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Message from the Director-General

It is my pleasure to present the twelfth edition of the annual Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) *Research Bulletin on Post-School Education and Training* (PSET). The purpose of the Research Bulletin is to share information about the latest research developments on the PSET sector, which covers Universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, Community Education and Training (CET) Colleges, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and Qualifications and Quality Assurance Bodies. The Research Bulletin serves to draw the producers and users of post-school research closer to one another to inform policy and practice. The Department has been producing this publication since 2013 and the previous editions of the Research Bulletin can be found on the Department's website at www.dhet.gov.za.

Once again, this year's call for contributions for the Research Bulletin surpassed all others. This is a clear testimony to the extent to which research on PSET is expanding across all sub-sectors of the system. This is also indicative of the dedication of those in the system, aspiring towards the betterment of services offered to citizens. We hope that this edition of the Research Bulletin serves as a valuable tool to both researchers and the public at large. The Research Bulletin gives a snapshot of entities' completed research, and research currently underway or planned to be undertaken in the near future. It also showcases events, reviews, statistical information, fact sheets and information on research practice. You are welcome to reach out to the authors of particular summaries if you would like to receive further information.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all contributors towards this year's Research Bulletin. We appreciate you sharing your work via this platform, making the wider audience aware of the specific details of your respective research projects.



Dr. Nkosinathi Sishi

Director-General: Department of Higher Education and Training

Editorial Statement

The *Research Bulletin on Post-School Education and Training* (PSET) is published every year by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) as a resource for the research community, stakeholders, and participants in lifelong learning. It is a browser-based application, comprising abstracts, summaries, and excerpts of completed, current and planned research and evaluations; book reviews; summaries of event proceedings; reflections on research practice; and statistics on Post-School Education and Training (PSET), most of which have web links to full research articles and reports.

The Research Bulletin promotes good quality research. It is not primarily a journal of opinion but is open to all well-argued and substantiated views, for which the authors are responsible for.

Contributions are expected to be brief, plain language is recommended, and the use of jargon is discouraged. Contributions to the Research Bulletin are welcome from all researchers engaged in key research on PSET. The Department's Editorial Committee reviews all contributions made towards the Research Bulletin, and assesses their relevance to research on PSET, before finalising which contributions should be included. The final decision to accept a contribution rest with the Editorial Committee. Research contributions and feedback on the publication, including suggestions for improvement are welcomed and can be emailed to dhetresearch@dheth.gov.za

CONTENTS

Message from the Director-General	ii
Editorial Statement	iii
RESEARCH ARTICLES AND REPORTS	1
1. Rethinking Policy for Private Colleges (<i>Veerle Dieltiens</i>).....	2
2. A Framework for Analysing Technical and Vocational Education and Training Assessment Practices (<i>James Garraway</i>)	4
3. Evaluation of the Institute for the National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessment (<i>Angel Mathebula</i>).....	6
4. Distance Education Research in South Africa: A Longitudinal Study into the Research Levels of Open Distance Learning Journal Articles (<i>Jennifer Roberts and Hugo Denton Van der Walt</i>)	8
5. Examining Staff Burnout During the Transition to Teaching Online Due to Coronavirus Disease -19 Implications (<i>Angelo Fynn and Hugo Denton Van der Walt</i>)	9
6. Spatial Perspectives on Student Profiling to Inform Open Distance e-Learning in Various Geographical Contexts: A Case Study from the Global South (<i>Sanet Carow, Peter Schmitz and Rudi Pretorius</i>)	11
7. Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer: An Ever-Increasing Encroachment of Artificial Intelligence in Online Assessment in Distance Education (<i>Katharine Naidu and Kershnee Sevnarayan</i>).....	12
8. Sector Analysis for Hospitality, Conservation and Tourism Travel Services Sub-Sectors (<i>Keabetswe Mabale, Khanyisa Jack and Tebogo Umanah</i>).....	13
9. The Fourth Industrial Revolution Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan (<i>Lucinda de Leeuw, Khanyisa Jack and Tebogo Umanah</i>).....	15
10. Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises Outcome Evaluation Study (<i>Gugu Masina, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah</i>)	17
11. Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises Strategy (<i>Gugu Masina, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah</i>)	19

12. Track and Trace Study Assessing the Impact of Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority’s Learning Programme Interventions for the Period 2019/20 (<i>Alpheus Kganyago, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah</i>)	21
13. Community Education and Training College Needs Analysis (<i>Osborne Mkhize and Nokuthula I. Sibia</i>).....	23
14. The Need to Integrate Critical Global Citizenship Education into Teacher Education (<i>Zayd Waghid</i>).....	25
15. Defamiliarisation as a Decolonial Teaching Approach (<i>Zayd Waghid and Lawrence Meda</i>)	27
16. Promoting Youths’ Skills Acquisition through Experiential Learning Theory in Vocational Education and Training in South Africa (<i>Celestin Mayombe</i>).....	29
17. Applying Social Marketing Strategies in Entrepreneurship Training to Turn Unemployed Adults into Entrepreneurs in South Africa (<i>Celestin Mayombe</i>)	31
18. Partnership with Stakeholders as an Innovative Model of Work-Integrated Learning for Unemployed Youths (<i>Celestin Mayombe</i>)	32
19. Reflections on the Conceptualisation and Practices of Community Engagement as a Core Function of Universities (<i>Amani Saidi</i>).....	34
20. Community Engagement in Higher Education: Developments after the First Institutional Audit Cycle (<i>Matsie Agnes Mohale</i>).....	35
21. Revisiting Community Engagement in Higher Education in South Africa from a Vantage Point of the Notion of Third Mission (<i>Amani Saidi and Zanele Boti</i>).....	36
22. Professionalising Early Childhood Care and Education in South Africa is not Child’s Play! Determining Skills Gaps and Implications for Future Sector Development (<i>Lesley Wood and Marinda Neethling</i>).....	37
23. The Track and Tracer Study Research Findings Submitted by Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority to the Department of Higher Education and Training (<i>Thami Dube</i>).....	38
24. Tshwane North Technical and Vocational Education and Training College: Towards a New Programme Qualification Mix and Centres of Specialisation (<i>Hoosen Rasool</i>)	40
25. A Comparative Study: Leadership Roles of Campus Managers in High and Low Performing Colleges (<i>Nick Balkrishen and Raj Mestry</i>)	42

26. Blending Synchronous with Asynchronous Learning Tools - Students' Experiences and Preferences for Online Learning Environment in Resource Constrained Higher Education Situations in Uganda (<i>Stephen Kyakulumbye and Anny Katabaazi</i>).....	43
27. Learning in Lockdown: University Students' Academic Performance During the Coronavirus Disease-19 Closures (<i>Emma Whitelaw, Nicola Branson and Murray Leibbrandt</i>).....	45
28. What Can We Understand About Learning Losses in 2020 from University Application and Enrolment Data? (<i>Nicola Branson, Vimal Ranchhod, and Emma Whitelaw</i>).....	46
29. South African Student Retention During 2020: Evidence from System Wide Higher Education Institutional Data (<i>Nicola Branson, Vimal Ranchhod, and Emma Whitelaw</i>).....	48
30. Quality Council for Trades and Occupations Benchmarking Report (<i>Naomi S. Alphonsus</i>).....	50
31. The Extent and Nature of Demand and Supply of Medical Practitioners Human Resources: A Case of Education and Training Landscape (<i>Qaqamba Mohulatsi, Menzi Mthethwa and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	52
32. The Extent and Nature of Demand and Supply of Pharmacy Human Resources: A Case of the Education and Training Landscape (<i>Mahali Makhetha, Menzi Mthethwa and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	54
33. Adult Education Training for Unemployed Persons - Track and Tracer Study (<i>Joyce Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	56
34. Track and Tracer Study of Employed Persons (<i>Lesego Monnapula, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	58
35. Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises and Levy Exempt Organisations Relevance and Sustainability Evaluation Study (<i>Joyce Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	60
36. Technical and Vocational Education and Training and University Work Integrated Learning - Track and Tracer Study <i>Joyce</i> (<i>Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	62
37. Track and Tracer Study of the Unemployed Persons (<i>Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	64
38. Trade Unions Relevance Evaluation Tracer Study (<i>Lesego Monnapula, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie</i>).....	66

39. Accounting for Social Value in Funding Public Colleges in Higher Education in South Africa (<i>Cornelia C September, Shirley Lloyd and Paul Singh</i>)	68
40. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Lecturer Work-Integrated Learning: Opportunities and Challenges (<i>Joseph Mesuwini and Sello. P. Mokoena</i>)	70
41. Duplication and Conflicts in South African Legislation in the Context of the National Qualifications Framework Act (<i>Heidi Bolton</i>)	72
42. Towards Understanding the Professional Designation Systems of South African Qualifications Authority - Recognised Professional Bodies (<i>Heidi Bolton</i>)	74
43. National Qualifications Frameworks Globally (<i>Heidi Bolton</i>)	76
44. Assessing the Implementation and Impact of the National Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Policies, and Other Elements of Flexibility in South African Education and Training (<i>Omotola Akindolani and Heidi Bolton</i>).....	78
45. Human Resource Development Council Maths and Science Report (<i>Aphiwe Socishe</i>)	80
46. The Other Side of Private Provision: Part 1 Research Report on the Response of Private Providers to the National Skills Development Plan 2030 (<i>Shirley Lloyd</i>).....	82
47. The Other Side of Private Provision: Part 2: Providers as First Responders to the Economic Reconstruction and Development Plan and District Development Model (DDM) (<i>Shirley Lloyd</i>).....	83
48. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Research Partnership: A Summary of the Five Research Streams (<i>Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>).....	84
49. Guidelines for the Compilation of an Organisational Competency Framework for Public Service Departments (<i>Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>).....	86
50. Track and Tracer Study of Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority Learnership Programme in Public Administration (National Qualifications Framework Level 4 to Level 6) Implemented During the Period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022 (<i>Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>).....	88
51. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority – Tshwane University of Technology Research Partnership Project Stream 1 on Skills Development of Information and Communications Technology Support Staff: A Study on Future ICT Skills Needs and	

Baseline ICT Skills Analysis of ICT Staff Working in the Public Sector (<i>Siviwe Tywabi, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>)	90
52. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority – Tshwane University of Technology Research Partnership Project Stream 2 on the Future Skills for the Public Sector in South Africa: A Research Intervention Focusing on the Future of Skills in the Public Sector (<i>Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>).....	92
53. Highlights of the Skills/Research Division for the year 2022/2023 (<i>Ernest Kaplan</i>).....	94
CURRENT OR PLANNED RESEARCH	96
1. Synthesising Social Constructivism and Cybergogy for Student Engagement in Open Distance and E-Learning Environments: An Integrative Review and Framework (<i>Esnah Dzimba and John Andrew van der Poll</i>)	97
2. Employability of Apprenticeship Programme Beneficiaries in the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector (<i>Winile Makamo, Popopo Mohlala, Lebo Thwala, Nkgaugelo Kgasago and Nokuthula I. Sibia</i>)	99
3. Investigating the Enablers and Constraints for Skills Planning in the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector (<i>Stephanie Allais, Themba Tshabalala, Siphelo Ngcwangu, Meryl Plasket, Nkgaugelo Kgasago and Nokuthula I. Sibia</i>)	101
4. A Model for “Gradupreneurs”: Creating a Model for Employability by Technical and Vocational Education and Training College Graduates for the Labour Market (<i>Mxolisi Maphakela and Nathanael Govender</i>).....	103
5. A Collaborative Research Study between the Namibia Training Authority and Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority: National Graduates Survey for Technical Vocational Education and Training Cohorts 2018-2020 (<i>Nathanael Govender, Mxolisi Maphakela, Indongo Indongo and Itebogeng Masibigiri</i>).....	105
6. Impact Evaluation Tool of the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority Skills Development Programmes: Enhancing Education, Employability, and Career Growth (<i>Mxolisi Maphakela and Reagalaletsa Matlhoahela</i>).....	107
7. Barriers to Implementing Recognition of Prior Learning for Sector Education and Training Authority - Accredited Providers in Gauteng (<i>Nathanael Govender</i>).....	109
8. Public Sector Education and Training Authority Current and Planned Research for 2023/24 (<i>Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter</i>)	111

REVIEWS.....113

1. Book Review: Vocational Education and Training in Sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence-Informed Practice for Unemployed and Disadvantaged Youth (*Celestin Mayombe*).... 114

RESEARCH EVENTS..... 116

1. Summary of the Proceedings of the Council on Higher Education 2023 Conference on Promoting Access to, and Success in Postgraduate Studies (*Amani Saidi*)..... 117
2. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority 2023 Research Colloquium on Skills Planning and Development for a Capable, Ethical, and Developmental Public Service Sector (*Siviwe Tywabi, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)..... 119
3. Announcement of the Council on Higher Education’s 2024 Higher Education Conference on Deepening the Discourse on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Public Accountability in South African Higher Education (*Amani Saidi*)..... 121
4. Umalusi Advert for Conferencing (*Shilela Nkadimeng*)..... 123
5. Catalysing Social Mobility through Student Success (*Emma Whitelaw and Nicola Branson*)..... 125

RESEARCH PRACTICE..... 126

1. Socialising the Good Practice Guide on Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education (*Christabelle Moyo and Moipane Mohlala*)..... 127
2. Research Repository on Post-School Education and Training (*Sinovuyo Makalima*)... 129
3. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Partnership – Research Outputs: Podcasts Series (*Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)..... 130
4. Southern African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Special Issue – Language Enigma: “Two Decades of Quality Assuring the General and Further Education and Training in South Africa: The Language Enigma” (*Shilela Nkadimeng*)..... 132
5. Active Learning and Research Committee (*Ernest Kaplan*)..... 133

6. Unlocking Potential: The World Skills Competition's Role in Promoting Artisan Trades in South Africa (*Ali Sibanyoni, Mamphela Malowa, Fumane Mboweni and Matheko Mpe*) 135
7. Enhancing Artisan Development through Evidence-Based Approach (*Fumane Mboweni, Matheko Mpe and Vinolia Mogashoa*) 137
8. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Partnership Research Outputs: Opinion Editorials (*Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)..... 139

STATISTICS AND FACT SHEETS..... 141

1. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training: 2021 (*Nthabiseng Tema*) 142
2. Factsheet on New Entrants in Technical and Vocational Educational and Training Colleges: 2021 (*Nthabiseng Tema and Sonnyboy Manthata*)..... 144
3. Fact Sheet on Gender for Students in Post-School Education and Training Institutions (*Nthabiseng Tema and Sonnyboy Manthata*) 146
4. Fact Sheet: Adult Illiteracy in South Africa (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe*) 148
5. Fact Sheet on Not in Employment, Education or Training (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe and Elvis Ganyaupfu*) 149
6. Throughput Rate of Technical and Vocational Education and Training College National Certificate (Vocational) Students (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe*)..... 151

RESEARCH ARTICLES

AND

REPORTS

1. Rethinking Policy for Private Colleges (*Veerle Dieltiens*)

In 2019, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) commissioned a five-year Research Programme on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF). The Programme is being managed by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) through the Institute of Post-School Studies (IPSS) who have partnered with several organisations to lead on the various projects under the programme. Currently, the programme is in its fifth year of implementation and has a total of 36 research projects (completed or in progress). One of the projects under the Programme is on Private colleges.

Private colleges providing education and training in the technical and vocational fields get little policy attention aside from regulations related to registration with DHET. This study investigates whether DHET should support private colleges through direct financial contributions, subsidising student fees or partnerships to deliver vocational education. Using public resources to assist private education enterprises – that may be making a profit and may therefore be controversial. However, if private colleges demonstrated that they had public benefits that would escalate with greater government support, there may be a rationale for a policy change. The rationale for such support would be found in the capacity of private colleges to improve access to vocational education for disadvantaged learners and/or increase the diversity of vocational programmes.

Drawing on a survey of 48 private colleges, an analysis of their marketing via websites and interviews with college owners and management of ten colleges, this report provides a situational analysis of the landscape of private colleges and the extent to which they currently provide access to learners to a variety of vocational courses.

The findings show that private colleges appear to offer training to a slightly older age group than public colleges and with a higher percentage of white students enrolled (10% in 2019 compared to 0,8% in public TVET colleges). These are also likely proxy statistics for socio-economic status which is plausible given that private colleges rely almost exclusively on fees. There is also no indication that private colleges offer a wider variety of courses available in public colleges. The most frequent explanation interviewees gave for their choice of programme offerings is that there is a demand for the courses.

The main recommendation from this study is that vouchers are unlikely to be a feasible means of supporting private college students given the weight of bureaucracy that would be required to administer such a system. However, Public-Private Partnerships could mutually benefit public and private colleges to share resources and expertise. For example, private colleges may have better linkages with industries that they could share with public TVET colleges. TVET colleges currently need more capacity to train in the artisan trades and have few networks for Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities and could contract private providers to assist with delivering artisan training.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/ResearchNew/TVET%20Research%20Programme/Rethinking%20Policy%20for%20Private%20Colleges.pdf>

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2. A Framework for Analysing Technical and Vocational Education and Training Assessment Practices (*James Garraway*)

In 2019, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) commissioned a five-year Research Programme on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF). The Programme is being managed by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) through the Institute of Post-School Studies (IPSS) who have partnered with several organisations to lead on the various projects under the programme. Currently, the programme is in its fifth year of implementation and has a total of 36 research projects (completed or in progress).

One of the projects under the TVET Research Programmed aims to present a Framework for TVET assessment which could be used by lecturing staff to enhance their current classroom practices. The Framework is based on a systematic review of current local and international literature on assessment 'best practices' in the TVET sector. The overwhelming assessment focus in the literature was on 'Competency-Based Assessment' (CBA). However, more recent moves in Competency-Based Learning and CBA have progressed beyond an individual's possession of isolated technical skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Assessments have rather developed towards how skills, knowledge and attitudes may be articulated within the variations and complexities of social and material settings typical of authentic workplaces. Based on the literature review, a Framework for CBA task design was developed.

A Framework for CBA task design in TVET

The Framework includes the three main principles of CBA (authenticity, holism and reflection) and under each there are several dimensions. A rule of thumb method to analyse assessment tasks is to score each assessment against the dimensions with '1' indicating no adherence with the dimension, '3' strong or well-realised adherence and '2' some, though limited, adherence. A score of '0' would indicate that insufficient evidence is provided.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/ResearchNew/TVET%20Research%20Programme/A%20Framework%20FOR%20Analysing%20Assessment%20Practices.pdf>

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3. Evaluation of the Institute for the National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessment (*Angel Mathebula*)

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the National Skills Fund (NSF) contracted the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) to undertake an Evaluation the Institute for the National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessment (INDLELA).

The evaluation aimed to assess the role of INDLELA in training and producing quality artisans. The evaluation sought to address several objectives, including identifying the relevant regulations, guidelines, and practices that have an impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of INDLELA's implementation strategy. The evaluation also assessed whether INDLELA programmes and interventions are achieving their goals and objectives, particularly in terms of being an enabling mechanism for access, redress, mobility, skills development, and the overall development of South Africa's artisan landscape.

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, involving a literature review, a document review, a beneficiary survey, key informant interviews, a focus group discussion, and the development of a Theory of Change and Logframe mapping out the desired changes.

The findings reveal that INDLELA has achieved several successes, such as improving the trade testing system, delivering high-quality training, and producing a considerable number of artisans annually. However, the findings also identify several challenges, such as funding constraints, resource deficiencies, administrative delays, low pass rates, high drop-out rates, lack of industry partnerships, and inadequate data management systems.

The evaluation provided recommendations to address these challenges and improve the implementation and impact of INDLELA. These include institutionalising the Theory of Change and logical framework, targeting specific groups, establishing a reliable and valid data management system, ensuring employment of graduates, boosting artisans' entrepreneurship prospects, earmarking funding for human resources and other services, enhancing stakeholder engagement, digitising the trade test certification process, cementing INDLELA's position in the artisan landscape, aligning apprenticeship training with current and future labour market needs, and increasing support for artisan development.

