019) underscore the multitude of hurdles, particularly the scarcity of material resources, which compromises the CLCs' capacity to offer flexible programmes that cater to students' needs.

As lecturers have reported, Nokukhanya CLC grapples with severe shortages of essential resources, such as tables, chairs, and stationery. One lecturer noted,

Stationery comes late, which means students have to buy their own. No photocopier. We have to travel and make copies for 100 students. (CLA)

There was a promise of computer classes, and that someone would come and offer them but, to date, we have not been offered them. Moreover, there are no computers and no Wi-Fi. Akukho lutho nje [There is nothing]. (S5)

Additionally, the data reveal a lack of tables and chairs, leading to the borrowing of furniture from neighbouring schools at the expense of the CLC.

We do not have enough tables and chairs. We borrow from neighbouring schools using our money. No computers, no cupboard for storing our belongings. (CLC)

These infrastructural inadequacies impede the realisation of policy expectations that CLCs should offer occupational and skills programmes. Crucial subjects like bricklaying, plumbing, welding, and sewing, essential for empowering students to establish their enterprises and break free from poverty, remain out of reach for Nokukhanya CLC due to its limited capacity. One lecturer confirmed the absence of resources like stoves, computers, and machinery necessary for offering skills such as baking and sewing, which could significantly enhance students' livelihoods. Rivombo and Motseke (2022) and Matlabe (2016) found that teaching and learning support materials were scarce, which concurred with the above findings.

Table 8

Observational data feedback

Items	Observation	Analysis
1. Infrastructure	Lack of teaching and learning materials, furniture, equipment	Three unfurnished classes have been allocated to the Nokukhanya CLC. One of the classes is used as a staffroom. Since the municipality uses this building, and sometimes community meetings are held inside the premises, this can cause disruptions.
2. Curriculum	Students registered for GETC formal programme only. No non formal programme.	This centre only offers academic programmes, offering Isizulu, English, Natural Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Life Orientation, Ancillary Health Care and Early Childhood Development as electives.

3. Resources	No computers, stoves, machines, unqualified staff to teach skills subjects	Lack of computers, stoves and machines meant that there were no skills programme offered
4. Staffing	8 female lecturers, one male 161 students registered 4 lecturers with no matric	Not seen more than 20 were present during visits. Registered and dropped out due to lack of relevant programme
5. Daily activities	Classes start at 12h00 and finish at 15h00. Students and lecturers do not honour the starting time. Start about 20 minutes late. Students do not attend regularly	Classes are held from Monday to Thursday during the day starting at 12h00, and each subject runs for 30 minutes a day. Students do not attend classes regularly. Maybe they are demotivated because programme do not address their needs.
6. Classroom interaction	Students seated in rows, one in each desk. Chalk and talk. No groupwork observed	Students were seated in rows. They copied notes from the board written by the lecturer. No group learning was observed as students were coping notes.
7. Challenges	Limited resources, staff not qualified to teach and offer practical skills. Lack of stationery	The CLC does not have qualified facilitators to teach skills subjects, and there are no resources like stoves, workshops, or machines. Shortages of essential resources like tables, chairs, and stationery impede the realisation of policy expectations and limit the centre's ability to offer occupational and skills programmes
8. Other organisations inside the building	Gcina printing company, counsellor's office	

4.4 Deductive Analysis Using the Ecological Theoretical Framework

In this section, I employ a deductive analysis framework grounded in ecological theory to examine the interplay between CLCs and their surrounding environments in addressing the students' needs. Drawing inspiration from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, my

analysis seeks to unravel the intricate relationships between CLCs and the various systems that influence their functioning. By applying this theoretical lens, I aim to elucidate how factors at multiple levels, including the microsystem (individual students and educators), mesosystem (interactions between CLCs and their stakeholders), exosystem (external influences on CLCs), and macrosystem (broader societal context), collectively shape the effectiveness and impact of CLCs in their communities. Through this deductive approach, I endeavour to provide a nuanced understanding of the ecological dynamics within community education and learning.