The evaluation concludes that INDLELA plays a vital role in skills development and economic growth in South Africa and has the potential to achieve the 2030 National Development Plan (NDP) target of training 30 000 artisans, annually.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

[INDLELA Evaluation Report.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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4. Distance Education Research in South Africa: A Longitudinal Study into the Research Levels of Open Distance Learning Journal Articles (*Jennifer Roberts and Hugo Denton Van der Walt*)

The measure of an academic field lies in the richness and depth of its published research, especially within the ever-developing field of distance education, which is relatively new. The University of South Africa (UNISA) is one of the oldest Open Distance Learning (ODL) higher education institutes globally, which has given rise to its status internationally as a leader of distance education. It is prudent to analyse and reflect on the research outputs published by South African academics, particularly regarding the levels of research that are conducted. This article follows the research published by Roberts, which analysed South African distance learning research levels and sub-levels from articles published between 2011 and 2015. This longitudinal study applied a thematic content analysis of the titles and abstracts of all ODL-related papers published by South African authors. The findings compare ODL trends for the five-year periods from 2010 to 2014 and 2015 to 2019. The data were obtained from the Scopus and SABINET databases, using the same search criteria employed by Roberts. The levels of research publications were analysed according to the ODL Research Framework of Zawacki-Richter presented through descriptive statistics. The results indicate that although the number of published ODL research articles has more than doubled, the research levels have not shown any significant change from the previous five years. The South African ODL publications should give attention to meso- and macro-level research to enhance the ODL development within Southern Africa and create local trends fit for purpose.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://unisapressjournals.co.za/index.php/LIS/article/view/10198/5751>

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5. Examining Staff Burnout During the Transition to Teaching Online Due to Coronavirus Disease -19 Implications (*Angelo Fynn and Hugo Denton Van der Walt*)

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID) -19 generated the need for changes in the higher education sector, sparking a shift to online approaches ultimately increasing workload. This study assessed the prevalence of burnout symptoms among academics at an online university in South Africa.

The purpose was to assess the prevalence and severity of burnout symptoms among academics and its impact on work engagement.

The motivation for the study is that academics are central to the teaching and learning processes at higher education institutions. Health and wellness have an impact on institutional functionality. As academic workloads increase, so does the likelihood of burnout, which can influence academic functioning.

The approach/design and method for the study was cross-sectional design.

The main findings include: High levels of burnout within Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) academic staff member population is evident with 75% of staff experiencing high or very high burnout. High levels of burnout were concentrated among senior lecturers, with teaching experience and have at least a PhD. The regression coefficient for work engagement ($B = -0.364$, $p \leq 0.001$) indicated that for each point increase in work engagement, there was a decrease in burnout of 0.364.

The practical implications are: High levels of burnout include job dissatisfaction, reduced quality of work, and increased absenteeism. Addressing burnout contributes to retaining experienced staff, improved job satisfaction and quality output.

The Contribution/Value-add of the study is the impact of teaching transitions on the academic workforce within South Africa, contributing towards wellness interventions aiding the recovery from burnout.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://sajhrm.co.za/index.php/sajhrm/article/view/2062/3186>

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6. Spatial Perspectives on Student Profiling to Inform Open Distance e-Learning in Various Geographical Contexts: A Case Study from the Global South (Sanet Carow, Peter Schmitz and Rudi Pretorius)

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 underpins the other SDGs and emphasises the importance of increasing access to inclusive, equitable, quality education. Equitable and inclusive access to education remains a pressing issue in many parts of the world, especially in the Global South. Developments and challenges experienced in the Global South have increased awareness of the potential of Open Distance e-Learning (ODEL) to increase access to higher education. This potential has to be considered from the perspective of the digital divide. Analysing student data can play an important role in obtaining insights into students' lives to improve the quality of the educational services provided.

The study aims to reflect on the use of spatial statistics in compiling a profile of the students registered for a Geography module at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The study has two objectives. The first is to specify the broad student profile in terms of the geographical location of students. The second objective is to reflect on the life worlds of the students in the different clusters and the challenges they may face in successfully completing their studies. Four representative student profiles could be compiled using lifestyle data. Marked differences in lifestyle factors between the four identified profile types were observed. These may directly impact students' ability to progress with their studies.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s43621-023-00143-9>

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7. Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer: An Ever-Increasing Encroachment of Artificial Intelligence in Online Assessment in Distance Education (*Katharine Naidu and Kershnee Sevnarayan*)

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education is becoming increasingly prevalent, and its encroachment and impact on online education and assessment is a topic of interest to researchers and lecturers. Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT) is one such AI model that has been trained on a large corpus of text data to generate human-like responses to questions and prompts. Using the theory of disruptive innovation as a foundation for the authors' argument, this conceptual article explores the potential and possible disruption of ChatGPT in online assessment. This article also considers the ethical and pedagogical implications of using ChatGPT, particularly in relation to online assessment in distance education. While the use of AI in online assessment presents a myriad of limitations and possibilities, it is crucial to approach its use with caution and consider the ethical implications of academic integrity for online assessment. This article aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion and debate around the use of AI in online higher education and assessment, highlighting the need for continued research and critical evaluation of its impact.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/30448/chatgpt-an-ever-increasing-encroachment-of-artificial-intelligence-in-online-assessment-in-distance-13291.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

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8. Sector Analysis for Hospitality, Conservation and Tourism Travel Services Sub-Sectors (*Keabetswe Mabale, Khanyisa Jack and Tebogo Umanah*)

The Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) conducted a sector analysis for the Hospitality, Tourism and Travel Services and Conservation sub-sectors, to assess the economic performance and labour market profiles of these sub-sectors and identify emerging trends, skills gaps and requirements to inform skills planning. The study was conducted as an Exploratory Mixed Method (EMM) research designed to generate both inductive (qualitative) and deductive (quantitative) data. The research utilised a mixed-method approach involving online surveys and in-depth interviews and spanned over five months.

In the Hospitality sub-sector, due to temporary business closures and considerable consumer behaviour changes brought on by the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 epidemic, downsizing and a faster adoption of technology were both required. The industry showed confidence for expansion despite being vulnerable to economic changes and difficulties including financial limitations and competition. The research highlighted a pronounced preference for short courses over full qualifications, with both in-house and external training programmes playing pivotal roles in addressing the prevailing skills gaps. The Hospitality labour landscape has undergone notable transformations and shifts, mostly characterised by a younger workforce and an increased emphasis on multi-skilling. While limited engagement with CATHSSETA initiatives was observed, stakeholders expressed openness to internships/learnerships as a feasible means of enhancing skill development.

In the Tourism and Travel Services sub-sector, the post-COVID-19 era revealed optimism, particularly in the domestic market, albeit with challenges stemming from the absence of a robust recovery strategy. Education and training priorities shifted towards practical experience, soft skills, and technological proficiency, reflecting the evolving demands of the sub-sector. The labour landscape experienced transformations with the departure of experienced personnel and the emergence of new job roles. Unrealistic employee expectations and concerns about the low remuneration level of personnel in the sub-sector were among the challenges. With that said, the sub-sector's future outlook remained positive, driven by investments in human capital and innovative attractions. Engagement and involvement in CATHSSETA programmes were limited, as it was in the Hospitality sub-sector.

In the Conservation sub-sector, economic challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including fiscal strains and reduced financial support, were prevalent. Stakeholders stressed the need of advanced degrees and practical skills in navigating these issues efficiently. The dynamics of the workforce shifted, with a heightened focus on professionalising specific roles within the sub-sector, mainly higher-level positions related to in-depth conservation knowledge and skills. Despite the challenges, stakeholders expressed resilience and optimism, placing a strong emphasis on sustainability and stakeholder engagement. The study additionally highlighted the interconnectedness of Conservation and Tourism and identified challenges such as leadership and funding within this sub-sector. Limited engagement with CATHSSETA initiatives was noted, although stakeholders remained open to participation.

In conclusion, this sector analysis provided insights into the transformative forces shaping the Hospitality, Tourism and Travel Services, and Conservation sub-sectors in South Africa. It calls for workshops to strengthen collaboration between these sub-sectors and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); aligning education with industry needs for integrated, sustainable practices; bi-annual provincial skills-summits with HEIs to enhance coordination and address skills gaps in these sub-sectors; and addressing the employability skills gap by advocating for industry-aligned curricula in educational institutions, offering career guidance, and launching a digital platforms for approved short courses to help people improve their skills and adapt to changing market demands.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://cathsseta.org.za/latest-research/>

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9. The Fourth Industrial Revolution Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan (*Lucinda de Leeuw, Khanyisa Jack and Tebogo Umanah*)

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan was developed from the findings of a previous research study on the 4IR in the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) sector. The previous study brought to light that 4IR is increasingly having a significant impact on the sector and its skills needs, however, CATHSSETA sub-sectors (Arts, Culture and Heritage; Conservation; Gaming and Lotteries; Hospitality; Sport, Recreation and Fitness; and Travel and Tourism Services) were showing signs of lack of capacity and know-how regarding identifying growth areas of 4IR adoption in the industry.

The main objective of developing a sectoral strategy was therefore to assist CATHSSETA sub-sectors in understanding how they can integrate 4IR technology into the different areas in which they operate. The findings from the Strategy together with the Implementation Plan are expected to enable organisations and other role-players within the CATHSSETA sector to capitalise on existing, as well as emerging, 4IR opportunities. Through the Implementation Plan, recommendations were laid out for an Organisational Framework and mechanisms through which CATHSSETA as a skills development authority can address 4IR-related occupational demands for its sector.

Research toward the 4IR Skills Strategy and Implementation Plan followed a mixed method approach involving primary and secondary data collection. A literature review was conducted to lay the foundation for the research interviews with employers, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), training providers and industry experts and an online survey was administered to stakeholders.

Common findings emanating from the research include stakeholders experiencing a lack of access to required 4IR infrastructure, inadequate training supply, the absence of new qualifications, insufficient stakeholder collaboration, and policies that do not sufficiently promote 4IR workforce development and digital inclusiveness for the sector. It was concluded that these challenges can be addressed through collaborative efforts from various role-players

in the skills development ecosystem of the sector, including government, training providers and employers, amongst others.

To help CATHSSETA implement the outcomes of the 4IR Skills Strategy and fulfil the needs for 4IR-related skills, the Implementation Plan was conceptualised based on the research findings. To advance the project's strategic outcomes, the Implementation Plan concentrated on the following 11 areas:

- 4IR Learning Interventions focus on developing relevant skills in this new era.
- Awareness of 4IR/4IR Skills and Engagement to promote 4IR communication.
- Digital inclusiveness in providing access to digital technologies in skills training.
- Reskilling and Upskilling of the Labour Force as jobs and tasks are redefined.
- Collaboration between Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to create a unified approach to achieve 4IR readiness.
- Financial support for 4IR education and training initiatives.
- 4IR Policies, Strategies, Legislation and Frameworks to be reviewed and updated.
- Training/Delivery Mechanisms by including 4IR in teaching, learning and resources.
- Capacitated Training Providers/Institutions particularly in disadvantaged communities.
- Research on 4IR including sharing and publishing of research studies.
- Skills Development in Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs) including funding and investment.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://cathsseta.org.za/latest-research/>

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10. Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises Outcome Evaluation Study
(Gugu Masina, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah)

Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs) are considered the backbone of South Africa's economy, contributing significantly to job creation, innovation, and economic growth. However, despite this, they face several internal and external challenges that inhibit their growth. These include access to funding, lack of awareness of opportunities, constrictive or ineffective government policies, lack of appropriate skills and/or inefficient business management practices. Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) through its role in fostering SMME growth and sustainability through various skills development programmes sought to understand the unique requirements of SMMEs within each sub-sector. To determine the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of SMMEs as well as recommendations for future interventions.

A quantitative, cross-sectional approach by means of a survey reaching 315 SMMEs comprising both CATHSSETA-funded and non-funded SMMEs was conducted.

CATHSSETA supported the SMMEs with mostly skills programmes and learnerships accounting for 26% and 25% respectively of the most funded interventions. Furthermore, the study found that CATHSSETA-funded SMMEs that have been in operation for less than three years, accounted for the lowest percentage of supported organisations.

Moreover, CATHSSETA-funded SMMEs indicated that the training received from CATHSSETA was relevant and applicable to their business growth and development however they highlighted the inability to access funding as a major challenge. While the non-CATHSSETA-funded SMMEs indicated that lack of training, funding, and access to relevant information pertaining to available opportunities and business experience were the greatest challenges for their businesses.

In conclusion, it was found that new businesses tend to receive fewer interventions and opportunities which at that stage is critical for their survival and development, indicating that further research is required to understand how new and upcoming SMMEs can be assisted

by the sector. Additionally, CATHSSETA-supported SMMEs found the skills development interventions relevant and effective for the growth of their businesses, while also stressing the need for funding and/or resources to sustain their businesses. Indicating that support for SMMEs is beyond skills development and hence partnerships with other entities are critical for the development of SMMEs in the sector. Those who have not received training from CATHSSETA indicated there is a need for both skills development support and funding for the development of their businesses. In addition, both groups rated access to low- and medium-cost funding and low awareness of business opportunities as the biggest challenges that they face as SMMEs in South Africa. Thus, indicating the need to have skills development interventions targeted at SMMEs as well as funding and resource allocation support for growth and sustainability.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://cathsseta.org.za/latest-research/>

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11. Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises Strategy (*Gugu Masina, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah*)

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 places Small Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs) at the head of addressing poverty and creating the necessary employment in the country. SMMEs are projected to contribute between 60% and 80% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and employ 90% of the country's workforce in line with global trends by 2030 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2022). Despite the vision of a substantial contribution of SMMEs to growth and employment, South Africa has the lowest rate of successful and sustainable SMME ventures due to a couple of factors which include limited access to funding for SMMEs, low awareness of opportunities, lack of relevant training and mentorship, lack of market access and load shedding among others (International Finance Corporation (IFC), 2017; IFC, 2018 and World Bank, 2019). The lack of successful and sustainable SMMEs poses a threat to increased unemployment rates and economic growth.

SMMEs account for 96% of the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) sector contributing towards the reduction of unemployment and economic growth in the country. Considering the role of SMMEs in the sector and the country it was pertinent for the SETA to develop a Skills Development Strategy for SMME development. The Strategy was developed through a mixed methodology inclusive of quantitative methodology using surveys and qualitative methodology using focus groups across the six sub-sectors.

When it comes to opportunities for growth and development the findings indicated that there is a critical need for training with a focus on general business acumen, marketing, and branding. In the survey SMMEs were asked to rate factors based on their level of importance, the SMMEs indicated that creating awareness of funding opportunities that are available in the market and other business opportunities is important for their business operations on the other hand training on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills was rated the least important to them. When asked which learning programmes the SMMEs found most beneficial, most SMMEs ranked learnerships, skills programmes and apprenticeships as the programmes they found most beneficial. Sub-sector events were ranked the least beneficial to them, events such as workshops. The SMMEs further indicated the need to have improved

access to market-related information portals that would address the low awareness of opportunities and skills development interventions. Additionally, the SMMEs also highlighted their key challenges as a lack of funding and load-shedding disrupting operations and adversely affecting their profits.

When ranking their challenges, the biggest challenges for the SMMEs were limited access to low- and medium-cost funding and low awareness of business opportunities these challenges were identified across different business sizes and years of operation. Indicating that regardless of how long the business has been operating and the size of the business, SMMEs rate the limited access to funding and low awareness of business opportunities as an enormous challenge.

Based on the findings above the CATHSSETA strategy focuses on three (3) primary strategic initiatives namely: (a) Upskill and enable SMMEs; (b) Improve partnerships and collaboration with external organisations; and (c) Improve ways of working within CATHSSETA. These strategic initiatives aim to create a supportive ecosystem that will enable the SMMEs in CATHSSETA's six (6) sub-sectors to contribute to sustainable economic growth.

In conclusion, CATHSSETA's multi-pronged approach to supporting SMMEs underscores its dedication to promoting sustainable economic growth in the six sub-sectors. Through upskilling, collaboration, and internal improvements, CATHSSETA aims to empower sector SMMEs, enabling them to play an increasingly vital role in the prosperity of the six sub-sectors. This paper provides a glimpse into CATHSSETA's SMME Strategy, which aligns with broader national and sectoral development objectives.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://cathsseta.org.za/latest-research/>

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12. Track and Trace Study Assessing the Impact of Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority's Learning Programme Interventions for the Period 2019/20 (Alpheus Kganyago, Daphney Makhubela and Tebogo Umanah)

There is a critical need for Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and public institutions to focus on the outcomes of their interventions as opposed to being limited to outputs as recommended by the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030. For this purpose, Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) embarked on a track and tracer study aimed at beneficiaries who completed the CATHSSETA-funded apprenticeships, bursaries, internships, learnerships, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and Skills programmes between 2019/20 and 2020/21. The study mainly sought to establish the learner pathways upon completion of the programme, programme relevance, effectiveness and the employer's and learners' perception of the programme.

The study was conducted quantitatively through Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews (CATI) methodology with 517 beneficiaries of CATHSSETA learning programmes and nine (9) surveys were self-administered by employers who worked with CATHSSETA beneficiaries in the financial years under review. Survey Monkey and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) platforms were jointly used to analyse, interpret and cross-tabulate the data.

Most learners were African's accounting for 93%, females 71%, and more than half (52%) of the participants had completed Hospitality related interventions.

The study revealed that a significant number of candidates (62%) did not acquire employment upon completion of the CATHSSETA programmes. Furthermore, 66% of these jobs have been deemed as short-term. Despite these employment rates, some respondents (38%) reported that they moved from contract/casual to full-time work, while others received promotions or salary hikes. Learnership, internship and bursary programmes yielded higher employment rates compared to the other programmes. Fewer graduates explored entrepreneurship as an alternative to traditional job hunting. Amongst the candidates who remained unemployed, 5% are studying, 2% are volunteering and 56% are Not in Education, Employment, and Training (NEET).

The study similarly revealed that employment offered after the training was in line with the qualifications acquired by the beneficiaries and therefore a correlation was established between interventions and graduates' access to the job market, indicating that specific learner interventions can be linked to employment rates upon completion of the programmes.

Overall, beneficiaries agreed that they earned critical skills, which improved their work performance, and employers corroborated these views and noted that employees' improved competencies led to better organisational efficiencies. Beneficiaries also indicated their satisfaction with the programmes regarding curriculum content, balance between theory and practice, facilitator attributes and mentorship and coaching.

A myriad of factors that could be attributed to implementation or process related issues varying from double dipping of beneficiaries, challenges accessing certificates after programme completion, challenges with stipends which then inhibit students to travel, and trainee drop out levels have been identified amongst the root causes that hinder the effectiveness of the learning programmes.

Key recommendations of the study amongst others included but not limited to:

- Efforts to explore innovative ideas such as streamlining entrepreneurship as part of the programme offerings should be considered and explored.
- Strengthen the collaboration between the private, public and SETA sub-sectors to co-create solutions meted out to open learning and sustainable employment opportunities.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://cathsseta.org.za/latest-research/>

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13. Community Education and Training College Needs Analysis (*Osborne Mkhize and Nokuthula I. Sibia*)

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) proposed the establishment of Community Education and Training (CET) colleges in 2013 with the aim of responding to the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030. CET colleges were fully established in 2015 with the mandate to contribute to the national government's agenda relating to the provision of a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

There is one Community Education and Training College Administrative Centre (CETCAC) per province, making a total of nine (9) national CETCACs. These CETCACs manage and govern their provincial Community Learning Centres (CLC) (CET Act, 2006), previously known as Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs). The mission of the CETCACs is to promote skills development through both formal and informal programmes through CLCs. There are in total 2 795 CLCs nationwide (Simkins, 2019). CLCs are the delivery sites of the CETCACs.

It is through the CLCs and other training institutions that adult education is implemented, which provides adults with the opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge, while lifelong learning allows adults to continually update and improve their skills. CET colleges in South Africa play a crucial role in ensuring the above also reaches remote parts of the country where often the colleges are the only source of education and training for many individuals, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Up-skilling educators has been a consistent plea in all CET colleges and CLCs. They have indicated explicitly so that some of the educators are teaching unaccredited skills programmes of which they are not qualified in. These skills programmes such as baking, seamstressing, and basic computing are typically requested by the community and thus justifies the need. Most of these skills programmes are offered despite the lack of essential tools such as industrial cooking ovens/kitchen island worktables, and space/classrooms.

There is a sense of communal responsibility among educators, expressing that if the CLCs are not capacitated then communities will plunge further into hopelessness. Thus up-skilling educators in CLCs should be considered a major priority given their inherent invested interest in seeing their communities up-lifted from the current poverty-stricken state that most find themselves in.

There were evident infrastructure disparities between CLCs. For instance, Ligugu CLC administrative office occupied a dilapidated school. The centre had zinc rooftops with no ceilings and scaffolding lying bare. Majority of the windows had cracks and the floors were of hard concrete. The walls were losing colour and in much need of refurbishment. Security is also a critical consideration for the learners and staff members, as well as the centres' belongings such as computers, stationery, and assessment materials. Lack of tools of trade have been brought up by all CETs and CLCs. CETs have expressed significant funding challenges that make it hard for them to equip the CET and its affiliate satellites.

The CET college needs analysis took a qualitative methodological approach and purposive sampling. The CETCAC and two of their respective CLCs were selected per province.

The report makes the following recommendations:

1. Adoption of the Capacitate Accredite and Place (CAP) model.
2. Develop a short, medium, long-term strategy:
 - a. Short-term: Provide Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) funding for learnership and skills programmes.
 - b. Medium-term: Establish SETA industry partnerships.
 - c. Long-term: Enter into public private partnerships with industry and CET Colleges that focus on infrastructure support and workplace experience

The full document can be accessed on the following link: www.foodbev.co.za

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14. The Need to Integrate Critical Global Citizenship Education into Teacher Education *(Zayd Waghid)*

Despite the fact that Global Citizenship Education's (GCE) principles support South Africa's government's efforts to promote democracy and equality, they are mainly missing from the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) Policy. This discrepancy impacts how future teachers develop their critical thinking abilities. In addition, minimal research has been done on how educational technology might improve GCE, particularly in the Global South.

This study, done at a university in South Africa, examines teacher educators' teaching methods to comprehend how they might help students develop critical GCE competencies. It further looks at how effectively educational technology promotes GCE in the current digital era. The study focuses on three main areas: how educators see GCE, how they use technology to improve GCE teaching, and what obstacles they encounter when attempting to integrate GCE in their teaching methods. The primary aim is to enhance teacher preparation programmes and enhance GCE in the Global South.

Findings:

- The results show that GCE is not well included in the university's curricula. Many teacher educators, who often use a soft approach to GCE, seem to have a basic understanding of GCE.
- The study shows that there might need to be more opportunities for professional development in GCE in South Africa.
- To support students' critical engagement with global concerns, educating teacher educators more in GCE concepts and instructional strategies is crucial.
- Despite the fact that some teacher educators have begun to use a more critical GCE approach, there is a need for a forum where they can share their insights and teaching strategies.
- The results also demonstrate the need for explicitly incorporating critical GCE into the MRTEQ Policy to close the knowledge gaps and improve students' comprehension, critical thinking abilities, and attitudes towards GCE. Tackling this issue in the current policy is critical to empowering students to critique negative selfviews and develop into positive influencers. Therefore, a more robust strategy is needed in South Africa to include GCE in programmes for teacher education.

Reference Waghid, Z. (2023). Examining the pedagogical practices of South African university lecturers in Global Citizenship Education using the Soft vs Critical GCE framework. *Cogent Education*, 10(2), 1-19.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

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15. Defamiliarisation as a Decolonial Teaching Approach (*Zayd Waghid and Lawrence Meda*)

Movements like the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall have been calling for free and transformed higher education in South Africa for the last eight years, but school curricula remain unchanged. The current South African school curricula still significantly promote Western methods of learning. This approach enables an unequal learning environment by preparing students mainly for industry. In this regard, African identities among learners are eroded by the current educational material's failure to represent the reality and variety of local communities. Minimising their voices and viewpoints encourages people to remain inactive. This research investigates the teaching method of defamiliarisation in teacher education, which encourages teachers to evaluate education from a global perspective and may pave the road for more democratic classrooms. This method aligns with Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy. It aims to transform the existing power relations in the educational system while fostering a deeper analysis and understanding of the present curriculum. This could mark a development in South African education towards more inclusivity and decolonisation.

The method of defamiliarisation was positive for new teachers and students in the study, helping them identify and address unequal knowledge systems in the current curricula. It made them more self-aware and promoted disagreement and new ideas.

This study provides critical suggestions:

- It is essential for education experts and policymakers to carefully review and adjust the current curriculum, particularly considering the unique context of the Global South. This approach should encourage an understanding and respect for one's culture, history, and language without removing existing content.
- The Ubuntu philosophy should be integrated into education, reducing selfish attitudes and fostering community awareness and responsibility. This perspective encourages moral growth, emphasising empathy and cooperative problem-solving, moving beyond a mere focus on market demands.
- The practice of defamiliarisation can help teachers and learners become aware of the gaps in the current curriculum that marginalise learners and maintain unequal power dynamics in classrooms. This calls for a shift from old teaching styles, fostering a more respectful and open-minded atmosphere. This encourages a learning approach

combining new and known concepts, facilitating a curriculum that resonates more with African perspectives.

Reference: Waghid, Z., Meda, L. (2023). Defamiliarization in advancing a decolonial approach to global citizenship education. *Prospects*.

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16. Promoting Youths' Skills Acquisition through Experiential Learning Theory in Vocational Education and Training in South Africa (*Celestin Mayombe*)

Attracting young people to enrol in different forms of Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes has been linked to addressing their needs to enable their participation in the socio-economic life in their countries. The VET system has been an important instrument to integrate young people - specifically vulnerable or disadvantaged- into the labour market. This article is part of a research project on non-school-based VET programmes offered to unemployed and disadvantaged youths in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. Experiential learning is a major component of skills development programmes. This study attempts to examine the effects of facilitating VET through experiential learning theory to promote youths' skills acquisition.

Using Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), the study examines the effects of facilitating VET through ELT to promote youths' skills acquisition. The findings reveal that there was a strong integration between school-based learning and Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) in the real world of work. The experiential learning process mostly occurred in the workshops and companies where trainees were placed to gain work experience. The use of ELT in VET programmes helped the trainees to gain real-world skills, hence contributing to their empowerment in terms of work experience and competence for their future employment.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that ELT is an effective instrument to promote VET programmes for disadvantaged and unemployed youths. The use of ELT appears to be a solution to the skills mismatch between skills development programmes and industries. Its application in VET is useful in helping a smooth school-to-work transition for the trainees because it fosters the competencies and abilities of trainees to perform activities like those in their future workplaces.

The socio-economic implication of the study is that skills development plays an important role in poverty reduction. Investing in the skills development of citizens is vital to raise the incomes of poor groups and to reduce poverty.

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17. Applying Social Marketing Strategies in Entrepreneurship Training to Turn Unemployed Adults into Entrepreneurs in South Africa (*Celestin Mayombe*)

In developing countries where job opportunities are scarce, unemployed adults may be discouraged from participating in entrepreneurship training programmes because they end up with mere attendance certificates. Entrepreneurship training programmes alone cannot reduce poverty, as a result, various strategies should be considered to transform unemployed adults into entrepreneurs.

The main contention of this study is that applying social marketing strategies might help turn unemployed adults into entrepreneurs. The idea behind social marketing is to promote and empower social transformation among individuals and communities to escape poverty and vulnerability.

This article demonstrates how Adult Education and Training (AET) in South African could benefit from social marketing strategies and techniques to address unemployment. The main research question for the study is: What social marketing strategies do AET centres apply in their entrepreneurship training programmes to turn unemployed adults into entrepreneurs?

The main findings of the study reveal that the social marketing strategies that the AET centres apply to turn unemployed adults into entrepreneurs entails mobilising external stakeholders to create opportunities for trainees to access financial and non-financial support for the start-up and growth of micro-enterprises. The study tentatively concludes that social marketing strategies are effective tools AET centres can use to turn unemployed adults into entrepreneurs and facilitate socio-economic transformation in impoverished communities. As a practical implication for policy, there is a need for policymakers at local and national levels to embrace social marketing to enhance the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training for poverty reduction among unemployed and vulnerable population groups.

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18. Partnership with Stakeholders as an Innovative Model of Work-Integrated Learning for Unemployed Youths (*Celestin Mayombe*)

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) in vocational education and training mostly refers to any learning activity or programme which integrates theory with practice to provide trainees with industry experience. However, one of the key challenges facing young graduates from technical and vocational training is to make a smooth transition from the WIL programmes into the real world of work or the labour market. The concern in this study was that most WIL programmes did not enhance trainees' subsequent employment prospects and could not facilitate a smooth WIL-to-work transition. There was a need to examine the roles of partner stakeholders in the features of the innovative WIL model influencing the labour market entry of disadvantaged youths from vocational education and training programmes in KwaZulu-Natal.

Evidence shows that the full commitment of the stakeholders resulted in aligning WIL programmes to meet the needs and demands of their companies. The local businesses and enterprises played important roles in participating in the design of the curriculum of the WIL programmes, providing adequate mentorship for work experience and micro-placement to the trainees. To absorb 70% of the graduates into the workforce, micro-placements were often converted into formal employment after graduating. The prospective employers were the second to recruit the WIL graduates who were not absorbed by the host companies after their micro-placement contracts ended. Another role of the local businesses and enterprises was to link the graduates to prospective employers through labour brokers or agencies.

Based on the findings, the author concludes that a partnership with stakeholders as portrayed in this study of an innovative WIL model, contributes to the employability of disadvantaged youths through the acquisition of employability skills, work experience, work-readiness and mechanisms to appoint or simply to absorb the graduates complete the WIL programmes. The implication of the findings is that the commitment of partner stakeholders evident in this study is likely to continue creating better employment prospects for WIL graduates.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

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19. Reflections on the Conceptualisation and Practices of Community Engagement as a Core Function of Universities (*Amani Saidi*)

During the Coronavirus (COVID)-19 pandemic, universities worldwide played a prominent role in combating the virus and seeking ways to establish immunity within the population. This article contends that, although appearing unusual, this engagement reflects universities' fundamental duty to society, as their existence is rooted in serving humanity. While they may not always prevent crises, they should consistently lead efforts to address and mitigate these crises. This is a lead article in a special issue of the *South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE)* Volume 37, Number 1, which focuses on the theme of community engagement as a core function for universities.

The article argues that universities have a social responsibility to act as pillars of their towns and regions, driving development in their respective geographic areas and advocating for important social causes. It delves into the concepts and practices of community engagement, providing critical context for understanding the arguments presented in the subsequent articles. This context encompasses the relationship between community engagement, higher education transformation, and the decolonisation of knowledge and epistemology.

Furthermore, the article reflects on the current state of community engagement in South African universities and explains that it is mostly regarded as a stepchild because it is not valued, funded, or supported in the same way as the other two core functions of teaching and learning, and research and innovation. It cautions against rhetoric that romanticises community engagement when the projects on the ground leave much to be desired, and with no potential to make a difference to society.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://doi.org/10.20853/37-1-5700>

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20. Community Engagement in Higher Education: Developments after the First Institutional Audit Cycle (*Matsie Agnes Mohale*)

This is a paper published in the *South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE)*, Volume 37, Number 1 of 2023. It reports on a study that investigated how three universities have addressed the Higher Education Quality Committee's (HEQC) recommendations concerning deficiencies in implementing their Community Engagement (CE) missions. While the Education White Paper 3 integrates community engagement into higher education policy changes, resistance to recognising CE as a fundamental university function persists. Using qualitative methods and document analysis, this research assesses the progress made by three selected universities in fulfilling their CE missions. The documents examined encompass HEQC audit reports, policies, strategic plans, annual reports, and institutional websites. The study draws on Open Systems Theory to support its findings; revealing that, despite the challenges reported in the literature, universities have established policy frameworks to facilitate understanding of the concept among internal stakeholders and put structures for managing CE initiatives.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://doi.org/10.20853/37-1-5675>

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21. Revisiting Community Engagement in Higher Education in South Africa from a Vantage Point of the Notion of Third Mission (*Amani Saidi and Zanele Boti*)

This paper was published in the *South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE)* Volume 37, Number 1 of 2023. It unpacks and analyses the notion of third mission of universities. Community engagement is one dimension of an array of activities that together are referred to as the third mission of higher education institutions, while teaching and learning, and research and innovation make the other two missions. The paper argues that universities engaged in third mission programmes serve as anchors of social, economic and cultural development in their respective geographical regions. It observes that the notion of third mission of universities has not gained much traction in South Africa where focus is on community engagement as a standalone mission. Universities in South Africa have not made significant impacts with their community engagement activities because of the limited scope and scale of implementation, among others. Universities and the broader society in South Africa have more to gain if the universities were to consider institutionalising, planning and effectively implementing third mission programmes.

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22. Professionalising Early Childhood Care and Education in South Africa is not Child's Play! Determining Skills Gaps and Implications for Future Sector Development *(Lesley Wood and Marinda Neethling)*

In line with international trends in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the Department of Basic Education in South Africa has recognised the importance of early learning and pledged to professionalise the sector by increasing its access and quality improvement. From a systemic point of view, professionalisation of the sector will require collaboration on multiple levels between various stakeholders working in different systems to bring about simultaneous improvement in conditions of employment, resource provision, and infrastructure development.

To aid the government in supporting skills development in this sector, particularly for those servicing the most indigent populations, we employed a multi-method design to determine critical skills gaps and how they could best be addressed. Data were gathered through online questionnaires, a desktop review and focus group and individual interviews. Thematic analysis revealed the need for managerial training, practical learning opportunities for practitioners, the necessity for more home-based ECCE services and systemic improvement. Based on the findings, we make suggestions of how key stakeholders could partner to best address these needs.

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23. The Track and Tracer Study Research Findings Submitted by Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority to the Department of Higher Education and Training (*Thami Dube*)

Over the years, there has been a renewed interest in keeping track of beneficiaries amongst Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) as well as by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This interest was created by the SETAs' need for feedback on the progress and destination of funded beneficiaries. SETAs anticipate that this feedback will assist them in the establishment and measurement of the Returns on Investment (ROI). This interest is shared by the Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority (FASSET) and thus the request to have a Track and Tracer Study (TTS) on the impact of the Bursary scheme which is funded through the Discretionary Grant budget conducted. Through the TTS, FASSET sought not only to keep track of the destination of the bursary scheme beneficiaries, but to also determine the value-add that the bursary scheme has and continues to make among its beneficiaries. The research findings are as follows: (A) 86% of the beneficiaries have completed their studies, 11% are still studying, and 3% have dropped out. Reasons provided for the 3% drop-out rate varies. They include lack of funding and difficulty of the study programme. (B) 56% of the beneficiaries indicated that they are employed; 1% are self-employed; 21% are unemployed; 16% are studying further; and 6% did not disclose their employment status. (C) Most of the respondents are employed in Large Enterprises (74%), 14% in Medium Enterprises, and 12% are employed in Small Enterprises. None are employed in the Micro Enterprises. (D) 69% of the beneficiaries are employed within the Finance and Accounting industry, with the majority employed in Gauteng (54%), followed by Western Cape, (23%), Eastern Cape (7%), and KwaZulu-Natal (6%). (E) 40% of the respondents earn less than R10 000 per month, 38% earn between R15 000 and R20 000, 16% earn between R25 000 and R30 000, and 6% earn a monthly salary of R35 000 and above. (F) 93% of the respondents replied that they received the necessary support from FASSET. FASSET intends to use lessons learnt from this study for business improvement opportunities as it grows and adapts to the needs of clients and stakeholders.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.fasset.org.za/downloads/Track%20and%20Tracer%20Study%20Final%20Report%2009022023.pdf>

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24. Tshwane North Technical and Vocational Education and Training College: Towards a New Programme Qualification Mix and Centres of Specialisation (*Hoosen Rasool*)

The research study's purpose was to propose a Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) and Centres of Specialisation (CoS) for the Tshwane North Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College (TNC) that is responsive to the Greater Tshwane Metropolis (GTM). The TNC Board and management want to mobilise resources, create niches, and ensure successful college-to-work transitions.

The study entailed conducting a GTM labour market analysis, accessing the TNC's current PQM and infrastructure, determining programme and staffing gaps, proposing a new PQM and Centres of Specialisation, and identifying lecturer/instructor skills needed for the proposed PQM. Data was collected through a literature review, TNC student performance database analysis, stakeholder consultations, site visits to six campuses and workshops with the Board and management.

Some major study findings and recommendations are noted, below.

PQM: The current PQM, in most instances, does not respond to local labour market demand. Most students are enrolled for management and administration National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) and National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) courses for which there are skills surpluses. Some courses lack an occupational title, e.g. Safety in Society. The NATED courses do not provide practical training. We proposed 40 occupations in demand (Information Technology (IT) eight, hospitality five, beauty four, healthcare two, finance one, fashion two and trades 18 that should constitute a new PQM. The College should transition to the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) occupational qualifications in the medium to long-term.

CoS: A CoS in Wellness and Aesthetics was proposed for the Pretoria Central campus, focusing on Healthcare, Cosmetology, Hospitality and Arts and Crafts. The Soshanguve North campus should become an engineering CoS and partner with the Rosslyn campus. The Soshanguve South campus should become a Centre for Entrepreneurship. The Temba campus should become an Agricultural CoS focusing on green agri-technologies.

Niches: There is a global demand for people in care, IT software, cyber security, food preparation, cosmetology, renewables, urban agriculture, and Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners. The college should establish a niche instead of offering what every other TVET college offers.

Human Resource (HR) staffing needs: Lecturers/instructors are required for mechatronics, air-conditioning and refrigeration, handyman, panel beating and spray painting, draftsman, solar panel installer, water process controller, software developer, cybersecurity analyst, computer technician, graphic designer, Network technician, Sound Engineer, Web developer, Database Administrator, Home, frail, and palliative caregivers, ECD practitioner.