4.4.1 Microsystem

This initial layer involves direct interactions within the CLC environment, encompassing relationships between students and educators (Ryan, 2001). The holistic approach influences students' immediate learning experiences through communication between CLC staff and students. Within this environment, centre managers and lecturers play a crucial role in facilitating the curriculum, interacting with students and fostering peer interactions among students.

At this level, the study found that NCLC lacks a holistic education approach in its immediate interactions with students. The centre only offers academic programmes directed by the district office, which undermines the effectiveness of the CLC, leading to limited student development and high dropout rates. Students expressed dissatisfaction with the limited scope of the curriculum, which fails to meet their needs for practical skills and vocational training. This direct interaction highlights a critical gap in the centre's ability to address its students' immediate needs and aspirations. This is reflected in the direct quotes from the participants below.

At the beginning of the year, we discuss our programme with students. We tell them the centre offers Isizulu, English, Mathematics, Life Orientation, Natural Sciences, Ancillary Health Care and Early Childhood Development. (CLA)

Students ask about subjects we do not have, like tourism, cooperatives, and SMMEs. (CLC)

4.4.2 Mesosystem

This layer involves the interactions between the CLC and external entities such as local authorities, SETAs, and NGOs, impacting the CLC's ability to offer diverse and relevant programmes.

At the mesosystem level, the study shows the positive impact of CLC collaboration with other stakeholders, such as local municipalities and NGOs. Though faced with challenges and sometimes discontinued, these partnerships highlight the potential benefits of resource sharing. Effective collaboration can enhance resource availability and empower student outcomes by diversifying and enriching the curriculum, aligning CLC programmes with market demands and student employment prospects. The quotes below support the above results.

Although we do not have a skills programme, a guy from municipality trained our learners in computer skills. He came with his laptops and trained several learners per term. It's an introductory course of three months. This building was a skills centre. They gave us classes to use for our programme. (CSCL)

LETCEE trains our students in Early Childhood Development. Students are given toys and assisted on how to open their creche. (CLB)

Nurses sometimes come and ask for students who will be trained as caregivers. (CLC)

4.4.3 Exosystem

The exosystem level involves the indirect influences that affect the centre, such as policies from the DHET (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). The study revealed that the NCLC struggles to carry out the mandate of DHET to offer a flexible curriculum. The centre is constrained by the lack of autonomy in deciding its programmes, which is instead dictated by the district office. This misalignment with the exosystem's policy expectations hampers the centre's ability to offer a curriculum that meets the practical needs of its student body. One participant said, "There are no resources here like stoves and machines to offer baking, beading and knitting. There are not enough tables, desks and chairs" (CLC). Another participant said,

“We do not have computers and internet. Even if you want to download material for learners, you must travel to an internet café and use your money”. (CSCL).

Macrosystem

At the macrosystem level, the broader cultural and societal context, the study found that the failure of the NCLC to meet policy mandates could limit the country’s ability to achieve its 2030 targets. The inadequate infrastructure and resources at the NCLC impede the realisation of policy expectations that CLCs should offer occupational and skills programmes. This broader systemic failure reflects the need for a more supportive and resource-rich environment to fulfil the educational and vocational aspirations of the students.

While KZN Community College has articulated its commitment to providing formal and non-formal programmes to equip adults and youth with academic, vocational, and occupational skills (DHET, 2016), the practical implementation of these goals faces significant challenges. This includes discrepancies between stated commitments and actual programme offerings observed at local CLCs. These centres often struggle with limited resources, insufficient infrastructure such as lack of computers and internet access, and inadequate staffing, which hinder their capacity to deliver comprehensive educational programmes as envisioned by the DHET policies.