The study concluded with an implementation plan based on ten actions: plan and initiate a TNC change management strategy; offer in-demand courses and teach out courses with surplus labour market supply; resource campuses; establish CoS; establish short course units for third-stream income; recruit skilled and experienced lecturers/artisans; foster stakeholder engagements with local employers; conduct HR needs assessment; seek accreditation for proposed PQM courses; grow job creation partnerships.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/sr1o1vhh9dwc6mddm49vi/TNC-RESEARCH-REPORT-V1-01-JAN-2023.docx?rlkey=h4x6ma25mw3e94dmgebj18tyh&dl=0>

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25. A Comparative Study: Leadership Roles of Campus Managers in High and Low Performing Colleges (*Nick Balkrishen and Raj Mestry*)

Improving the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and student achievement is essential if these colleges are to meet the demands of skilling the youth for employment. The contexts surrounding TVET colleges in South Africa are very similar, especially when comparing their funding rates, programmes offered and student cohorts. Yet, the academic performance of TVET college campuses, even within the same college, varies greatly. This study sought to compare the leadership roles of campus managers in high and low performing college campuses. The positivist approach employed led to a survey research design being chosen. Questionnaires were used as the instrument for collecting the data required to determine the perceptions of academic staff on the leadership roles of their campus managers regarding student achievement. The four highest and four lowest performing TVET college campuses in the province of Mpumalanga in South Africa were chosen to participate in this study. Arguably, the most substantial finding in this study is the significant difference in leadership roles played by campus managers of poorly performing campuses compared to campus managers of high performing campuses. The leadership of campus managers of high performing campuses was rated at a significantly higher level than campus managers of poorly performing campuses. Notwithstanding the myriad of other factors that affect student achievement, the findings suggest that there is a tangible link between the leadership role of the campus manager and student achievement. Replicating the leadership roles of campus managers of high performing colleges has the potential to impact on improving student achievement in TVET colleges.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/znqisuqrpr189z0ok4ua3/comparison-of-campus-managers-from-high-and-low-performing-colleges-in-Mpumalanga-South-Africa.docx?rlkey=xoffuy84s3mw2yxddcr30luyh&dl=0>

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26. Blending Synchronous with Asynchronous Learning Tools - Students' Experiences and Preferences for Online Learning Environment in Resource Constrained Higher Education Situations in Uganda (*Stephen Kyakulumbye and Anny Katabaazi*)

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 pandemic has raised significant challenges for the higher education community worldwide. In Uganda, a particular challenge was the urgent and unexpected request for previously face-to-face university courses to be taught online through the Ministry of Education COVID-19 Online Distance e-learning (ODEL) emergent guidelines. Online teaching and learning imply a certain pedagogical content knowledge, mainly related to designing and organising for better learning experiences and creating distinctive learning environments, are carried out with the help of digital technologies. This paper provides some expert insights into this online distance learning, with the goal of helping non-expert university teachers (i.e. those who have little experience with online learning) and within a technologically resource constrained environment to navigate in these challenging times. These conceptual case-based findings, using experience from Uganda Christian University (UCU) and Kabale University point at the design of learning activities with two certain characteristics, the enhancement of synchronous learning technologies with asynchronous ones to mitigate the challenge of system breakdown, passive learning to active learning, and enhances the types of presence (social, cognitive and facilitatory). The paper both empirical and experiential in nature, uses online experiences from third year students lectured using asynchronous text, audio, video created with Open Broadcaster Studio software and compressed with Handbrake, all open-source software to mitigate disk space and bandwidth usage challenges. The synchronous online engagements with students were a blend of Zoom and BigBlueButton, to ensure that students had an alternative just in case one failed due to excessive real-time traffic. Generally, students report that compared to their previous face-to-face lecturers, the pre-recorded lectures via Youtube provided them an opportunity to reflect on content in a self-paced manner, which later on enabled them to engage actively during the live zoom and/or BigBlueButton real time discussions and presentations. A major recommendation is that lecturers and teachers in resource constrained environments with limited digital resources including internet and digital devices should harness this approach to offer students access to learning content in a self-paced manner and thereby enabling reflective active learning through reflective thinking.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/sobuaq020pxh0y1yycger/Blending-synchronous-with-asynchronous-learning-tools.-Students-experiences-and-preferences-for-online-learning-environment-in-a-resource-constrained-Higher-Education-Situations-in-Uganda.doc?rlkey=thk6onmh7xj8tk56k3svnfi2y&dl=0>

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27. Learning in Lockdown: University Students' Academic Performance During the Coronavirus Disease-19 Closures (*Emma Whitelaw, Nicola Branson and Murray Leibbrandt*)

Using longitudinal, institutional data, the authors estimate the effects of pandemic-related closures on the academic performance trajectories of undergraduate students at a university in South Africa. Leveraging data from both the 2020 and 2021 academic years, and using difference-in-difference models, the authors find that performance gains made in 2020 are reversed in 2021, with performance dropping relative to pre-pandemic trends. Moreover, the authors find a widening achievement gap between students from differing socio-economic backgrounds, suggesting household inequalities played out in student performance differentials to a greater extent in 2021 – despite the reopening of campus residences that year. This result persists even when accounting for the fact that dropout rates in 2021 are substantially lower compared to previous years. Together, results suggest that the improvements observed in 2020 did not reflect true learning gains, and support hypotheses that a reduction in content taught, increased marker leniency, and a reduction in credit loads were likely drivers of improved performance in the 2020 academic year.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.opensaldru.uct.ac.za/handle/11090/1021>

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28. What Can We Understand About Learning Losses in 2020 from University Application and Enrolment Data? (Nicola Branson, Vimal Ranchhod, and Emma Whitelaw)

This paper investigates potential Grade 12 learning losses in 2020 using applications and enrolment data from the University of Cape Town (UCT). Using difference-in-difference strategies, the authors find suggestive evidence of learning loss in the state National Senior Certificate (NSC) in 2020 among both applicants and enrolees. For enrolees, they observe lower first-year academic performance, as measured by Grade Point Average, among those who enrolled in 2021 and wrote the 2020 NSC, compared to students who enrolled in 2021 but wrote the NSC in before 2020. In the applications data, the authors observe a negative change in the relationship between a student's Grade 11 and Grade 12 marks compared to pre-pandemic trends. Specifically, given Grade 11 marks, they observe lower average NSC scores for students who wrote the NSC in 2020, compared to similar students in previous years. The effect appears to be driven by students at the lower end of the Grade 11 academic performance distribution in the UCT data.

Despite expectations that the impact of school closures in 2020 may have differed by school quintile, the UCT applications data indicate similar effects across school quintiles. This could potentially reflect the prioritisation of Grade 12s during school closures, or the select sample of students who apply to UCT from under-resourced schools. The improved maths performance that was observed for writers of the 2020 NSC in the applications data was not expected, but this could reflect adjustments to individual NSC subjects. Overall, this study sheds light on the complexities of quantifying learning losses, particularly at the nexus of secondary and tertiary education, and prompts a need for ongoing investigation on the longer-term ramifications of learning losses (e.g., on performance at tertiary level over time and changes in the composition of who enrolls).

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://icts.evlink9.net/servlet/link/74740/762873/133205802/3333240>

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29. South African Student Retention During 2020: Evidence from System Wide Higher Education Institutional Data (Nicola Branson, Vimal Ranchhod, and Emma Whitelaw)

Using longitudinal institutional data, the authors document the impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 on undergraduate student retention at public universities in South Africa. The authors find that student dropout increased in 2020 for students between third and fifth years, with little evidence of a change for those entering their second year of study. These aggregate findings mask significant differences across institutions. Students enrolled in most historically advantaged traditional institutions, and some comprehensive institutions, were not significantly affected, whereas dropout increased significantly at the University of Fort Hare (UFH), Walter Sisulu University (WSU) and the University of Venda (UNIVEN), three historically disadvantaged institutions located in rural areas. No difference in retention is found, however, for students enrolled at the University of Zululand (UZ) or the University of Limpopo (UL), equally resource-disadvantaged institutions where a majority (over 90%) of students are funded via the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). Furthermore, at institutions where dropout increased, NSFAS-funded students were less impacted than their unfunded peers.

Our overall findings accord with growing evidence that COVID-19-related changes in the sector differentially impacted students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. However, they also illustrate that the NSFAS bursary appears to have provided a social safety net during this time. Finally, the example of UZ and the UL provide suggestive evidence that institutional relational aspects are important too. Together, these results foreground the complex interplay of factors impacting a student's decision to drop out of or remain in university, highlighting that institutional responses and/or relational context during a crisis like COVID-19 can positively impact student retention.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://icts.evlink9.net/servlet/link/74740/762873/133205802/3333241>

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30. Quality Council for Trades and Occupations Benchmarking Report (*Naomi S. Alphonsus*)

The report compares and contrasts the South African Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) with five international vocational and professional qualification frameworks to provide insights for ongoing development and improvements to the OQSF. The five frameworks are:

- The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- Bangladesh's National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework;
- The Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF);
- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for Namibia; and
- The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

The goal of the report was understanding how vocational and professional qualifications were structured in other countries compared to South African occupational qualifications by using a benchmarking approach. This study uses the case study approach which details aspects of the national working population, industries, educational governance structures, and vocational qualifications.

Australia, Bangladesh, the Netherlands, and Namibia define their qualifications in a single national framework with rules for vocational qualifications. The only difference with the Scottish Vocational Qualifications is that they have their own levels aligned to levels on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

The findings reflect that on the regulatory level, qualifications appear to have many similarities. Most countries have some form of pre-vocational training programmes that occur on a lower secondary level, with Scotland and the Netherlands having the most regulative information on pre-vocational programmes and pathways. Australia, South Africa, Bangladesh and Namibia have many similarities between qualifications and framework structures, and the Australian and South African framework levels are almost identical. The governance structures in all countries are almost identical with similar use of frameworks, qualification authorities, sectoral/industrial training boards, and a vocational education/training regulator. The only variation was in the funding structures which related to those responsible for tuition fees and the breakdown of funding vocational programmes between state and employers. Additionally, regulative descriptions of occupational/competence standards were almost identical in their construction and detailing of task performance. While the qualifications were similar, the

learning programme, based on the qualification, often varied from country to country. The last set of findings show — in the two specific occupational studies on professional/catering cook and electricians —the variation in learning occurring at the apprenticeship/work experience and educational institutions.

The full report is available in the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) Research Bulletin 2022-23 which can be accessed under Published Presentations on the following link:

<https://www.qcto.org.za/publications%2c-policies%2c-guidelines---forms.html>

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31. The Extent and Nature of Demand and Supply of Medical Practitioners Human Resources: A Case of Education and Training Landscape (*Qaqamba Mohulatsi, Menzi Mthethwa and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

The shortages of human resources in the health sector have been described as one of the most pressing global health issues of our time. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates a projected shortfall of 10 million health workers by 2030, mostly in low- and lower-middle income countries. In response to the challenges relating to medical human resources specifically, it is crucial to understand the context of the supply and demand for these professionals and the factors at play in this regard. The aim of the study was to investigate the extent and nature of the supply and demand, and the ratios and densities of medical practitioners in South Africa, and the challenges that exist pertaining to maintaining the supply of these human resources and skills.

The study made use of a mixed method research strategy focusing on quantitative and qualitative analysis. Purposive sampling was applied in the study. Secondary data sources include Education Management Information System (EMIS), Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), Colleges of Medicine, Statistics South Africa (STATS SA), Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) from Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) and Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The findings revealed that the secondary school system's output is severely constrained considering a small pool of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learners from the basic education system. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that the output of medical student graduates is insufficient to meet the needs of the population. The lack of posts for internships and community service is flagged as one of the biggest concerns currently affecting the supply of medical practitioners to the country. This demonstrates that the South African public health structure is grossly undercapitalised, despite the fact that the majority of the population uses these facilities. A need for a well-coordinated human resource system for health was greatly emphasised and private public partnerships were seen as a possible solution to some of the challenges that affect the supply of medical practitioners.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/download/the-extent-and-nature-of-demand-and-supply-of-medical-practitioners-human-resources-research-paper/>

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32. The Extent and Nature of Demand and Supply of Pharmacy Human Resources: A Case of the Education and Training Landscape (*Mahali Makhetha, Menzi Mthethwa and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

The role of pharmacists has evolved historically from a focus on medication compounding and dispensing to pharmaceutical care services. In South Africa, pharmacists currently contribute towards primary health care, and even so their role is said to be more with the introduction of the National Health Institute (NHI). The scope of practice of Pharmacists was currently expanded in response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19, where they acted as key first point of contact in the health care system. Nonetheless, there are shared views globally around the numerous challenges faced by the pharmacy fraternity. These challenges include although not limited to the supply and demand factors. In response to these challenges, it is crucial to understand the context of the supply and demand for these professionals and the factors at play in this regard.

The study followed a mixed method approach which accounted for literature review, quantitative secondary data analysis, and qualitative analysis of primary data collected through interviews with relevant key experts and stakeholders. Secondary data sources include Education Management Information System (EMIS), Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC), Statistics South Africa (STATS SA), Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) from Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) and Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The overall findings show that the secondary school system's output is severely constrained given a small number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learners from the basic education system. The national density as calculated in this study is 28.2 Pharmacists per 100 000 population in 2022 which is below the recommended 43 per 100 000 population by the WHO. While there are some improvements in the system it is not adequate to demand and requirements when compared to the global averages and minimum requirements for universal health coverage systems.

Below are some of the key recommendations that came from the study:

- Consider funding community service posts in areas where the shortages of pharmacists are felt by communities the most.

- Provide funding for post-graduate studies in academia, as well as post-graduates across the board.
- Consider raising the stipend paid by the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) for interns at private hospitals.
- Facilitate discussions to foster partnerships between the pharmacy schools and industry so that graduates can be absorbed by both public and private sectors.
- Introduce a platform with information on pharmacists who are looking for employment.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/download/the-extent-and-nature-of-demand-and-supply-of-pharmacy-human-resources-research-paper/>

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33. Adult Education Training for Unemployed Persons - Track and Tracer Study (Joyce Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie)

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority's (HWSETA's) strategy is committed to supporting adult education in South Africa and promoting lifelong learning in the sector. Therefore, funding for the Adult Education Training (AET) in both formal and informal skills-based courses give relevance to community-based education and training. Community Education and Training (CET) contributes to improving community cohesion and social capital. Such training therefore needs to be responsive to geographic needs, sectoral needs and employment challenges. Both formal and informal training interventions are offered by CET colleges and in order to ensure that these programmes are indeed achieving their intended objectives and goals, evaluations are periodically conducted. The main aim of the study was to assess the effects of AET interventions on employment prospects and further learning of adults who are out of work and out of school. The aim was achieved under the following objectives: (a) To determine the achievement of the formal qualification after completion of training; (b) To determine the destinations of learners who have completed the AET programme; (c) To determine the nature of the employment by learners; (d) To determine type of skills development initiatives that yield positive employment outcomes; and (e) To assess progression to further learning after completing the AET programme.

This evaluation used the theory-based approach to determine the effectiveness of the AET programme, thus the value created by the programme. Data was collected using the Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews (CATI) telephonic interviews tool. The study focused on the unemployed learners who completed the HWSETA funded AET programme in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The study sample frame was comprised of 418 learners who completed the formal and non-formal training modalities. Due to missing contact details and invalid contact numbers only 312 learners were contactable. Of these, 64 responded to the survey which resulted in the overall response rate of 21%.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- i. Determining the achievement of the formal qualification after completion of training: 55 respondents completed formal training and eight (13%) confirmed that they obtained a formal qualification. Eight obtained Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Level 4, equivalent to National Qualification Framework (NQF) level 1.

- ii. Determining the destination of learners that have completed the AET programme: Of the 64 people that responded to the survey, 15 have found employment, while seven are self-employed and five progressed to formal learning. However, 37 remained unemployed.
- iii. The nature of the employment of learners who received employment: In terms of learners who have found employment, seven have full-time jobs, four have fixed-term contracts, and three have casual jobs. It was alarming to find that the majority of respondents said their jobs did not align with the training/qualifications completed. Further, seven of the 15 people indicated that they had two or more jobs since completion, which may suggest that the jobs were not sustainable. This was corroborated by learners that have reported that they were earning low wages of below R4000,00. Only five (5) learners ventured into starting their own businesses. Four of the five received the non-formal training. There was consensus that the training that they had received had motivated them to start their own businesses. In addition, there was indication that the learners lacked training and financial support to start their own businesses.
- iv. Determining type of skills development initiatives that yield positive employment outcomes: Among the learners who found employment, eight received non-formal training, while seven received formal training.
- v. Assessing progression to further learning after completing the AET programme: Thirty-four learners completed the formal training and eight confirmed that they have obtained a formal qualification. Further, only five learners decided to study further. Three enrolled at universities and TVET college while two are studying matric at the CET/AET Centres.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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34. Track and Tracer Study of Employed Persons (*Lesego Monnapula, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority's (HWSETA's) strategic intent (i.e., the 2020-2025) is to contribute to the improvement of level of skills for 50% of the Health and Welfare sector workforce through various learning programmes that address the critical skills required by the sector. This annual track and tracer study is aimed at identifying and mapping career pathways created by qualifications funded by skills development programmes of the HWSETA targeting the employed by achieving the following objectives: (a) Determining whether the qualification has provided a career progression; (b) Determining the change in salary/wage after obtaining the qualification; (c) Determining the utilisation of skills after completion; and (d) Determining learner perceptions towards the programme.

The study collected data through telephonic interviews with workers who completed artisanship, learnership, bursary programmes. The database had a total of 188 workers who completed the learning programmes in 2021/22, however, only 185 had contactable numbers and out of a sample of 185 only 91 workers responded across learning programmes.

Key Findings are noted below.

1. Career progression after obtaining qualification: Of the trained workers that completed their respective HWSETA programmes, a majority were working for government departments, and for universities. At the time of enrolment into the HWSETA programmes, 65.9% of the trained workers were employed by government departments, 24.4% in private enterprises and 9.8% in non-profit organisations. After completing the programme, 56% of the trained workers continued with the jobs they already held, 29% changed jobs, and 9% decided to study further, however, 6% are now unemployed. Of the 24 workers who changed jobs after completing their qualifications, 70.0% found permanent employment while 29.2% were employed short-term. Sixty-six percent (66%) of trained workers from the post-graduate bursary programme progressed to higher positions, followed by undergraduate bursary at 13% and learnership (21%). None of the learners from the artisanship programme got promotions.
2. Change in salary/wage and fringe benefits after obtaining the qualification: Amongst those who disclosed their monthly salaries, the study found that there were key income changes in trained workers after the completion of the qualification they were funded for. Among some of the key changes, 18.6% of the trained workers earned a monthly salary between

R 25 601– R 51 200 (+4% improvement compared to before obtaining the qualification). However, declines were noticeable in 7% trained worker earnings monthly salaries which ranged between R 6 401 and R 25 600. With regards to the employer contribution to pension/retirement fund, a majority of the trained workers indicated that their employers contribute towards their Pension/ Retirement fund (66.7%), the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) (53.3%) and Medical Aid (30.0%).

3. Utilisation of skills after completion: Overall, 92.0% of the trained workers use the acquired skills of the qualification to some degree. Specifically, 65.3% of trained workers use the acquired skills to a great extent to satisfy their work tasks while 26.7% use the acquired skills to some extent/small extent.
4. Learner perceptions towards the programme: A majority of trained workers believed that the knowledge they acquired was top-class, as 57.3% (43/75) of the learners indicated to have received expert knowledge in the qualification obtained after the intervention. In terms of overall satisfaction, 97.5% of trained workers indicated that they would recommend the programme to someone else.

Recommendations suggest that the HWSETA must verify that learners that enrol in these programmes are actually employed. The response rate for this study was compromised by learners who did not belong to the target population. The HWSETA must revise the theory of change for this programme as the current outcome is at long-term therefore cannot be measurable within six months of completing the programme.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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35. Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises and Levy Exempt Organisations Relevance and Sustainability Evaluation Study (*Joyce Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

The main focus of this evaluation is to understand the outcomes of the interventions targeted at Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) and levy-exempt organisations by Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA). Also, the study wanted to uncover the number of SMMEs whose sustainability was strengthened through skills development initiatives funded by the HWSETA in the strategic period; and the sustainability of levy-exempt organisations whose governance has been supported through skills development programmes during the strategic period.

The objectives of this study were to determine:

- The extent to which the training intervention funded by the HWSETA respond to the skills development needs and priorities of the small and emerging businesses, as well as levy-exempt organisations.
- The extent to which the training intervention funded by the HWSETA contribute to the sustainability of SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations.
- Other skills needs of SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations that may be supported by the HWSETA in the future.

This evaluation study made use of an empirical research design, with a mixed-methods research approach. Data were derived through both quantitative and qualitative sources. A survey was conducted with directors and business owners from 206 levy-exempt organisations and SMMEs. Furthermore, a total of eight (8) in-depth interviews were conducted.

Key findings revealed that according to the results of the project, a majority of both SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations indicated that HWSETA's funding was effective in responding to their needs. Apart from meeting the fundee's requirements, the outcome of the funding was also shown to have successfully achieved their intended objectives and purpose. Combining the survey and interview data established that the HWSETA's support was relevant and effective in response to the skills development needs and priorities of the SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations. Results also show that the positive outcome of the funding does continue to benefit the SMME or levy-exempt, for a certain period of time. As such, the

HWSETA's funding does contribute towards the sustainability of SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations, but only to a certain extent.

Overall, the findings presented in this report indicate that HWSETA's funding is relevant to the needs and priorities of SMMEs and levy-exempt organisations. The funding provided is pertinent to the entities and has been deemed successful in achieving its intended purpose. The benefits reaped from the success of the funding are sustainable, but only to a certain degree. Given that most funding is required to improve the skills of the employees, the SMMEs, and levy-exempt organisations continue to benefit even after the funding has ceased. However, this sustainability is hampered when skilled employees leave the entity.

Recommendations suggest that apart from receiving more funding, the SMME owners and the directors of the levy-exempt organisations first recommendation is concerned with improving the level of communication provided and reducing the extensive waiting period prior to receiving the funds. Participants recommend that the HWSETA contact the beneficiaries regularly to provide timeous responses to concerns related to funding. The primary recommendation involves developing procedures to reduce the time taken to provide the funding, as numerous respondents stated that they are still waiting for their funding and are struggling to cover the financial costs. Lastly, participants recommend that the HWSETA help with the administrative process taken to apply for funding, as it is a confusing and time-consuming process. In response, it is recommended that the HWSETA attend to improving their service delivery in the above-mentioned areas.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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36. Technical and Vocational Education and Training and University Work Integrated Learning - Track and Tracer Study Joyce (Mphela, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie)

The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programme aims to mitigate the skills gap among learners before completing the program and entering the workforce. This programme is designed to equip learners with hard and soft skills essential for success in their respective fields of specialisation. This study aims to evaluate the outcomes of the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA)-funded WIL programme for learners from Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and universities.

The aim of the study is achieved through the following objectives: (a) To determine attainment of full qualification after completion of the WIL programme; (b) To determine students' experiences towards the WIL programme; and (c) To determine student employability after completion of the qualification for which work integrated programme was funded.

The study collected data from a sample of learners that have completed the TVET and university WIL placement throughout the country. The database had a total of 429 learners. Due to the unavailability of candidates and invalid contact details, only 178 candidates (27 from TVETs and 151 from universities) participated in the survey i.e. 41.4%.

Key research findings are summarised below.

Determining the obtainment of full qualification after WIL completion: According to the results, all TVET (n=27; 100%) and 92.5% (n=123) university learners who participated in this study have obtained their qualifications. TVET learners who participated in the study have completed their qualifications; however, only 52% obtained their certificates, and only 23% of university students received their certificates. The average time it took to receive the certificates was less than a year to two years for university and TVET learners, respectively.

Learners' experiences towards the WIL programme: The findings suggest differences in how learners from universities and TVET programmes secure their WIL placements. The majority (76%) of university learners found their WIL placements with the assistance of their institutions, while more than half (52%) of TVET participants applied to employers on their own. During placement the majority (95%) were assigned a supervisor or mentor, and only

5% of the learners stated that they were not given a supervisor. The duration of placements varied; a quarter (25%) of the respondents were placed in less than six (6) months, while 23% were placed after 24 months. However, 15% reported that their placements took six (6) months, and 5% of the sample could not remember their placement waiting period. Most of the participants indicated that their mentor or supervisors had great knowledge of the field (62%), communication skills (46%), and provided excellent support (50%). 82% of learners rated the WIL programme benefits well for their academic learning and the quality of work.

Learner employability after completion of WIL programme: Among the university learners who completed the WIL programme, a majority (57.1%, n=40) secured immediate employment, whereas for TVET learners, the figure stood at 46.7% (n=7). Interestingly, female learners emerged as the group with the highest percentage (52.1%, n=37) of immediate job placements after the WIL programme. Furthermore, the study found that 62.5% (n=10) of TVET learners obtained fixed-term job contracts, while 50% (n=35) of university learners secured similar contracts. 48.6% (n=34) of university learners secured full-time job contracts, and a significant portion (54.2%, n=39) of female learners obtained fixed-term contracts. This finding further highlights the gender dynamics within the programme's outcomes.

The WIL programme contributed to the absorption of learners into the workplace, as 55% of learners found employment. The study revealed a gap in monitoring the participants, as 10% of the learners are still engaged in the programme, while 1% have confirmed that they have discontinued their participation. HWSETA is advised to consider creating a monitoring tool or application that operates in real-time to improve the learner experience.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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37. Track and Tracer Study of the Unemployed Persons (*Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

This is a track and trace study focused on the unemployed learners funded by the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) who successfully completed the HWSETA learning programmes namely, the Artisan, Bursary (undergraduate and postgraduate), Internship and learnership programmes during 2021/22 financial year. The overall objective of the project was to determine the outcomes and career pathways of learners who have completed the HWSETA learning programmes. The aim of this study was to conduct an outcomes evaluation focused on achieving the following objectives: (a) To determine the rate of employment for the 2022/23 financial year; (b) To determine whether these learners found jobs within six months upon successful completion of the programme; (c) To determine the nature of employment provided to the learners that participated on the programmes.

Learners who participated in the above-funded programmes, were contacted via the Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATI) tool. The population was comprised of 3 413 who completed HWSETA learning programmes in 2021/22 and were never traced before. Due to the lack of learner contact details only 2 211 learners from the 3 413 total targeted population formed part of the sample frame and only 1 013 learners responded to the survey. The overall response rate of the 2022/2023 study was 46%. In total 931 learners were reached through telephonic interviews. Additional 82 learners were reached through online survey which tallied to 1 013 learners reached throughout the whole 2022/2023 tracer study.

Key findings are summarised below:

Determining the rate of employment for the 2022/23 financial year: There was a 42% overall employment rate. This is a 10% increase from the 2021/2022 overall employment rate. Although it is still relatively lower, the small increase in employment rate is highly attributed to the labour market still suffering from the pandemic after-effects. In terms of gender disaggregation, females were found to have more advantage on getting employment as compared to males at 65% for females and 35% for males. Approximately 49.2% (84) of learners of the age group 18-25 years have found employment while 42% (194) of the learners of the age group 26-30 years and 38.7% (173) were between the ages of 31-35 years. The undergraduate bursary programme tends to yield the more employment (88%) followed by the artisanships programme (53%) then the postgraduate bursary programme and learnership

and internship at 48% and 39%, respectively. The vocational bursary programme yields 15% employment.

Determining whether these learners found jobs within six months upon successful completion of the programme: There was an evident increase in the learners who acquired employment within 6 months of completing their learning programme from 78% in the 2021/2022 study to 85% in the 2022/2023 study whilst 15% found employment between seven to 12 months and more than 12 months each. The learnership programme (66%) facilitated quicker absorption into the labour market compared to other programmes. This was followed by undergraduate (58%) and internship (46%) programmes. Other programmes such as Artisan programmes, 50% of learners got employed within three (3) months after training while those from vocational bursary (33%) found employment after a period of six (6) months.

Determining the nature of employment provided to the learners that participated on the programmes: The study found that the health sector employed 40% of the learners followed by the social sector at 35% and other sectors at 20%. The veterinary sector employed 5% of the learners. Majority of the learners (47%) were employed by the government. The private sector and government (national/provincial) absorbed most of the learners at 35% and 28%, respectively. Approximately 52% were employed on a full-time basis which is an increase from 34% who were employed on full-time basis from the 2021/2022 cohort. Further, 85% of the learners indicated that their jobs were aligned to the qualification obtained.

The overall rate of employment of the 2022/23 study is 42%, which is a 10% increase from the 2021/22 employment rate. This is slightly higher than the country's employment rate of 39.38% in the fourth quarter of 2022.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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38. Trade Unions Relevance Evaluation Tracer Study (*Lesego Monnapula, Johanna Ledwaba and Bulelwa Plaatjie*)

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) supports trade unions, by strengthening their service delivery through skills development initiatives and carrying a responsibility of evaluating the education, training, and skills development interventions. The aim of the research is to assess the relevance of skills development funding initiatives that the HWSETA offers to trade unions and as such the results will assist HWSETA in further developing a sustainable skills development strategy for the HWSETA as well as contribute positively to the HWSETA sectors and promote inclusive economic growth in the country.

The main Objectives of the Study are:

- a) To assess the extent to which training intervention offered by the HWSETA respond to the identified skills needs and priorities of trade union officials.
- b) To assess the extent to which skills developed are utilised for trade union agenda.
- c) To identify other skills needs of Trade Union officials that may be supported by the HWSETA in the future.

The research methodology applied in this research was a quantitative Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATI) method as well as the quantitative online self-complete methodology. The study sample frame was comprised of 174 learners, of these 55 participated in the study.

The results indicated that 42 were funded for the short courses and 13 were funded for other courses. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the respondents are satisfied with the level to which the programme met their needs (fully met), and 5% indicated that the training has not met their needs. Based on the results, 60% of respondents agreed that the training intervention matched skills and level of understanding towards their work. Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents were delighted to have had the training intervention, with 27% of the respondents saying they were satisfied. Respondents mentioned that a law degree is important in their line of work, they suggested that HWSETA should subsidise undergraduate degrees and master's levels on labour law. Furthermore, they mentioned other courses which they should receive funding on such financial management, public management, degree in political science etc.

Overall, the findings presented in this report indicate that the training intervention offered by HWSETA had a positive impact on the beneficiaries. The training intervention they completed assisted them to carry out tasks required.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.hwseta.org.za/about-the-hwseta/research-findings/>

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39. Accounting for Social Value in Funding Public Colleges in Higher Education in South Africa (Cornelia C September, Shirley Lloyd and Paul Singh)

The need has become imperative to look not only at the **effect** on the public purse of the South African government, but also a need to focus on the **long-term change** achieved by government through funding public education.

The aim of this research was to investigate the use of a Social-Return-On-Investment (SROI) as a benefit to the public college sector.

Introduction

There has been growing interest by governments and other agencies of rate-of-returns from investment in education along with research to guide macro-policy decisions and financing education reforms (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 2010).

Aim and Objectives

The phenomenological inquiry, as part of uncovering what the expected SROI would be from the college sector was studied in the context of South Africa as a developmental state.

Major Findings

The social outcomes are influenced by the institutional settings, as the nature of the social benefits will change depending on the type of system and country in which Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is situated. The findings reveal that dimensions must include the context of employability, consider the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and idle factor of young people, output must be aligned to identifiable sectors such as towards a reduction in crime and gender-based violence.

A SROI is about value rather than money only. A framework for measuring and accounting should therefore be based on the concept of value and improvements. The TVET education is undervalued and therefore the TVET sector can benefit from an analysis of its value, to inform policy makers to understand the economic and social value of TVET investments.

Discussion

A SROI has to be underpinned by the values of those that matter most. Value refers to the relative importance of different outcomes informed by the beneficiaries such as students, broader society, the public colleges and government.

Conclusion

The measurement of a SROI has not been done in the TVET sector in South Africa according to the literature and documentary analysis. A new education financing system, framed within the parameters of a SROI, will seek to reflect from theory to practice towards a desired outcome of what is expected from the TVET sector. To understand a SROI for the TVET sector is to understand the true value of TVET programmes and what they produce as they are most important.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/d0i55ayy3s54p9jyh1xlf/Accounting-for-social-value-in-funding-public-colleges-in-Higher-Education-in-South-Africa.-June-2023.docx?rlkey=rxab6s9kaf5w2mbpcydx8ngqo&dl=0>

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40. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Lecturer Work-Integrated Learning: Opportunities and Challenges (*Joseph Mesuwini and Sello. P. Mokoena*)

There is a widening gap between industry expectations and what Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) lecturers teach to students. In South Africa, Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) equips lecturers with industry skills and experience necessary for effective teaching and learning. Most TVET lecturers in South Africa lack industry experience. There is a lacuna of research as lecturers' industry opportunities and challenges are not much researched.

Findings revealed that lecturers acquired industry experience through exposure to the latest machines, technology processes and practices, and networking with artisans. Challenges included a lack of supervision and support from industry personnel and colleges, a lack of hands-on engagement with expensive machinery and weak industry induction processes. Some lecturers were exposed to world-class standards with the latest technology, learnt to use different machine types, participated in engineering processes through teamwork, and carried out maintenance and repair work. It implied they could relate their theory to practice when teaching practical subjects. Contrarily, the WIL experience was muddled with limited support from some TVET institutions and industry personnel who did not provide the necessary backing when needed. There were administrative and supervision concerns raised which hindered the implementation of WIL. Some of the issues pointed at a lack of a WIL model that addresses WIL TVET lecturer placement so that all role players participate from an informed viewpoint.

This study informed the challenges encountered during lecturer WIL and proposed a WIL model to enhance TVET lecturer skilling. Communication and coordination between industry and TVET colleges needs attention to ensure that lecturers are placed in industries that can fully support WIL. Industry personnel should be trained to host lecturers so that they disseminate vital information for their learning. The WIL initiative should be industry-driven so that lecturer placement challenges are minimised. The appointment of dedicated training officers who receive, induct and guide lecturers through the WIL practice was recommended to limit challenges. Colleges should design an induction programme in collaboration with industry for lecturers to attend a common induction course which qualifies them to engage in WIL. This study proposed lecturers to report to company supervisors during WIL to prevent double reporting. This study recommended an embedded WIL component in the training of

TVET lecturers to ensure their practical skills competency. Some crucial issues were highlighted in the study to improve TVET delivery and livelihood of citizens.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://ijlter.org/index.php/ijlter/article/view/8026/pdf>

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41. Duplication and Conflicts in South African Legislation in the Context of the National Qualifications Framework Act (*Heidi Bolton*)

The South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) comprises three NQF Sub-Frameworks – for general, higher, and occupational qualifications respectively – each overseen by a Quality Council. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is aware of duplications in, and conflicts between, the legislation that governs the work of the three Quality Councils, and that of statutory professional bodies in the country. SAQA sought to investigate these overlaps towards enhancing understandings that could inform the effectiveness and efficiency of the NQF. This paper presents the research that followed, that sought to identify the legislation and clauses concerned, and specific duplications and contradictions that exist in these documents. The paper presents the problematic areas identified, and recommendations to address the challenges.

The four research questions that form the focus of this paper were as follows.

1. What does NQF-related legislation for SAQA, and the Quality Councils, in South Africa say about quality assurance in education, training, and development in the country?
2. What does the legislation of statutory professional bodies in South Africa say about their quality assurance roles?
3. What specific clauses in this legislation are aligned, or contradictory, or overlapping/ causing duplication in the system?
4. What is needed to address non-alignment and overlapping clauses, where these challenges exist, in the legislation for the different bodies?

The problematic aspects identified were:

- Difficulties in locating complete sets of up-to-date statutory body legislation,
- Use of outdated terminology and referencing in the legislation for statutory bodies,
- Non-aligned concepts,
- Conflicts between legislation for the Quality Councils and statutory bodies, resulting in overlapping roles regarding quality assurance,
- Conflicts in legislation regarding the evaluation of foreign qualifications,
- Omission of NQF requirements in legislation for statutory bodies,
- Statutory council freedom to act outside the NQF system.

The findings of the analysis showed that while some of the Acts of the statutory bodies include sections *explicitly* referring to the 'control of education and training', all except one deal *implicitly* with this control, and refer to the approval/ recognition/ accreditation of learning providers to differing extents. In relation to the categories of problematic aspects found, recommendations were developed, addressing which will require bilateral engagement as ten different Ministries are involved.

The recommendations include the following.

- Updating statutory body Acts to address terminology, streamline processes involving SAQA and the Quality Councils, reduce duplications, strengthen collaboration in quality assurance, and provide for general updates.
- Greater inter-Ministerial collaboration to reduce duplications in reporting and other functions.
- That the relevant legislation provides for formal collaboration between the Quality Councils and the statutory professional bodies.

The full document can be obtained via the author.

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42. Towards Understanding the Professional Designation Systems of South African Qualifications Authority - Recognised Professional Bodies (*Heidi Bolton*)

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is mandated by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 2008) to, amongst others, develop and implement policy and criteria for recognising statutory and non-statutory professional bodies and registering their professional designations. SAQA's (2020)¹ policy and criteria for professional bodies includes some broad requirements for their professional designations. To develop the more detailed guidelines required, SAQA needed to deepen its understanding of professional designation systems, including aspects such as designation naming practices, numbers of designations, clear naming systems nationally and internationally, articulation between designations, and the relationships between designations on one hand, and qualifications and occupations, on the other. This paper presents SAQA's research to understand these aspects, including the patterns found, and related recommendations towards guidelines.

The research reported in this paper addressed the following questions.

- 1) What are the **current designation naming practices and patterns** for SAQA-recognised statutory and non-statutory professional bodies?
- 2) Considering the designations of professional bodies currently recognised by SAQA, **how many have the same titles** as:
 - (b) NQF-registered **qualifications/ part-qualifications** and are there any patterns in this regard?
 - (c) **Occupation titles** in the Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) and are there any patterns in this regard?
- 3) Considering the designations of professional bodies currently recognised by SAQA, (i) **how many** include **terms that may be inappropriate** for South Africa, (ii) **what are the terms**, and (iii) are there any **patterns** in this regard?
- 4) Considering the designations of professional bodies currently recognised by SAQA, (i) how many have **high numbers of titles** and what are the numbers? (ii) How do designations differ, and to what extent do bodies **sequence** their designations? (iii) Are there any **patterns** in this regard?

¹ SAQA initially published this policy in 2012, and revised it in 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The analyses reported in this paper commenced under the 2020 version and the related research recommendations informed subsequent versions of the policy.

- 5) What are some **international practices that SAQA could consider** as it seeks to *clarify its criteria* for professional designations?
- 6) **What principles and/or criteria** could feature in SAQA guidelines for naming and assigning professional designations?

At the start of the research, on 31 August 2021, there were 103 SAQA-recognised professional bodies; during the research, two bodies were de-recognised; the analyses focused on the remaining 101 bodies and their 373 designations registered in the National Qualifications Framework Management Information System (NQF MIS). There were 19 statutory bodies with 112 (30% of) designations, and 82 non-statutory bodies with 261 (70% of) designations.

To address the first five questions, the designation data were extracted from the NQF MIS and the professional body websites, and cleaned, coded, and analysed using Excel spreadsheets. Patterns were sought within the categories 'statutory' and 'non-statutory', and overall, as appropriate. Information in the NQF MIS and on professional body websites was compared.

The first level analyses revealed clear as well as less clear systems of professional designations; international counterpart professional body conventions were considered, the idea being to identify alternative possibilities for the less clear systems.

Rich patterns were found in all the designation aspects investigated, including in relation to the original research questions, and additional aspects that impacted on these foci, namely, designation criteria, the hierarchy of designations and progression between designations per body, and the 'designation systems' of bodies. The trends found provided clear pointers for the development of policy, criteria, and guidelines for professional designations.

The full document can be obtained via the author.

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43. National Qualifications Frameworks Globally (*Heidi Bolton*)

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) conducted desktop research on the nature, scope, and management of qualifications frameworks internationally, towards informing the implementation and further development of the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The research considered how many qualifications frameworks exist globally, the forms frameworks take, their purposes, implementation, and lessons for South Africa. The education and training systems of *all* 202 United Nations (UN)-listed countries were considered; the 'Holy See' (the Vatican) was omitted, leaving 201 countries.

The research questions comprised the following.

- 1) How many qualifications frameworks exist, globally, and what form do these frameworks take?
- 2) What are the purposes of the qualifications frameworks and how are they implemented?
- 3) Which qualifications frameworks could be considered in detail, to inform South African NQF policy?
- 4) What are some of the lessons for South Africa, based on detailed consideration of selected qualifications frameworks?

Regarding the methods followed for the research, the first comprised sourcing and analysing existing compilations on qualifications frameworks. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education (CEDEFOP), European Training Foundation (ETF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL), for example, jointly write biennial volumes on national and regional qualifications frameworks (CEDEFOP-ETF-UNESCO UIL, 2019; 2017; 2015)². The relevant information was captured, coded, and analysed using Excel. Secondly, some country systems, with aspects of particular interest for South Africa, were examined in more detail. In this second stage of the research, care was taken to select countries from various world regions, and with differing generations of NQFs, and population sizes.

The findings revealed that 161 (80% of) countries utilise qualifications frameworks; 136 (67%) had NQFs; seven had Sector Qualifications Frameworks (SQFs); 18 utilised only Regional

² The 2021 publication is imminent but is not yet available.

Qualifications Frameworks (RQFs), and for 40 (20%), no information was found. All countries reference their systems to regional qualifications frameworks, of which 17 were identified.

The NQFs found usually had three main sectors – for general, vocational, and higher education. A small number had a fourth sub-framework for ‘lifelong learning qualifications’ or ‘labour market qualifications’. Roughly half of the NQFs were managed by a qualification authority, others were located within departments of education. While variety was found in the numbers and types of bodies overseeing the range of NQF functions, similarity was found in the types of roles displayed, which comprised the following:

- Qualifications framework policy development,
- Over-arching oversight of NQF implementation and further development
- Developing and maintaining NQF Level Descriptors,
- Developing and maintaining qualification standards,
- Developing and managing registers/sub-registers of qualifications and related information,
- Quality assurance,
- Overseeing the recognition of formal, non-formal, and informal learning,
- Leading stakeholder collaboration and communications,
- Serving as a national coordination point for evaluating foreign qualifications, verifying qualifications, managing an appeals board and related legal aspects, and
- Research, monitoring, and evaluation towards deepening NQF implementation and development.

The full document can be obtained via the author.