Colleges must employ more facilitators and provide resources such as stoves and machines. If CLCs can have qualified facilitators to teach welding, motor mechanics, and plumbing, more people can be assisted as they gain skills to survive. (CLA)

We do not have stove/machines to teach baking/knitting. We do not have certificates for baking and knitting, but we do it at home. Skills could assist students in making a living. (CLB)

4.4.4 Chronosystem

The chronosystem, which encompasses the dimension of time, shows how environmental changes and continuities affect development. The study indicates that while there have been attempts to introduce new programmes and collaborations over time, these have not been sustained or adequately supported. This lack of long-term strategic planning and investment further exacerbates the issues faced by NCLC. The evolution of educational demands and

programme offerings at CLCs reflects broader socio-economic trends and historical contexts. Over time, as the economic landscape and job market demands have shifted, there has been an increasing need for employment, entrepreneurship, management, digital, and life skills programmes. Students currently seek centres that offer practical programmes such as computer skills, baking, sewing, mechanics, and learner's licences (Land, 2021). This evolving demand highlights the chronosystem's influence, highlighting how changes over time in community needs and economic conditions shape the educational services provided by CLCs.

In summary, several critical findings have emerged from this study that shed light on the functioning and effectiveness of Nokukhanya CLC. At the microsystem level, students' express dissatisfaction when the desired programmes are not offered, highlighting a disconnect between student aspirations and the curriculum provided by the CLC. This dissatisfaction often contributes to high dropout rates and a sense of unmet educational needs among the student body.

At the mesosystem level, the study finds that the CLCs have facilitated skills training in computer literacy and early childhood development, albeit with some challenges and discontinuations. These collaborations underscore the potential benefits of resource-sharing and highlight the difficulty of sustaining these efforts over time.

At the exosystem level, the study identifies the DHET policy mandates as significant drivers of programmatic decisions. DHET emphasises the importance of CLCs offering flexible and relevant programmes to meet community needs in academic, vocational, and occupational fields. However, CLCs often struggle to align their programmes with these mandates due to resource constraints, including inadequate infrastructure, such as a lack of computers, internet access, and essential equipment like stoves and machines for vocational training.

In the macrosystem, despite these intentions, there is a notable gap between policy goals and the practical implementation at CLCs, affecting programme diversity and overall effectiveness. This gap suggests a need for more significant support and resources to bridge the divide between policy expectations and operational realities at the local CLC level.

Finally, the study reveals fluctuations in CLC programming efforts over time in the chronosystem. Past initiatives to introduce skills programmes with external assistance have faced challenges in long-term sustainability, influenced by changes in leadership, fluctuating resource availability, and evolving community needs. These temporal factors highlight the

dynamic nature of CLC operations and the importance of adaptive strategies to meet ongoing educational demands effectively. Addressing these complexities is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of CLCs in providing community education and empowering learners to meet their educational and vocational aspirations.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the research information gleaned from the following sources: focus group discussions with students, semi-structured interviews with lecturers and document analysis. I formulated themes and sub-themes based on the three research questions. I used both inductive and deductive analysis approaches. The study presented three themes and six subthemes. The next chapter will discuss the study's conclusion concerning research questions.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the qualitative data were analysed inductively and deductively. This chapter presents the study overview and a summary of findings concerning research questions. The chapter will end with suggestions for future research and the conclusion.

This study sought to investigate the role the CLCs play in addressing the needs of students. In so doing, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What informs programme offerings at NCLC?
2. What are students' needs at NCLC?
3. What is the relationship between the programme provided and the requirements of students?

5.2 Overview of the study

Nokukhanya CLC is a satellite CLC in Umzinyathi District which falls under the Msinga Municipality, a deeply rural area in KZN. There are minimal employment opportunities in this area. There are no essential industries in this area. People are employed in informal sectors. This centre is located in the Makhankane area. It is housed at Amandla Municipal building (pseudonym) and operates in the building which was previously used for skills development by an FET college.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the role the CLC plays in addressing students' needs. Literature that was reviewed for this study included international literature which focused on the evolution of CLCs and their educational needs, CLCs in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South Africa, as well as curriculum provision challenges faced by learning centres. The literature reviewed showed that good practices in adult education centres internationally and locally can be followed to assist CLC in effectively addressing students' needs.

A qualitative case study was adopted to get rich information from various sources and understand the roles the CLC plays in addressing students' needs. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory underpinned this research study. It was relevant as it examined the interplay between CLCs and their surrounding environments in addressing the students'

needs. Using this theory, the analysis sought to unravel the intricate relationships between the CLCs and various systems that influence their functioning. Through this theoretical lens, I could elucidate how factors at multiple levels, including microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems, collectively shape the effectiveness and impact of CLCs in their communities.