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44. Assessing the Implementation and Impact of the National Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Policies, and Other Elements of Flexibility in South African Education and Training (*Omotola Akindolani and Heidi Bolton*)

Since the promulgation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act in 2008, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has conducted three NQF Impact Studies. The recent fourth NQF Impact Study builds on the previous impact studies and assesses the implementation and impact of the national Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) policies, as well as other system flexibility initiatives undertaken by a wide range of NQF stakeholders.

The study employed a mixed-methods research design where the primary tool for data collection was a survey questionnaire consisting of a mixture of structured and unstructured questions. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for the survey and a total of 173 NQF partners/stakeholders (respondents) participated in it. Using an inductive approach, thematic analysis was applied to the unstructured responses, and the responses were coded into broad themes based on the research objectives and survey questions. The analysis reflected the following broad thematic areas: policy awareness, policy implementation, policy impact, policy improvement, flexibility elements, and understanding relevant data.

The findings show that there is a robust policy framework in place regarding flexibility in the system, and implementation is well supported by providers of education and training. There were generally high levels of knowledge and awareness of the national RPL and CAT policies, and NQF stakeholders have come up with innovative and creative ways to provide the necessary student support and ensure that articulation in the system is catered for, alongside RPL and CAT principles. The study also notes some of the successes and challenges experienced by the responding institutions while implementing RPL and CAT within their institutions.

Some key recommendations from the study include:

- Update and simplify aspects of the national policies that are confusing.
- Intensify system-wide communication around RPL, CAT and FLPs.
- Prioritise record-keeping and data management practices regarding achievements awarded through RPL and CAT.
- Explore dynamic funding models that support the implementation of RPL.

The full document can be accessed on the following link: https://www.saqqa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2023-03-20_2021-NQF-Impact-Study-Report_FINAL-Board-Approved.pdf

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45. Human Resource Development Council Maths and Science Report (*Aphiwe Socishe*)

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) of South Africa Mathematics and Science recommendations is to improve science and mathematics. The Maths and Science report under the heading Pre-Service Teacher Education, comprises of recommendations to address the challenges and opportunities in mathematics and science within the entire South African education system.

The first section of the report focuses on mathematics starting from the Intermediate phase, outlining what teachers need to know about what they teach and the important content knowledge for teaching that extends beyond their phase curriculum. The report continues to zoom into mathematics in the Senior Phase to deliberate and make recommendations on the mathematical content topics that are relevant for the broader development of Senior Phase Mathematics teachers' mathematical proficiency for Grades 7-9 from an advanced perspective. The last part of this section focuses on Mathematics in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase and provides recommendations on principles and framework for content selection and additional aspects that should be given attention in mathematics course for teachers.

The second section is based on Science starting from the Foundation Phase, which highlights the importance of revising the teacher curriculum to reflect the current and practical thinking on science education. The section continues to Science in the Intermediate Phase, which further provides potential recommendations on how the teacher curriculum and assessments can be improved to be meaningful to learners. The section also looks at Natural Science in the Senior Phase which analyses and provides recommendations on how Natural Science content can be transformed, decolonised and Africanised to improve understanding of the Four Science strands. The last part of the second section is based on recommendations for the FET Physical Sciences and Life Sciences preservice curriculum, which identifies challenges that could possibly hinder progress in achieving potential teaching and learning outcomes and provides guidelines that could be adopted to ensure that the Physical and Life Science teachers are prepared with sufficient content mastery.

The full documents can be accessed on the following links:

<https://hrdcsa.org.za/category/reserchreports/>

- Final Science Pre-Service Teacher Education report: <https://hrdcsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final-Science-Pre-service-Teacher-Education-Report.pdf>
- Final Mathematics teacher education report: <https://hrdcsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final-Mathematics-Report.pdf>
- Mathematics and Science Standing Committee (MSSC) Close- Out Report: <https://hrdcsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Mathematics-and-Science-Standing-Committee-final-report-summary.pdf>

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46. The Other Side of Private Provision: Part 1 Research Report on the Response of Private Providers to the National Skills Development Plan 2030 (Shirley Lloyd)

The Research Report Part 1 is contextualised within the National Skills Fund (NSF) -funded project that was designed and implemented to facilitate dialogue and build capacity for particularly private higher education and training institutions, private colleges and skills development providers to understand and develop a response to the National Skills Development Plan 2030. Private providers are significant stakeholders and role -players in skills development implementation in South Africa. The purpose of this Report is to provide an account of their responses to the implementation of the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), including its goal(s) and objectives. The evaluation-driven account also seeks to identify the successes and challenges in the implementation of the NSDP thus far, and offers recommendations regarding improvements to the implementation of the NSDP in the future.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/k6qh88w8s7vfyx0rlak2o/NSF-YEAR-1-RESEARCH-REPORT-1.pdf?rlkey=c4k6cf792yrssdtr78suc0mk&dl=0>

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47. The Other Side of Private Provision: Part 2: Providers as First Responders to the Economic Reconstruction and Development Plan and District Development Model (DDM) (Shirley Lloyd)

The global Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 outbreak has thrown the world as we knew it into a place where future outcomes are unclear and filled with disruption and uncertainty. The challenges are understood, as are the opportunities, born out of the knowledge that disruptors have forced change very quickly. To promote post-pandemic recovery, South Africa has adopted economic packages that include financial and skills development policy measures. The South African government published an economic reconstruction and recovery plan to focus agency and resources on current and future pandemics and crises. Without the critical role played by education and training providers from the education sphere, these plans would not be implemented. The role that private education, training and skills development providers play is to design and implement appropriate skills development programmes to address the need for skilled and knowledgeable future-fit people for a changed workplace. This study uses a qualitative methodology, comprising a literature review of the skills development trajectory in South Africa, followed by a narration of initial responses from focus groups comprising mainly private providers to the government's economic reconstruction and recovery plans. Through provincial capacity building workshops and focus group discussions innovative and entrepreneurial solutions were proposed. What emerges as new knowledge is a positive early response in the form of a proposed model, encompassing entrepreneurial partnerships, new qualifications, and formal and non-formal skills development programmes to drive new resilience in local economies.

The full document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/jzh8va8a7e9igglcsozbz/REPORT-THE-OTHER-SIDE-OF-PRIVATE-PROVISION-PART-2.pdf?rlkey=urte0v2tge6a529fq3agggrrnl&dl=0>

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48. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Research Partnership: A Summary of the Five Research Streams (Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter)

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) entered a three-year partnership with the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL) in 2020. Central to the research work undertaken was to support PSETA in the development of a competent and capable state through relevant skills development research. The PSETA-Wits REAL partnership contributed towards more effective skills planning by exploring skills demand and supply challenges and how the Public Service sector can respond more efficiently, and guiding skills planning through more evidence-based skills development processes.

The partnership is divided into five research streams as follows:

1. E-Learning and Skills Development within the Public: The purpose of the stream is to develop a concise explanation of the change drivers and difficulties of implementing e-learning in the South African Public Service sector in line with policy imperatives and global trends.
2. Jobs, Qualifications and Occupations in the Public Service sector: This stream was a conceptual piece of work that aimed to explore what it means for education to prepare people for work, through an interrogation of the key concepts and terms used in policy and research in the post-school system. The project had a practical policy-oriented focus, aimed at improving insights and understandings in the South African post-school system with relevance to the African Public Service sector. It also included a focus on educational factors and debates about how curricula can be strengthened to better prepare people to do work.
3. Public sector policy directions and priorities associated with the United Nation's (UN's) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Impact on occupations and skills demand in the Public Service sector: The purpose of this stream was to examine the impact on occupations, knowledge, and skills of the South African government's (national and provincial) commitment to the realisation of the UN's SDGs. In the process of doing so the enabling institutional mechanisms at the macro, meso, and micro levels, were also examined. Policy recommendations were generated to assist the PSETA and its

stakeholders in achieving and reporting against the SDGs. The project aligned with and contributed to strategic focus area 4.2 of the Public Service Human Resource Development Strategic Framework which falls under pillar 4 that relates to the Human Resource Management requirements of meeting the SDGs and other developmental commitments of the state.

4. Review of Professional Competency Frameworks in the Public Service sector. The purpose of this stream was to explore competence development through an interrogation of the key concepts and terms used in policy and research in the Public Service sector. It examined competence frameworks and how they are used in the public sector internationally and in the South African context. The project had a practical policy-oriented focus that aimed to improve insights and understandings of professional competence, and how it is conceptualised, and it also presented the challenges with the South African public sector competency frameworks.
5. A critical review of skills demand and supply in the Public Service sector. The purpose of this research stream was to assist PSETA with a more nuanced and strategic understanding of how skills demand and provision planning currently takes place in the Public Service sector and the relationship between the two, with a view to strengthening these processes within the sector. The project also aimed to deepen the analysis of the key drivers of change within the Public Service sector and their implications for skills.

The research reports are available on the PSETA website (www.pseta.org.za).

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49. Guidelines for the Compilation of an Organisational Competency Framework for Public Service Departments (*Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) is mandated in terms of the Skills Development Act, No.97 of 1998, to facilitate skills development for the Public Service sector.

In accordance with this mandate, PSETA appointed Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) to develop Guidelines for the Compilation of an Organisational Competency Framework for Public Service sector departments in the 2021/22 financial year. This project was undertaken in partnership with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). The project's genesis was from the PSETA and the DPSA's shared understanding that developing individual competency frameworks for each Government department was not viable given the varying needs, contexts, and mandates. Thus, providing departments with clear guidelines that can be used to develop the competency frameworks was necessary. The project sketched the landscape of competency frameworks using global examples of good practice while providing practical Guidelines and tools that public sector departments can use to compile their context-specific Competency Frameworks.

The Guidelines form part of the annexures to the Public Service Human Resources Development Strategic Framework (PS-HRDSF) and the Skills Audit Methodology Framework for the Public Service sector (PS-SAMF), the latter being the output of an earlier collaboration between PSETA and the DPSA which have been approved by Cabinet for use within public sector departments.

The Guidelines are a critical step in the PS-SAMF and are therefore essential before embarking on a skills assessment exercise, as it leads to the development of a standardised Competency Framework per job family or category with Public Service sector departments. The development of a Competency Framework for individual departments will support them in defining the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attributes that are required by employees to achieve the departmental strategic objectives and to deliver on the organisation's mandate. It will also serve to inform all activities across the Talent Management Value Chain, including but not limited to Skills Assessments, Recruitment, Job Profiling, Training and Development, Succession Planning, and Retention. The Guidelines thus serve to enable departments to develop, implement, utilise, and sustain an Organisational Competency Framework.

Supporting the criticality of this project and the implementation of the Guidelines, in May 2023 the DPSA issued Circular 25 which states that the introduction of the PS-SAMF seeks to bring about a uniform and standardised approach to determine the nature of skills demands and assessment of skills needs as well as determining disparities within the public service departments. The Framework outlines the strategic purpose of undertaking a skills audit process in an organisation, in the context of public service. And, through the Guidelines, the PS-SAMF identifies the key steps involved, the principles guiding the process, and the roles and responsibilities expected in undertaking a process of skills audits.

The research reports are available on the PSETA website (www.pseta.org.za).

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50. Track and Tracer Study of Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority Learnership Programme in Public Administration (National Qualifications Framework Level 4 to Level 6) Implemented During the Period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022 (Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter)

This tracer study found that the beneficiaries of the different Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) Learnership Programmes in Public Administration (delivered at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels 4, 5 and 6) implemented during the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022 have benefited from the programme despite the lack of absorption into employment for the majority of the beneficiaries post completion of the Learnership programme.

The study utilised a survey amongst the beneficiaries of the PSETA-funded Learnership Programme in Public Administration (NQF level 4 to level 6) implemented during the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022. Eight hundred and six (806) learners completed the Learnership Programme in Public Administration (NQF level 4 to level 6) implemented during the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022, of which three hundred and sixty learners' (360) details were verified for this study. Consequently, forty-one (41) responses to the online survey were received, which translates to a response rate (the ratio of responses to all eligible units in the sample) of 11.38%. All the respondents were part of one of the programme cohorts during the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022. The research findings are therefore presented holistically.

The responses indicate that 59,09% of the beneficiaries are currently unemployed post the learnership, none of the respondents are self-employed, and only 18,18% are employed on a full-time basis while 9,09% are employed part-time. 13,64% of the respondents fell within the category 'Other' which may mean that they engaged in some form of employment.

Majority of the respondents, 58,88%, are working for organisations other than where they completed their Learnership programme. In addition, 5,88% are employed within the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) or Non-Profit sector, whilst the remaining 43,75% of respondents reported that they are employed within the Public Sector.

Beneficiaries in this study were placed in provincial departments and local municipalities within provinces. Of the total responses received, 30,0% indicated that they are still working for the organisation where they completed their Learnership programme, whilst 65,0% secured

employment outside of the employers where they completed their Learnership. The remaining 5% declined to respond.

Of the 30,0 % employed by the organisation where they completed their learnership, the following job titles were reported as those they currently possess: Immigration Officer, Civic Services Clerk, Assets and Liabilities Clerk, Supply Chain Officer / Clerk, Administration Clerk, Assistant Administrator, and Chief Administration Clerk.

Majority of the respondents have no income or are volunteering. The economically active group of 19.05% was earning R1 601 to R3 200, followed by 14,29% which was earning between R 3 201 - R 6 400, and lastly, 14,29% which was earning between R12 801 - R25 600. The final 14,29% declined to respond. The main reason (55.56%) for unemployment among the beneficiaries in this study is that there are no job opportunities where they live, whilst 16.67% are unemployed because they are not looking for a job and 27.78% are volunteering.

36,84% of respondents in this study are currently studying, while 63,15% are not studying. The main reasons stated for continuing with studies were to improve their knowledge of the public sector and their improving chances of finding employment. Majority of the respondents (85.71%) in this study were not pursuing further studies because they needed financial assistance. In addition, 7.14% indicated that they did not qualify to study further, and an additional 7.14% indicated that they were not motivated to study further.

The research report is available on the PSETA website (www.pseta.org.za).

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51. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority – Tshwane University of Technology Research Partnership Project Stream 1 on Skills Development of Information and Communications Technology Support Staff: A Study on Future ICT Skills Needs and Baseline ICT Skills Analysis of ICT Staff Working in the Public Sector (*Siviwe Tywabi, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)

The future of work is being rapidly transformed by the current global contexts such as global pandemics, global and local unrest, environmental challenges, and rapid technological developments. The public service sector needs to be prepared for this future state of work and the future readiness of the public service, thus the foundation of the research partnership between Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) and Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT's) Institute for the Future of Work, in collaboration with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA).

In 2022, PSETA appointed TUT to provide research services in the Public Service sector and skills development-related studies in response to the sector mandate and support to the SETA in the fulfilment of its research mandate and agenda. The partnership between PSETA and TUT was managed and coordinated by the Institute for Future of Work (IFoW) which was a key access point to the competence and capacity within TUT.

The goal of the partnership was to address the challenges of a capable public service through researching key gaps, research-driven training, and research-based future public servant capacitation. TUT was appointed to conduct empirical research in two (2) project streams in the following research focus areas:

1. Skills development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support staff: A study on future ICT skills needs and baseline ICT Skills Analysis of ICT staff working in the public sector.
2. Future skills for the public sector in South Africa: a research intervention focusing on the future of skills in the public sector.

The focus of the first project stream was to analyse the baseline of ICT skills of public servants working in ICT in the South African public service sector, as well as provide recommendations on the skills development and training interventions of these public servants. TUT achieved this through a systematic literature review of the future ICT skills needs of public servants working in ICT environments. Further, the current ICT skills of South African public servants

working in ICT environments were determined through an analysis of baseline data on public servants collected by the DPSA. Recommendations on skills development and training interventions were derived by analysing the gap between the future ICT skills needs and the current ICT skills of public servants working in ICT in the South African Public Service sector. The investigation culminated in a Framework for Future ICT Skills in the South African public service sector. The Framework strongly suggests that technology is the driver of change and public service capability. The findings suggest that a thorough understanding of 4IR technologies' implications, value, and benefits is the key to ensuring successful public service delivery. The findings further propose that agile ways of working would enable the public service sector to respond quickly to ICT-enabled service changes. Further, emphasis is placed on incorporating behaviours and cultures that support cross-functional cooperation, iterative technology development, and a new way of learning that enables ICT professionals to innovate and adapt quickly to change.

The final research reports may be accessed on the PSETA website www.pseta.org.za.

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52. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority – Tshwane University of Technology Research Partnership Project Stream 2 on the Future Skills for the Public Sector in South Africa: A Research Intervention Focusing on the Future of Skills in the Public Sector (*Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)

This research project sought to build on the previous research commissioned by the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) into emerging technologies in the public service sector and their skills implications. This collaborative research commissioned by PSETA to the Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT's) Institute of the Future of Work was aimed at investigating the future skills needs of the South African public service to develop a cadre of public servants who will contribute to the realisation of the future skills that are required for South Africa's public service sector in order to realise the objective goals of the National Development Plan (NDP), that is related to building a capable and developmental state.

Stream 2 of the research partnership between PSETA and TUT is titled the Future skills for the public sector in South Africa: A research intervention focusing on the future of skills in the public sector.

Whilst the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is a key change driver and public servants require digital skills to be able to carry out their work, the skills required by public servants go beyond digital literacy. Complementary skills may include political-administrative, economic, cultural, and environmental skills. The importance of an appropriately skilled public service is a critical cog for a capable state.

The research objectives are therefore summarised as follows:

- To establish the state of literature on the 4IR and its implications on the administration of the state; and to review existing literature on the future skills and competencies of public servants and its implication on the institutionalisation of the capability of the state.
- To ascertain how governments elsewhere in the world, from a skills perspective have responded to the 4IR and other developments that have had a significant impact on the operations in the public sector and institutionalisation of the capability of the state.

- To generate an understanding of the skills set and competencies required by public servants in South Africa within the context of the 4IR and other related developments.
- To develop a compendium of skills set and competencies for the model future public servant in the age of 4IR, from both the international experience and experiences of public servants in South Africa.
- To provide a framework that will provide strategic insight into the necessary capacity development and training interventions to develop a cadre of skilled and competent public servants that will institutionalise the capability of the state.

The research outputs are currently at finalisation stage. Interestingly, the compendium of skills proposes a comprehensive list of skills and competencies for the current and future needs of the public sector. The compendium intends to address skills planning and skills imbalances in the public service sector, that is the misalignment between the skills demanded by the public service sector and those supplied by education and training systems. The compendium of skills for the present and future public service is disaggregated into five major categories: work readiness skills, basic or fundamental human skills, leadership and management skills, technology-related skills, and functional or occupational skills.

The final research reports may be accessed on the PSETA website www.pseta.org.za.

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53. Highlights of the Skills/Research Division for the year 2022/2023 (*Ernest Kaplan*)

During the year under review the Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) were privileged to have access to the direction, expertise and resources of two Research Chairs. This resulted in the production of 7 research reports. These are outlined, below.

Report 1: Occupational Profiling of the top 10 sectoral priority occupations in the insurance sector - This study used a toolkit devised for human resource practitioners to profile occupational changes in several key insurance occupations.

Report 2: Insurtechs: Current and Future Needs – This study focused primarily on the skills needs of insurtechs within the South African context. It identified the insurtech operating models and key occupations and skills sets.

Report 3: Insurance SETA 1 August 2022 Sector Skills Plan submission - This Sector Skills Plan was updated as the South African Economy gradually recovered from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 pandemic. The pandemic brought with it significant economic disruption, creating new challenges and compounding others that predate its arrival.

Report 4: The Insurance Sector's Contribution towards a Green Economy – The report highlighted the following in terms of climate change which led to green economy initiatives to mitigate climate change risks. Insurance companies recognised the impact of climate change and adopted green initiatives. The insurance industry is actively involved in measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions which are mainly related to energy consumption and transportation.

Report 5: COVID-19 and Employment and Training in the Insurance Sector - In aggregate, employment is estimated to have declined slightly between 2019 and 2020, before rebounding marginally in 2021. Both male and female employment declined slightly over the period, with males accounting for a disproportionately large share (just under half) of the total decline when compared to their share of employment. However, the decline in employment of Africans over the period was greater than the aggregate decline, with Coloureds and Asians seeing relatively strong employment growth.