5.3 Summary of demographics of the study

The study involved a balanced gender distribution with 11% male and 89% female participants. The age range of the participants varied, with two individuals in the 20–29 years age group, three in the 30–39 years range, three in the 40–49 years range, one participant in the 50–59 years range, and no participant aged 60 and above. Educationally, the participants were diverse: four had not completed matric, three had completed matric, one held post-matric certificates or diplomas, and one had an undergraduate degree. Employment status also varied, with one participant employed full-time, three employed part-time, and five unemployed. Geographically, participants were drawn from various locations within the Umzinyathi District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, encompassing both urban and rural areas. All participants were actively involved in CLCs, either as learners or instructors, providing valuable insights into the operational challenges and educational experiences within these centres. This diverse demographic profile contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the community learning environment in the Umzinyathi District Municipality.

5.4 Summary of empirical findings

The empirical findings of this research reveal that Nokukhanya CLC lacks a holistic education approach. The centre only offers academic programmes directed by the district office, undermining the effectiveness of the CLC. This results in limited student development, high dropout rates, inadequate resources, missed opportunities for community collaboration, and failure to meet educational policy mandates.

The centre collaborates with other stakeholders like the local municipality and NGOs, although these partnerships have faced challenges and were eventually discontinued. However, these partnerships highlighted the potential benefits of resource sharing, even if they did not ultimately benefit the students. Collaboration with stakeholders is crucial for CLCs to expand their skill development offerings, enhance resource availability, and

empower student outcomes. Such partnerships can diversify and enrich the curriculum, align CLC programmes with market demands and improve student employment prospects.

Students are driven by a desire for practical skills that address real-life challenges, motivating them to continue learning. CLCs must align their programmes with students' needs and aspirations. Some students expressed dissatisfaction with the limited scope of the curriculum, which fails to meet their needs for practical skills and vocational training. They seek programmes that directly enhance their employability and livelihood opportunities. These dissatisfactions indicate that the CLC has a gap in providing a diverse curriculum, failing to meet the needs and expectations of its diverse student body.

The centre struggles to offer programmes that appear in KZN college pamphlets, failing to carry out the DHET's mandate to provide a flexible curriculum. Nokukhanya grapples with severe shortages of resources, and the lack of infrastructure impedes the realisation of policy expectations that CLCs should offer occupational and skills programmes.

5.5 Responses to the research questions

5.5.1 Research question 1: What informs programme offerings at NCLC?

The district office primarily directs programme offerings at the NCLC, focusing on academic programmes rather than a holistic or vocational curriculum. The centre has collaborated with stakeholders like the local municipality and NGOs, although these partnerships have faced challenges and have been discontinued. This indicates that while there was some external input and attempted collaboration, the central influence remains with the district office's directives. Additionally, the lack of a needs-based assessment or significant stakeholder engagement means that programme offerings are not fully aligned with the students' aspirations or community requirements.

5.5.2 Research question 2. What are students' needs at NCLC?

Students at NCLC have a clear desire for practical skills that address real-life challenges and enhance their employability and livelihood opportunities. They seek vocational training in bead making, cloth weaving, computer skills, dressmaking, and other practical courses to help them generate income and improve their living conditions. The demand is for programmes directly relevant to their personal and professional aspirations, including the ability to create self-employment opportunities. Some students expressed dissatisfaction regarding the current curriculum's limited scope.

5.5.3 Research question 3. What is the relationship between the programmes provided and the requirements of students?

There is a significant discrepancy between the programmes provided at NCLC and the requirements of the students. While the centre offers primarily academic programmes dictated by the district office, students strongly need vocational and practical skills training. This misalignment leads to student dissatisfaction, higher dropout rates, and limited student development. The current curriculum fails to meet the diverse needs and expectations of the student body, particularly in providing practical skills and vocational training that would enhance employability and livelihood opportunities. Despite attempts at collaboration with stakeholders, the centre has not successfully integrated these practical programmes into its offerings, thereby failing to meet the comprehensive needs of its students.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The primary limitation of this study is that the research was conducted at a single satellite centre, focusing exclusively on students enrolled in GETC/AET Level 4. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalised to other settings.

Additionally, this centre does not represent all centres in the district, meaning the views of students and lecturers here may not reflect those of others in similar situations. Another limitation is that only five students, all from the same centre, participated in the focus group, which may not provide a comprehensive view.

5.7 Recommendations

From the empirical study findings and literature reviews, I suggest the following recommendations to CLC managers, lecturers, DHET officials and policymakers.

To enhance CLCs' effectiveness, a holistic approach to programme provisioning must be adopted. This involves designing and delivering a comprehensive range of programmes that address not only academic needs but also vocational, life skills, and personal development. By promoting a holistic curriculum, CLCs can better meet the diverse needs of their students, ensuring that learners are equipped with practical skills and knowledge applicable to various aspects of their lives. The DHET should play a crucial role in fostering strong community ownership of the CLCs, ensuring that these institutions are responsive to local needs and have the support and engagement of the communities they serve.

To expand their skill development offerings, enhance resource availability, and improve student outcomes, CLCs must build strong collaborations with stakeholders. Partnerships with local businesses, non-governmental organisations, and community groups can provide CLCs with additional resources, expertise, and practical opportunities for students. These collaborations can facilitate the introduction of new vocational courses and skills training aligned with the current job market and local economic opportunities. By leveraging these relationships, CLCs can enhance their capacity to offer relevant, high-quality curricula and programmes that prepare students for employment and entrepreneurship.

CLCs must align their programmes with students' needs and aspirations, empowering them to thrive in their personal and professional endeavours. This requires regular and thorough needs assessments to understand the goals and challenges faced by students. Programmes should be flexible and adaptive, offering pathways that enable students to achieve their academic, vocational, and personal development goals. By tailoring their offerings to their students' specific needs and aspirations, CLCs can provide a more engaging and practical learning experience, thereby improving retention and success rates.

Furthermore, CLCs must focus on providing empowering programmes that can assist students in creating their own businesses to escape poverty. Courses in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and practical vocational skills such as sewing, baking, and computer skills are essential. These programmes should equip students with the knowledge and tools to start and sustain their ventures, contributing to local economic development and individual financial independence.

The DHET must allow centres the autonomy to decide on the programmes they offer based on the requests and needs of their constituents. Rather than imposing a standardised curriculum, the DHET should provide a framework that supports flexibility and responsiveness to local contexts. This approach ensures that the offerings are relevant and valuable to the students, addressing each community's unique challenges and opportunities. By empowering CLCs to make decisions about their programme offerings, the DHET can foster more innovative and effective educational practices that better serve the diverse needs of learners across different regions.

To ensure that CLCs effectively address the needs of their students and communities, it is crucial to enhance the capacity of centre managers. Managers should be trained to foster strong relationships with stakeholders and develop and implement curricula aligned with

their students' specific needs and aspirations. This includes building skills in community engagement, partnership development, and adaptive curriculum design to ensure the CLCs remain relevant and effective in their educational mission.

5.8 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings of the study, I would like to make the following recommendations for future research:

1. Further studies should focus on the collaboration between CLCs and other stakeholders.
2. A comprehensive study. Based on the study's findings, I recommend utilising mixed methods and encompass a larger scale. This comprehensive research should include input from departmental officials who monitor these centres.
3. Future research should explore the role of non-formal education in promoting sustainable living within the framework of Community Education and Training (CET). While this study focused on skills development, employability, and lifelong learning through community learning centres, the data did not explicitly address the integration of sustainable living practices. Given the growing importance of sustainability in addressing socio-economic and environmental challenges, further studies could investigate how CET programmes can incorporate non-formal education initiatives that emphasize sustainable lifestyles and practices. This line of inquiry would provide valuable insights into how CET can holistically address community needs and contribute to sustainable development.