Report 6: Learning and Career Pathways in the Insurance Sector - These pathways speak to the sequencing of events which give learners and workers recognition for full or partially completed qualifications as well as access to professional designations. In conclusion, while each occupation is unique, the extent to which individuals from very diverse backgrounds are able to access these occupations is striking.

Report 7: Job Quality in South Africa's Insurance Sector - In general individuals with higher quality jobs are generally more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction. Men have higher quality jobs than women.

The full documents can be accessed on the following links:

- <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/x245cv64w6pp4qdss8r53/Research-Reports-DPRU-UCT.zip?rlkey=hbagn0riimhftu8ja2tsjok9z&dl=0>
- <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/3wrtc9mfa4u20udg87s6r/Research-Reports-DUT.zip?rlkey=wfuau0dig9o3ctcd77rip3rv7&dl=0>

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CURRENT OR PLANNED RESEARCH

1. Synthesising Social Constructivism and Cybergogy for Student Engagement in Open Distance and E-Learning Environments: An Integrative Review and Framework (*Esnah Dzimba and John Andrew van der Poll*)

The physical and psycho-social distance in Open Distance and e-learning (ODeL) environments creates a sense of isolation, alienation, and disengagement for students, which impacts learning outcomes. This research synthesises and integrates the concepts of social constructivism theory and the cybergogy framework to provide a comprehensive understanding of technology use to enhance student engagement in ODeL contexts.

An integrative review of the literature to map the conceptual terrain of current literature on student engagement in ODeL environments was undertaken. The literature search was conducted across five databases, and themes were extracted to provide new perspectives and insights on student engagement in ODeL.

The study underscores the role of facilitating technologies in ODeL. The researchers found that student engagement in ODeL depends on developing an active digital pedagogy that promotes student empowerment and a sense of agency to apply digital tools to interact, collaborate, and enable purposefulness in the learning process. The findings also suggest that academic instructors require institutional support through training and continuous professional development to utilise digital technologies to enhance student engagement effectively. Additionally, ODeL institutions should be aware of the hidden workload impact on instructors that implementing active digital pedagogies for student engagement has. Therefore, instructors also require support with workload management interventions. Based on these findings, the researchers developed a conceptual framework for engaged learning in ODeL environments.

Some key recommendations for ODeL institutions aiming to promote technology-enabled student engagement include:

- Emphasising capacitating instructors in digital technology use through continuous professional development and communities of practice to enable the development of digital pedagogies that promote student engagement.
- Promoting instructional designs that are accessible to all types of digital devices to allow access to economically disadvantaged students.
- Prioritising students' digital competencies by offering digital skills training to empower and enhance student autonomy.

- Encouraging teaching practices that have been shown to promote student engagement in online learning, such as instructor presence on online platforms, use of authentic assessments, promoting digital discussion forums, and gamification of learning.
- Considering the workload models that can address instructors' hidden additional work responsibilities when implementing various technological interventions to address student engagement in ODeL.

The full report will be available in December 2023.

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2. Employability of Apprenticeship Programme Beneficiaries in the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector *(Winile Makamo, Popopo Mohlala, Lebo Thwala, Nkgaugelo Kgasago and Nokuthula I. Sibia)*

The National Development Plan (NDP, 2012), for South Africa emphasised the importance of eradicating the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality and ensure that all citizens have better working and living conditions by 2030. South Africa is known to be among the highest in the world with an immense unemployment rate. The first quarter of 2023 recorded the unemployment rate at 32.9%, which is mainly due to unskilled cohorts and the contracting Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It is through the NDP that the prominence of identifying the correct skills that will create jobs and entrepreneurs in South Africa. Thus, the democratic government embraced artisan training as a tool designed to address social and economic inequities and placed more emphasis to produce 30 000 qualified artisans a year to meet labour demands placed on artisan training and development in South Africa. Furthermore, South Africa's democratic government embraces apprenticeship training as a tool designed to address social and economic inequities and places more emphasis on producing 30 000 qualified artisans a year to meet labour demands.

Apprenticeship programmes are the most relevant training intervention for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students to obtain preliminary job knowledge and experience, enabling them to become qualified artisans and increasing their employability in the labour market. It is noteworthy, that the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector is experiencing a shift towards automation and mass production, which is mainly dependent on qualified artisans to manage. In addition, the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector offers substantial economic value by contributing to the overall GDP of the country, creating employment opportunities across a wide range of roles, promoting innovation, and contributing to the country's food safety, production and processing. The sector has been supported by the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector Education and Training Authority (FoodBev SETA) through skills development interventions which include support of apprentices through disbursing grants for the development of artisans in the food and beverages industry.

However, there is limited literature available regarding the employability of apprenticeship beneficiaries in the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector. This study examined the employability of FoodBev SETA-funded apprenticeship programme beneficiaries. The study was conducted using a quantitative research approach which emphasises data in the form of numbers. The approach was adopted because it was the most expedient data collection

method. The data collection method included surveys with employers/training institutions (28) that trained learners on the apprenticeship programme using FoodBev SETA-funded apprenticeship programme beneficiaries (completed) between the 2017/18 to 2021/22 financial years. The findings of this study revealed that participation in an effective apprenticeship programme increases the employability of beneficiaries. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the beneficiaries were employed after the completion of the apprenticeship programme either on permanent or contract employment. Most of the beneficiaries indicated that they were employed because of the FoodBev SETA financial support received to complete the programme and the on-the-job training skills gained at the entities of employment. The study also found that practical and industrial experience pre and post the trade test is a vital contributing factor in the employability of beneficiaries. Furthermore, the study revealed that the FoodBev SETA-funded apprenticeship programme is still adequately delivering on its mandate of equipping beneficiaries with skills and experience needed in the labour market. Thus, the apprenticeship programme is relevant to the labour market. Lastly, the findings of the study provide the SETA with information on the effectiveness of the apprentice programmes for obtaining employment.

This study will be concluded by December 2023 and the full version of this document will be available on www.foodbev.co.za

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3. Investigating the Enablers and Constraints for Skills Planning in the Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector (Stephanie Allais, Themba Tshabalala, Siphelo Ngcwangu, Meryl Plasket, Nkgaugelo Kgasago and Nokuthula I. Sibia)

The Food and Beverages Manufacturing Sector Education and Training Authority (FoodBev SETA) serves registered companies whose core business operation is food processing, which is within the secondary level of the food industry value chain. Food processing includes both the physical and chemical transformation of raw materials (input) into food as well as the transformation of food (intermediary goods like sugar) into other forms. Furthermore, food processing includes the combining of raw ingredients which yields marketable food items that are easy to make and serve to consumers.

The sector has its supply chain linkages ranging from primary producers, through processing and logistics, to the domestic retail sector and exports. At the heart of the problem that is being investigated by this project is that South Africa has an extensive collection of processes and tools aimed at understanding the demand for skills across the economy and translating this demand into planning for provision. It is within this problem that the research will be undertaken to understand within the ambit of skills demand and supply planning what the enabling and constraining factors are within the sector which both stand to either weaken or strengthen the creation of effective workplaces that will contribute to the growth and development of the sector.

The main research question guiding the study is:

What is the nature of demand planning and provision planning within the food and beverages manufacturing sector and what is the nature of the relationship between these two spheres of the skills system within the sector?

The project will seek to provide insight into the distinction between current and emerging demand and medium to long term demand and how these needs are being addressed in the food and beverages manufacturing sector. The outcomes of the project contribute to the Department of Higher Education and Trainings (DHET's) objectives of improving quality and content of research on skills planning within the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector.

The research project is being undertaken by the University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour (Wits REAL) Research Chair in partnership with the FoodBev SETA.

This study will be concluded by December 2023 and the final report will be available on www.foodbev.co.za.

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4. A Model for “Gradupreneurs”: Creating a Model for Employability by Technical and Vocational Education and Training College Graduates for the Labour Market *(Mxolisi Maphakela and Nathanael Govender)*

As we approach the 10th year anniversary of the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (PSET), we are reminded of the growing challenges of the present economy, combined with the fact that the highest rates of unemployment affect youth and young adults (Statistics South Africa (STATS SA), 2022). Added to this conundrum is the ever-present and often cited lack of employer opportunities for graduates from Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. This in part due to economic challenges, downsizing of many employers as well as the aftereffects of Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 amongst others. This creates a dissonance in the number of graduates versus the number of opportunities that are available in the labour market, especially in rural areas where such opportunities may be even fewer to none.

This paper argues via content analysis and data collected from employers of TVET college graduates that job opportunities for such graduates are not at levels required to ensure employability is increasing. A new way of thinking must be forged to tackle growing challenges, the reliance of established employers to absorb graduates is not producing the results required, as is evidenced by growing unemployment (including amongst graduates). This paper proposes a new model. A model which enables TVET college graduates (most of who possess scarce and critical skills) to turn into gradupreneurs. These gradupreneurs are given the opportunity to immediately open small businesses under mentors in local communities to practice their acquired skills and crafts, under the supervision of mentors. The small business is not isolated to the individual learner but is serviced by fellow graduates from the TVET college. Graduates who will be able to obtain practical work exposure or complete their experiential learning training within these small businesses. In this sense, the model aims to contribute to employability which is built by graduates for other graduates. It is geared towards creating sustainable livelihoods and partnerships.

The model is novel in the sense that these small businesses are not serviced solely by graduates of the same discipline but opens opportunities for graduates from other disciplines, in particular graduates from support services such as marketing and finance who can work for or rotate between small gradupreneurs businesses. These graduates also stand to benefit by applying their specialisations in the small business and gaining practical workplace experience

and opportunities for growth in their field. The development of the gradupreneurs model will be in collaboration with nominated TVET colleges, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and supporting Employers based on the requirements to enable the use of innovation and skills acquired to run sustainable enterprises which create present and further employment opportunities. This model also provides a mechanism to alleviate the over-reliance on employers to create opportunities, instead adopting an entrepreneurial mindset for graduates to create opportunities for themselves but at the same time, for fellow TVET college graduates.

The full paper will be made available on the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) website by May 2024.

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5. A Collaborative Research Study between the Namibia Training Authority and Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority: National Graduates Survey for Technical Vocational Education and Training Cohorts 2018-2020 (Nathanael Govender, Mxolisi Maphakela, Indongo Indongo and Itebogeng Masibigiri)

This collaborative research study between the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) and the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) represents a significant effort in development of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the context of Namibia and South Africa. Forming an integral part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between these two prominent institutions, this study is designed to provide comprehensive insight into the processes and guidelines essential for the successful execution of TVET college programmes for employability and entrepreneurship. The study places particular emphasis on key aspects, including conceptualisation, research methodology, operationalisation, population and sampling, observation and data processing, and analysis and application, utilising the data from the Namibia and W&RSETA National TVET College Graduate Survey spanning the years 2018 to 2020 as a primary reference point.

The National TVET College Graduate Survey has five main objectives:

- **Assess TVET College Programme Quality:** Evaluate the quality of TVET programmes offered by accredited providers in Namibia and South Africa.
- **Track Graduates' Labour Market Transition:** Gather data on how TVET college graduates enter the labour market.
- **Measure Employment Alignment:** Determine if TVET college graduates find employment or self-employment aligned with their training.
- **Identify Graduate Challenges:** Understand challenges faced by employed and unemployed TVET college graduates, including their views on TVET as an educational path.
- **Quantify Employment Rates:** Establish employment rates among TVET college graduates in both formal and informal sectors.

The survey also examines additional factors such as graduates' highest qualification, business ownership, changes in socio-economic status before and after graduation, programme participation, entrepreneurship challenges, funding limitations and opportunities, and the

impact of trade skills on business growth. The study includes all graduates who completed TVET college programmes within the specified timeframe, aiming to enhance TVET programmes, facilitate smoother transitions to the job market or entrepreneurship, and support the TVET sector's growth in Namibia and South Africa. In this sense, comparisons and contrasts are also made between data from the two countries in a bid to make recommendations for joint augmentation of TVET practice.

The full paper will be made available on the W&RSETA website by end March 2024.

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6. Impact Evaluation Tool of the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority Skills Development Programmes: Enhancing Education, Employability, and Career Growth (*Mxolisi Maphakela and Reagalaletsa Matlhoahela*)

This research study focused on evaluating the impact of skills development programmes implemented by the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) in South Africa. The study examined the overall findings, recommendations, key outcomes, and forward actions based on the experiences and feedback from programme beneficiaries.

The literature review highlighted the importance of impact evaluation in skills development interventions, the role of skills development in socio-economic transformation, the context of youth unemployment and skills gap in South Africa, and the specific contribution of W&RSETA in skills development. The review also explores various skills development initiatives, employability trends within the sector, and the concept of return on investment (ROI).

The study presents the research interventions conducted by W&RSETA, including the approach, sampling processes, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed. The research aimed to evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of the skills development programmes implemented by W&RSETA.

The overall findings indicate that the W&RSETA programmes, particularly the bursary and learnership programmes, have been highly beneficial for students, covering their education expenses and facilitating their career growth. However, certain challenges were identified, such as delays in certificate delivery and the need for improved selection criteria for bursaries. The study provides recommendations to streamline the application process, ensure timely payments, address stipend and work condition issues, and improve communication channels between W&RSETA and participants.

The research reveals that the W&RSETA programmes have provided valuable experience, skills, and knowledge in various sectors within the wholesale and retail industry. Participants expressed gratitude for the support received and highlighted positive impacts on their personal growth, confidence, and job prospects. The programmes have also led to permanent employment, self-employment opportunities, and career advancements for individuals. The study emphasises the importance of creating pathways to permanent employment, expanding

the programme to include postgraduate degrees, and establishing partnerships with universities to enhance the reach and resources available to participants in rural and townships.

The impact evaluation study of W&RSETA skills development programmes demonstrates the positive impact on education, employability, and career growth in the wholesale and retail sector. The findings provide valuable insights for improving the programmes' administration, participant experience, and long-term stability. By addressing the identified challenges, opportunities and implementing the recommended enhancements, W&RSETA can further optimise its skills development interventions and contribute to the socio-economic transformation and growth of the sector.

The conference paper was presented at the MBALI International Conference 2023 (16-18 August 2023) held in Richards Bay, Kwa-Zulu Natal by the University of Zululand (UNIZULU).

No link to the full paper is available yet, as the conference proceedings are still being finalised for publication.

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7. Barriers to Implementing Recognition of Prior Learning for Sector Education and Training Authority - Accredited Providers in Gauteng (Nathanael Govender)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a key component in implementing programmes for adult learners within the occupational education and training sector, by permitting relevant accumulated experience of employed adult learners to be formally acknowledged and credited against. Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) - Accredited skills development providers are mandated to implement RPL as one of the key pillars of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) embedded in credit-bearing occupational programmes. A review of literature in the field suggests the prevalence of barriers with RPL implementation across the globe, however, the causes of barriers along with the effects on providers needed to be investigated from within the local context. A qualitative phenomenological approach was selected to draw data from the direct-working experience of providers in the field. This experience-driven exploration occurred with a sample of six SETA- Accredited adult education and training providers who were active implementers of RPL, based in the Province of Gauteng, South Africa.

The investigation revealed that challenges are prevalent in the implementation of RPL for accredited programmes within the occupational education and training sector for providers, some of which were sector specific. A total of five major themes of barriers began to emerge from semi-structured interviews aimed at presenting participants with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences of implementing the concept of RPL. The barrier themes uncovered revolve around contestation with instruments, scarcity of competent specialist practitioners, internal management discrepancies, costing structures, meagre capacity building and awareness, which altogether, exerted an inhibiting influence on the ability of providers to effectively implement, finance, resource and sustain RPL interventions. Recommendations framed on the adaptation of theories such as Knowles' andragogical assumptions and learner contract; Kolb's experiential learning styles and the application of constructivism provided for a basis to mitigate each of the barrier themes uncovered.

The conference paper was presented at the MBALI International Conference 2023 (16-18 August 2023) held in Richards Bay, Kwa-Zulu Natal by the University of Zululand (UNIZULU).

No link to the full paper is available yet, as the conference proceedings are still being finalised for publication.

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8. Public Sector Education and Training Authority Current and Planned Research for 2023/24 (Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter)

The Public Sector Education and Training Authority's (PSETA's) Research Agenda is informed by a number of national priorities that respond to the skills needs of the Public Service sector. To guide the implementation of the Research Agenda five broad focus areas have been identified, inter alia, the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (PSET), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Research Agenda, the Public Service Human Resource Development Strategic Framework, the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030, the Skills Strategy in response to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) and other key skills development and human resource development policy imperatives. Each focus area has the potential to generate a variety of themes and topics, including cross-theme permutations. The five broad focus areas are: (1) Education and the workplace; (2) Analysis of skills demand and supply; (3) Cross-cutting and sector specific issues; (4) Curriculum, programmes and qualifications; and (5) the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); and Quality Councils and Articulation.

In addressing these broad focus areas, the following topics will be pursued.

1. PSETA Sector Skills Plan Update (SSP) 2024/25. The objective of the PSETA SSP is to identify key priorities and critical skills development trends, objectives, and priority areas, which provide for a sector profile and analysis of the demand for, and supply of skills in the Public Service sector. The SSP was submitted to the DHET on 01 August 2023 and the project is closed.
2. The Development of a Provincial Sector Skills Plan (PSSP) for the Northern Cape Province. The objective of this project is to identify key priorities and critical skills development trends, objectives, and priority areas, which provide for a provincial sector profile and analysis of the demand for, and supply of skills in the Northern Cape Province. The University of Pretoria (UP) has been appointed to conduct this study which is being carried out in collaboration with the Northern Cape Office of the Premier.
3. An assessment of public sector readiness for the implementation of South Africa's Just Energy Transition (JET). Since it is essential for the public sector to be adequately prepared and have the essential skills needed to ensure a JET in the country as different strategies and approaches are rolled out, this project will assess the public service sector readiness and associated skills required for the implementation of South Africa's JET. The appointment of a service provider for this project is in progress.

4. An Impact Assessment Study of the PSETA registered Skills Programme for Employed Learners. The objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of five (5) PSETA-registered skills programmes and to measure their impact on the beneficiaries that participated in the programme for the periods 2019/2020 to 2021/2022. The objectives of the study are to make informed recommendations to strengthen the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of PSETA skills programmes, as well as to assess the impact of the knowledge and skills development imparted in terms of the employers being able to fulfil their mandate. Furthermore, the study will assess whether PSETA skills programmes are effective in addressing the identified skills gaps by reaching the relevant intended beneficiaries.
5. A Tracer study of PSETA's training programmes in the Public Service Sector: Work Integrated Learning (WIL) for Universities of Technology (UoTs), namely Durban University of Technology (DUT) and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The objective of this study is to conduct a standardised survey of graduates from the UoTs who completed WIL in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The study aims to provide systematic and reliable information about the beneficiaries and their subsequent employment status.
6. The Development of Guidelines for Skills Development Providers (SDPs) to implement Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for credit against the PSETA accredited Public Administration qualifications will be undertaken. The objective of this study, where the UP has been appointed, will culminate in the development of guidelines towards a standardised approach for SDPs to implement RPL for credit against the PSETA-accredited Public Administration qualifications.

These projects reflect PSETA's commitment to the broader interests of the research community and also positions the SETA as an active contributor to the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) body of knowledge. The projects will assist in sharpening the focus and improving the quality and effectiveness of organisationally driven research; by describing the instruments the PSETA will use to accomplish its research tasks in collaboration with the research community at large.

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REVIEWS

1. Book Review: Vocational Education and Training in Sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence-Informed Practice for Unemployed and Disadvantaged Youth (*Celestin Mayombe*)

Considering the persistent youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa, empowering young people with employability skills has been a priority for governments and policymakers. The concern in this research project was that poverty and unemployment rates among disadvantaged youths (aged 15-34 years) have become urgent problems. Some of the young job seekers are not well educated, do not possess employability skills and work experience required by employers in the labour market. As a result, they have been discouraged by the labour market and are also not building their skills through education and training. In this connection, the study focused on the effectiveness of vocational training for unemployed and disadvantaged youth. Using the eThekweni Municipality as a case study, the purpose of the study was to assess the enabling environments (internal and external) of vocational training programmes fostering youth employment for poverty reduction.