5.9 Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate NCLC's role in addressing students' needs. The research objectives stated in Chapter 1 were achieved through data collection methods, including a student focus group and semi-structured interviews with lecturers.

The study has presented both positive and negative findings. On the positive side, it was found that collaboration with other stakeholders helps CLCs share resources, both human and physical, enabling them to carry out their mandates better. However, the study also revealed significant adverse findings. Notably, the NCLC failed to adopt a holistic approach to programme provisioning, leading to high dropout rates. This indicates that students are leaving the centre with their needs unmet. Furthermore, the failure to meet policy mandates

at NCLC could hinder the country's ability to achieve its 2030 targets. Based on these findings, recommendations have been made for the government to address the challenges highlighted in this study.

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Appendices

Appendix A- Ethical Clearance



29 August 2023

Siphiwe Wilfred Chonco (200400620)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear SW Chonco

Protocol reference number: HSS/1217/017M

Project title: The role of community learning centre in addressing students' needs: The case of Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre

Approval Notification – Recertification Application

Your request for Recertification dated 28 August 2023 was received.

This letter confirms that you have been granted Recertification Approval for a period of one year from the date of this letter. This approval is based strictly on the research protocol submitted and approved in 2017.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

This approval is valid for one year: 29 August 2024.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix B – Gatekeeper’s Letter



higher education
& training
Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Enquiries: Mr N Dlamini

Cell: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

University of KwaZulu Natal
Pietermaritzburg Campus
Golf Road
Education Building
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Mr SW Chonco

RE: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN KWAZULU NATAL COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES

The purpose of this letter is to grant Mr SW Chonco (200400620) permission, as per request to conduct research in the Community Learning Centres around KwaZulu-Natal.

You will be required to adhere to the following;

1. Give feedback to the senior management of the Community College regarding the research undertaken at the identified centres from time to time.
2. Respect the operation of the centres and therefore comply with the rules and regulations of the centre, when conducting the research.
3. Share the final research outcome with the Community College management after completion.

Should you have any enquiries or require assistance please contact Mr N Dlamini.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Dr BSW Mtshethwa, PhD
KZN CET College Principal
Date: 18/ 08/ 2017

Appendix C – Informed Consent Letter

School of Education, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg Campus,

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Mr. Sipiwe Wilfred Chonco, I am a master's candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, South Africa.

I intend conducting research in the field of Community Education and Training Colleges at the Community Learning Centre in UMzinyathi District. The title of my study is: 'The role of Community Learning Centre in meeting the needs of students'. Your Centre has been chosen because it is more convenient for the researcher to reach than other centres.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action.
- The research aims at finding out about programmes offered at this Centre, how they impact students' lives, and the relationships between programmes and needs of students.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

Willing/Not willing

Audio equipment

Photographic equipment

Video equipment

I can be contacted at:

Email:

Cell:

My supervisor is Dr Lulama Mbatha who is located at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: MbathaL5@ukzn.ac.za ; Phone number: 033 2605339

You may also contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

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

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

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Community Learning Centre in meeting the needs of students: The Case of Nokukhanya CLC

RESEARCHER

Full Name: Siphiwe Wilfred Chonco
School: Education
College: Humanities
Campus: Pietermaritzburg
Contact: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

SUPERVISOR

Full Name: Dr L Mbatha
School: Education
College: Humanities
Campus: Pietermaritzburg
Contact: 033 260 5339
Email: MbathaL5@ukzn.ac.za

HSSREC RESEARCH OFFICE

Full Name: Prem Mohun
HSS Research Office
Govan Bheki Building
Westville Campus
Contact: 0312604557
Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

I, Chonco, Siphiwe Wilfred, Student No:200400620, am a Master’s student at the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: The Role of Community Learning Centre in meeting the needs of students. The aim of the study is to investigate the nature of programmes that are offered in the Community Learning Centre and see whether they meet the needs of its students and how they also impact their lives.

Through your participation, I hope to get an understanding of the programmes that are offered, how they were chosen and by whom, and the relationship between programmes and needs of students. I guarantee that your responses will not be identified with you personally. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if you do not participate in the study. Please sign on the dotted line to show that you have read and understood the contents of this letter. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete.

DECLARARTION OF CONSENT

I.....

(Full Name) hereby confirm that I have read and understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project has been clearly defined prior to participating in this research project.

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

Participant's Signature.....

Date.....

6. How does the programme/course help you to gain knowledge and skills you can use in daily lives?

7. If you were given powers to change courses in this centre, what courses would you change and why?

8. What challenges do you face in this centre?

Thank you for participating in this research.

Appendix E - Observation Protocol

Item	Observation
Location of the Centre	Housed in Old Municipality skills development centre
Infrastructure	No cupboards, unlocked classrooms, not enough furniture facilitators and students
Resources	No machines, computers, workshop for skills subjects, no connectivity
Curriculum	Formal subjects provided. Electives: Early childhood development and Ancillary Health Care
Daily activities (arrival, departure, start & end of teaching)	Classes start at 12h00 and finish at 15h00. Students and lecturers do not honour starting time. Late about 20 minutes
Staffing (Lecturers & Students)	9 lecturers (1 male and 8 females). 161 students but have not seen more than 20 when visiting the centre
Challenges	No photocopier, printer, not enough furniture, no cupboard to store LTSM
Safety of premises	Unlocked classrooms, although there are security guards patrolling
Other organisations occupying other offices	Gcina printing company, Counsellor's office

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FACILITATORS

Thank you for participating in this research. You are selected to be part of this study because you are responsible for teaching in this Satellite Centre.

This is an individual interview to gather information about the programme offered in your Centre.

You have a right to withdraw anytime during interview without being punished or penalised.

The aim of this research is to investigate the role Centre plays in addressing the needs of students.

- What informs programme offerings at NCLC?
- What are students' needs at NCLC?
- What is the relationship between programme offered and the needs of students?
- What impact do programme currently offered at the NCLC have on the lives of students?

The individual interviews are tape-recorded and then transcribed.

I give you assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognised as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the question as honestly as possible. Your answers will assist this study to get more information on the role of the CLC to address needs of students.

Please remember that you are free to withdraw at any time from participating in this study.

Part one: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

2. What is your age

3. Race

African		White	
Coloured		Asian	
Indian		Other (specify)	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widow/widower	

Living with partner	
---------------------	--

5. Which area are you from

Urban formal (city, town)	
Urban informal (informal settlement, shacks)	
Peri urban (location, township)	
Rural (village/farm community)	

1. What is the highest qualification you have completed?

Some primary school	
Primary school completed	
Grade 8	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 11	
Matric/Grade 12	

2. What is your highest post-school qualification (Please tick only once)?

No qualification	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Graduate	

Introductory information about this centre.

Questions	Answers
Name of the Centre	
For how long have you worked here?	
Gender	
Age	
Position in the Centre	
Qualification	
When does centre start and end?	

Part Two: What informs programme offerings at NCLC?

- Which subjects are offered in this centre?
- How are these subjects chosen?

- Why do students enrol at this centre?
- How do you notify students about programmes offered here?
- Do you think subjects offered at this centre meet the needs of students? Explain.
- How does the centre determine the needs of students?
- What subjects are you teaching in this centre?
- Does the centre have any relationship with other government departments, local business and NGOs? If yes, how does that benefit students?
- Does this centre offer any skills programmes? If yes, what are those programmes and how do they assist students?
- What resources do you have to make to sure that you deliver successful programmes to your students?
- For how long have you been teaching in Adult Education?
- What problems do you encounter as the centre?

Part Three: What are the students' needs at NCLC?

- For how long have you been in this centre?
- How do you find the needs of students before they enrol in the centre?
- What jobs do your students do after completing AET Level four?
- Do the programmes that you offer meet the expectations of students? If yes, how do you know?
- Which skills and knowledge do students learn at this centre?
- Does the community request programmes that you do not offer? If yes, how do you respond?

Part Four: What is the relationship between programmes offered and the needs of students?

- Do you see connection between AET Level four and what students want to be in future? Explain.
- What AET level four programme has helped your students?
- If you were to change something in the programme, what would that be and why?
- Do you think the content of the module relates to the real life experiences of students?
- What evidence can you show that the curriculum for AET has met the expectations of your students?
- Do your students progress to further education bands after completing AET Level four?
- What do you think Community College should do to improve programme offerings in centres?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SUPERVISOR

Thank you for participating in this research. You have been selected to be part of this study because you are responsible for supervising this Satellite Centre.

This is an individual interview to gather information about the programme offered in your Centre.

You have the right to withdraw at any time during interview without being punished or penalised.

The aim of this research is to investigate the role the Centre plays in addressing the needs of students.

- What informs programme offerings at NCLC?
- What are students' needs at NCLC?
- What is the relationship between programmes offered and the needs of students?

The individual interviews are tape-recorded and then transcribed.

I give you assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognised as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the question as honestly as possible. Your answers will assist this study to get more information on the role of the CLC to address needs of students.

Please remember that you are free to withdraw at any time from participating in this study.

Part One: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

2. What is your age?

3. Race

African		White	
Coloured		Asian	
Indian		Other (specify)	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	

Widow/widower	
Living with partner	

5. Which area are you from

Urban formal (city, town)	
Urban informal (informal settlement, shacks)	
Peri urban (location, township)	
Rural (village/farm community)	

6. What is the highest qualification you have completed?

Some primary school	
Primary school completed	
Grade 8	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 11	
Matric/Grade 12	

7. What is your highest post-school qualification (Please tick only once)

No qualification	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Graduate	

Introductory information about this centre.

Urban formal (city, town)	
Urban informal (informal settlement, shacks)	
Peri urban (location, township)	
Rural (village/farm community)	

8. What is the highest qualification you have completed?

Some primary school	
Primary school completed	
Grade 8	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	

Grade 11	
Matric/Grade 12	

9. What is your highest post school qualification (Please tick only once)

No qualification	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Graduate	

Introductory information about this centre.

Questions	Answers
Name of the Centre	
For how long have you worked here ?	
Gender	
Age	
Position in the Centre	
Qualification	
When does centre start and end	

Part Two: What informs programme offerings at NCLC?

- Which subjects are offered in this centre?
- How are these subjects chosen?
- How do you notify students about programmes offered here?
- Do you think subjects offered at this centre meet the needs of students? Explain.
- How does the centre determine the needs of students?
- Does the centre have any relationship with other government departments, local business and NGOs? If yes, how does that benefit students?
- Does this centre offer any skills programme? If yes, what are those programmes and how do they assist students?
- What resources do you have to make to ensure that you deliver successful programmes to your students?
- What problems do you encounter as the centre?

Part Three: What are the students' needs at NCLC?

- Why do students enrol at this centre?
- What courses do students want to learn? How do you know about that?
- What jobs do your students do after completing AET Level four?
- Do the programmes that you offer meet the expectations of students? If yes, how do you know?
- Which skills and knowledge do students learn at this centre?

- In your opinion, what can the centre do differently to ensure that all students' needs are met?
- What role does KZN Community College play in order to make sure that the centre addresses the needs of the community better?

Part Four: What is the relationship between programmes offered and the needs of students?

- Do you see the connection between AET Level four and what students want to be in future? Explain.
- What has AET level four programme helped your students?
- If you were to change something in the programme, what would that be and why?
- Do you think the content of the module relates to the real life experiences of students?
- Do your students' progress to further education bands after completing AET Level four?
- What do you think Community College should do to improve programme offerings in centres?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH.

APPENDIX H: EDITOR'S LETTER

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Mrs G C Hannant
[REDACTED]
CRAIGHALL PARK
2196

19 August 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I certify that I have edited the Master's thesis:

**The Role of a Community Learning Centre in
Addressing Students' Needs:
The Case of Nokukhanya Community Learning Centre**

by

Siphiwe Wilfred Chonco

However, the correction of all errors/missing information remains the responsibility of the author.

[REDACTED]
G. C. HANNANT (BA HED)