The findings from the study show that the mode and approaches of the training delivery for skills acquisition were practice-oriented. The trainees had extensive practical sessions in the workshops, firms or workplaces. The mechanisms utilised to assist a graduate with finding employment were effective because the wage employment rate after graduating was 65.4%. Many host companies providing workplace training became the potential employers of the graduates. The role of the linkages or partnership between eThekweni Municipal Academy and local businesses/ enterprises was to help graduates find wage employment.

The study concluded that the use of workshops, on-the-job training and workplace-based training was very important for acquiring work experience. The result of this practice-oriented approach enabled the trainees to acquire skills and abilities for immediate employment. The implication of the study to the society is that it advocates in favour of promoting vocational skills training tailored to labour market needs in order to reduce youth unemployment, but the stakeholders should take into account enabling and disabling environments found in a given local, regional or national context.

The full version of this book can be accessed at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82284-2>

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RESEARCH EVENTS

1. Summary of the Proceedings of the Council on Higher Education 2023 Conference on Promoting Access to, and Success in Postgraduate Studies (Amani Saidi)

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) organised a conference with the goal of fostering dialogue and collaboration among various stakeholders within the higher education sector. The conference was held in Pretoria from the 01st to the 3rd of March 2023, under the theme: '*Promoting Access to, and Success in Postgraduate Studies.*' It featured the following subthemes: (1) Key success factors in postgraduate studies, (2) Lived experiences of postgraduate students, (3) Making an educational case for postgraduate studies, (4) Assessment practices in postgraduate studies, (5) Promoting success in postgraduate studies, (6) Barriers to access to postgraduate studies, (7) Increasing participation rates for previously disadvantaged population groups, and (8) Funding models for postgraduate studies.

A panel discussion explored the possibility of institutionalising *viva voce* examinations for PhD theses in South African higher education. The 2022 Report on the *National Review of Doctoral Qualifications in South African Higher Education* recommended using multiple assessment practices and implementing *viva voce* universally, prompting further debate.

Presenters of papers in various sessions tackled various challenges encountered by postgraduate students in higher education institutions. The two key challenges that were recurring in many presentations are those of supervision and funding. These challenges are the main obstacles to the success of postgraduate students in the South African higher education institutions. There is no adequate capacity for supervision in most institutions. In some institutions, staff members who themselves are studying towards PhDs are assigned the responsibilities to supervise fellow PhD students. Interpersonal challenges between supervisors and postgraduate students complicate matters further, and cause a significant proportion of dropout among postgraduate students. As regards funding, the National Research Foundation (NRF) funds a tiny proportion of those eligible for postgraduate studies. Furthermore, the amount of student funding from the NRF is insufficient to cover all the basic needs of students. This forces students to look for part-time employment so that they could supplement the NRF funding. Combining employment and study for postgraduate qualifications is not easy, and most students fail to achieve the necessary balance. As a result, most do not complete their studies in time. A small proportion of postgraduate students is funded by the private sector.

Further challenges include lack of support services for postgraduate studies including academic writing and statistical analysis support. Studying for doctoral qualifications, in particular, is a lonely journey that many are unable to complete. Presenters recommended some necessary interventions at institutional and national levels that could be implemented to address the challenges. Unfortunately, most of these interventions require funding to be made available at a time when the national fiscus appears to be relatively dry.

The main conclusion of the conference was that the country has made commendable strides to widen access to postgraduate studies. However, there are many obstacles that are limiting the success of postgraduate students; and these need to be attended to by all stakeholders, and not only the government.

For further information on the conference proceedings, please contact the author.

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2. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority 2023 Research Colloquium on Skills Planning and Development for a Capable, Ethical, and Developmental Public Service Sector (Siviwe Tywabi, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter)

The Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) 2023 Research Colloquium was convened under the theme *Skills Planning and Development for a Capable, Ethical, and Developmental Public Service Sector*. The hybrid event was held on 28 June 2023 at the ANEW Hotel in Pretoria and was well attended by academics, thought leaders, and senior managers in the Public Service sector.

The key objectives of the Research Colloquium were to contribute to the data-driven and evidence-based research culture that exists in the public service sector by sharing credible, up-to-date research undertaken by the PSETA with its research partners, and with the wider public service sector community. In addition, the Colloquium intended to provide a forum for sharing ongoing research outputs and engaging in dialogue on skills development in the public service sector and to accelerate progress on contributing to a capable, ethical, and developmental public service in line with the National Development Plan (NDP).

The Chairperson of the PSETA Accounting Authority, Mr Thulani Tshefuta, welcomed all stakeholders to the Research Colloquium. Ms Bontle Lerumo, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PSETA introduced the Director-General (DG) of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Ms Yoliswa Makhasi who in her keynote address emphasised the transformative power of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and the need for the Public Service sector to adapt to the sector's demands by acquiring digital and technology skills. DG Makhasi further broadly shared insights on lifelong learning, the up-skilling, and re-skilling of public servants to remain responsive to the service delivery needs of the country's citizens.

The plenary session comprised presentations by PSETA's research partners, the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), and the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). Wits REAL's presentation of a "Critical Review of Skills Demand and Supply in the Public Service Sector" was delivered by Prof Anne McLennan and Mr Themba Tshabalala. In their presentation, the researchers highlighted the criticality of identifying the skills, abilities, and capacities for a capable, ethical, and developmental state which is difficult because there

seems to be a lack of clarity and consensus on what a South African developmental state looks like and what the related skills and capacities might be.

“PWC’s perspectives on the Workforce of the Future and Considerations for Sustainability for the South African Public Service sector” were presented by Mr Dayalan Govender and Ms Claudette Ramnarain. The presentation challenged delegates to reflect on how the world of work has changed, and the need for a capable, strategic workforce. The Metaverse, Quantum Computing, Artificial intelligence, Augmented and Virtual Reality, Internet of Things, and Blockchain were outlined to understand the main disruptions that have shaped workforces.

“The Future of Work in the Public Sector” study led by TUT which comprises two distinct research streams, was presented by Prof Mashupye Maserumule. He shared preliminary insights on the ongoing analysis of baseline Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills of public servants with a view to investigating the future ICT skills needs for the public service sector. Prof Maserumule also reflected on the findings emanating from the study on skills and competencies required for the future model public servant to thrive in the South African Public Sector.

After the plenary sessions, three breakaway sessions were facilitated. Breakaway session 1 on the topic “Sustainable Developmental Goals with a focus on Sustainable Development Goals 4, 16 and 17” was facilitated by Wits REAL researchers, Dr Nicola Jenkin with Rapporteur, Ms Kate Mlauzi. Breakaway session 2 on the topic “Jobs, Occupations, and Qualifications mapping in the Public Service sector” was facilitated by Wits REAL researchers Dr Glynnis Vergotine and Ms Meryl Plasket with Rapporteur, Mr Themba Tshabalala. The third Breakaway session on the topic “Skills Development and Implications for 4IR readiness in the Public Service Sector” was facilitated by Prof Mashupye Maserumule with Rapporteur, Prof Ricky Mukonza.

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3. Announcement of the Council on Higher Education's 2024 Higher Education Conference on Deepening the Discourse on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Public Accountability in South African Higher Education (*Amani Saidi*)

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) has announced its next Higher Education Conference, scheduled for 28 February to 1 March 2024, to be held in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province. The theme of this conference is '*Deepening the Discourse on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Public Accountability in South African Higher Education*', with the following subthemes: (1) Philosophical and/or theoretical conceptions of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability, (2) Reflections on the concepts of academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability from Afrocentric, and Africanisation of higher education worldviews, (3) Academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability in the context of the democratisation and transformation of higher education, (4) Reflections on the inclusion of academic freedom in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and models for exercising academic freedom as a constitutional right, (5) Academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability in the era of generative artificial intelligence and other impactful technological developments, (6) Academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability as conceptual frameworks and tools for analysing the state of higher education, and for designing and planning the future of higher education, (7) The implications of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability to the pursuit of various national imperatives, (8) Locating the state's steering mechanisms of higher education within the matrix of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability, (9) Locating managerialism and the corporatisation of higher education within the matrix of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability, (10) Reflecting on the state of institutional and student governance in higher education using the lenses of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability.

The conference aims to deepen the national dialogue on these critical concepts, building on the CHE's decades-long activities in the area. It is expected to attract diverse groups of participants, including academics, researchers, institutional leaders, governance members, students, policymakers, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders interested in or affected by academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability in higher education.

Abstract guidelines and more information on the conference can be accessed at: <https://www.che.ac.za/news-and-announcements/first-announcement-higher-education-conference>. The abstracts should be sent to the conference Organising Committee through the following email address: Research@che.ac.za (cc Qampi.w@che.ac.za)

Any person who wishes to be part of the conference should complete and submit a formal registration form which can be accessed by clicking [Registration](#). The registration for the conference closes on 14 February 2024. Queries about the conference should be addressed to research@che.ac.za (cc Mayepu.L@che.ac.za, Boti.Z@che.ac.za; Mufamadi.A@che.ac.za and Qampi.W@che.ac.za).

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4. Umalusi Advert for Conferencing (*Shilela Nkadimeng*)

Umalusi is pleased to announce that it is organising the 40th Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) conference, which will take place from 19-23 August 2024 in Cape Town, South Africa.

The theme of the conference is titled *Reimagining educational assessment in the age of multiple dimensions of learning in a global society*.

The 40th AEAA conference aims to bring together examination councils, assessment bodies, researchers, policymakers, educators, research institutions and government officials, among others, to engage, exchange and share their experiences, research findings; and discuss topical issues germane to access to, and success in, postgraduate studies.

The theme of the conference is relevant to the current discourses of digital pedagogy, assessment of non-traditional learning experiences, assessment data security, partnerships, and quality of education provisioning. The proceedings will contribute to knowledge development on quality assurance of assessments and provide a platform for sharing good practices.

Call for abstracts

Umalusi invites high-quality papers to be presented at the 40th AEAA conference, to be held from 19 to 23 August 2024. The submitted abstracts should align to the conference theme: “Reimagining educational assessment in the age of multiple dimensions of learning in a global society”. The abstracts should, specially, address issues outlined in the associated sub-themes, which are as follows:

1. Accessibility, credibility and accountability through digital assessments.
2. Assessing and quality assuring non-traditional learning experiences.
3. Ensuring assessment data security and maintaining ethical standards.
4. Partnership strategies for enhancing learning outcomes and accessibility.
5. Transitioning to digital assessment in high-stakes examinations.
6. Research and policy for improvement of assessment practices.
7. The role of assessment in improving accountability and quality of education provision.

Abstracts submitted should adhere to the following requirements:

The Conference Abstract Review Committee will accept the authors' original work in the following format:

- a) 350-word abstract
- b) Author(s) (name, organisation & email for each one)
- c) Title
- d) Sub-theme
- e) Abstract
- f) Keywords

Once the notification of acceptance has been received, submit the full paper and presentation in the following format:

- a) Font type: Times New Roman 12 pt
- b) Line spacing: 1.5
- c) APA Reference Style
- d) Name of the main presenter (please note you can only be the main presenter for one paper during the conference)

The abstracts and papers should be submitted to aeaa2024@umalusi.org.za and uploaded to <https://www.aeaafrica> in adherence to the timelines.

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5. Catalysing Social Mobility through Student Success (*Emma Whitelaw and Nicola Branson*)

In June, members from the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit's (SALDRU) Siyaphambili Project attended the 2023 Siyaphumelela Network Conference. A programme highlight was the keynote address by Prof Murray Leibbrandt, who anchored the work of the Siyaphumelela initiative for student success in the broader context of South African inequalities and social mobility. The conference went on to feature presentations on achieving equality and social justice in education, and the benefit of orientating the whole university towards student success. Prof Leibbrandt's keynote provided a valued opportunity to showcase work from the Siyaphambili project, as well as to foster networks with and learn from stakeholders in the higher education sector.

Following the conference, Emma Whitelaw and Nicola Branson wrote about the keynote for University World News. *"South Africa is characterised by deeply embedded structural inequalities, high unemployment, and the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage. However, amidst these challenges, there exists opportunity for change"*, write Whitelaw and Branson. *"How do you tackle [the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage]? Well, you tackle it by doing whatever you can in your own spaces to promote social mobility, to promote the opportunities for the more disadvantaged members of our society to actually move ahead. You, and all of us, are crucially important in supporting students through the postsecondary milieu,"* said Leibbrandt.

See the [webinar slides](#), watch the [YouTube recording](#), and [read the UWN article here](#).

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RESEARCH PRACTICE

1. Socialising the Good Practice Guide on Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education (*Christabelle Moyo and Moipane Mohlala*)

Following the publication of the Good Practice Guide on Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) held eleven (11) regional workshops in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Mpumalanga, Polokwane, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. These workshops were intended to assist Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) implement the Good Practice Guide guidelines for student participation in Quality Assurance and Promotion processes. Prof Rob Midgley (who was involved in the development of the Good Practice Guide) presented at these workshops. Prof Lumkile Lalendle (University of South Africa (UNISA) and Mr Theo Bhengu (Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University) who were part of the Reference Group team, facilitated in these workshops. The CHE team comprised Dr Makhapa Makhafola (former Director at the CHE), Dr Christabelle Moyo and Ms Moipane Mohlala.

The workshop participants were from both public and private higher education institutions, professional bodies, and students. The Guide was warmly received, and the team's efforts were applauded.

Institutions were encouraged to:

- Accept that they must do something about involving students in Quality Assurance (QA).
- Assess what policies and processes they have in place and the extent to which they talk to the Good Practice Guide's principles.
- Determine the gaps and assess whether they can do something about filling those gaps – what is practical, given their context.
- Draft or amend the institutional QA policy.
- Note what they cannot do now; and why; and determine whether they can do such things later, when their internal systems are more mature.
- Draft an institutional implementation manual of the Guide.
- Monitor the effectiveness of their internal systems so that they can report to the CHE, with reasons for success or failure to achieve the goals – with a feasible remedial action plan.
- Be creative and innovative in their approach to work with the capacity and the resources that they have, to ensure effective student engagement.

- Develop community of practice to assist one another when possible.
- Host institutional workshops within their region.

The Good Practice Guide on Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education document can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.che.ac.za/publications/frameworks/che-good-practice-guide>.

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2. Research Repository on Post-School Education and Training (*Sinovuyo Makalima*)

Introducing the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET's) Research Repository on Post-School Education and Training (PSET), a digital treasure trove of knowledge and innovation that serves as the intellectual heartbeat of our academic community. Within these virtual walls, we proudly showcase a diverse collection of publications including research reports, bulletins, research and policy briefs, fact sheets, presentations and conference proceedings undertaken by our esteemed Department, entities researchers, and students. As a hub for cutting-edge research spanning a wide spectrum of disciplines, this repository reflects the Department's unwavering commitment to advancing the frontiers of knowledge, fostering intellectual curiosity, and nurturing the spirit of inquiry within the realm of PSET.

The link to the PSET Research Repository is as follows:

<https://psetresearchrepository.dhet.gov.za/>

Research outputs for the repository can be sent to: dhetresearch@dhet.gov.za

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3. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Partnership – Research Outputs: Podcasts Series (*Andrica Letsoalo-Fuze, Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)

Research dissemination was a priority in the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA)- the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL) research partnership. PSETA acknowledges the need to share research outputs with a wide range of stakeholders in an accessible way, and to also provide platforms for dialogue in relation to the research themes and its implications for skills development in the Public Service sector.

The partnership resulted in the production of the following: Research reports, policy briefs, opinion editorials, webinars, journal articles, international conference papers, presentations at sector conferences, a PSETA research colloquium, research posters, and podcasts. In addition, a book will be published by 31 March 2024. The book will focus on skills planning, qualifications and occupational classification systems which are key tools for ensuring that the supply of education meets the demands of society. The book will problematise these tools and the broader areas which deal with the concept of ‘supply and demand’ and skills mismatches. It will also draw on empirical work which explores policy attempts to link occupations and qualifications, and conceptual work that explores these relationships.

This article focuses on the podcasts which featured the following speakers on topical issues:

1. Ms Bontle Lerumo, PSETA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the role of PSETA in supporting the development of a capable state
2. Dr Presha Ramsarup, Wits REAL Director on the research partnership between the REAL Centre and the PSETA
3. Themba Tshabalala, Wits REAL Researcher on skills planning and development for a capable and developmental public service sector.
4. Mr Ketso Gordhan, former public servant on understanding the notion of a performing state.
5. Prof Anne Mc Lennan, Wits REAL Research Associate on Connecting systems: PSETA skills planning and development for a capable, developmental Public Service sector.
6. Prof Mbongiseni Buthelezi, Public Affairs Institute (PARI), Executive Director on the Professionalisation Framework and what it means for skills in the public service sector.

7. Dr Tolika Sibiyi and Dr Nicola Jenkin, Wits REAL on Public sector policy directions and priorities associated with the United Nations' (UNs') Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Impact on occupations and skills demand in the Public Service sector.
8. Prof Francine De Clercq and Ms Kate Mlauzi, Wits REAL on Professional Competency Frameworks in the Public Service sector.
9. Dr Wilma Van Staden, Research Associate at the Wits REAL on the Development of an e-learning assessment framework for the Public Service sector and
10. Ms Glynnis Vergotine, Researcher at Wits REAL on Jobs, occupations and qualifications in the Public Service sector.

The podcasts are available on the PSETA website (www.pseta.org.za).

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4. Southern African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Special Issue – Language Enigma: “Two Decades of Quality Assuring the General and Further Education and Training in South Africa: The Language Enigma” (*Shilela Nkadimeng*)

This special issue, which is fully subsidised by Umalusi, is the contribution made through the SALALS to the celebration of Umalusi’s 20 years of quality assuring South Africa’s general and further education and training sector.

At the heart of the six articles accepted in the issue is the review of education policy as it relates to language curriculum and the assessment thereof, while at the same time offering proposals for improvement from quality assurance point of view. The foci of the articles range from problematising the practice of versioning of learning and teaching materials from English into African languages, given the conceptual and linguistic complexities associated with the process; to critiquing the logic of differentiating the South African language curricula along the lines of home and first additional languages; to analysing the space allocated to vocabulary assessment in an African language context, and exploring the criteria for assessing and selecting a suitable software for digital learning of a language.

The authors are language experts in their own right and are associated with different institutions in South Africa. Their wealth of experience in the quality assurance processes of Umalusi stand them in good stead. This Special Issue comes at the time when Umalusi has just started its journey of the next 20 years. And, therefore, it contributes towards strengthening and enhancing ways of setting and maintaining standards of language curriculum across different language contexts.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rall20/41/1>

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5. Active Learning and Research Committee (*Ernest Kaplan*)

Three Virtual Learning and Research Committee Meetings were held during the year under review 2022-2023.

This included a Focus Group Discussion on 06 June 2022, led by Dr Morne Oosthuizen from the Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) at the University of Cape Town (UCT).

This focused discussion includes a number of pointers/focal areas, including:

- The impact of floods in Kwazulu-Natal from the perspective of insurance companies and the broad insurance sector and its potential level of influence on the identified Change Drivers.
- The impact of the unrest in Kwazulu-Natal and Gauteng from the perspective of insurance companies and the broad insurance sector and its potential level of influence on the identified Change Drivers.
- The amount of funding and type of projects that insurance companies are engaging in, for the purpose of enhancing and broadening skills development.
- Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) – what the insurance sector is doing in terms of projects/ventures as far as the ERRP is concerned.

On 09 November 2022, the Active Learning and Research Committee focused on the Role of the Financial Services Intermediaries Network (FSIN). This session was led by Mr Edward (Jay) Mngoma (President FSIN) and Mr Enock Moyo (Senior Business Developer Trainsure Consultancy). The following issues were discussed:

- The issue of tied agents being supported.
- The ability of financial intermediaries to come up with a financial plan and advise clients to move their assets around.
- The fact that members of disadvantaged communities could not be members of investment schemes during the era of 'apartheid'.
- Assets can be fragmented and the value of the package needs to be established. Here is where Black Brokers can play a role and assist their clients with a tax plan.
- Preference for commission instead of fees because fees is defeating financial inclusion and emerging markets.
- Broaden focus from funeral income to retirement planning.

- Potential for FSIN to grow in the rural areas. FSIN is working at developing a proposal with one of the large asset companies.
- The application of a pilot investment programme by the FSIN.
- Provincial spread of FSIN.

On 24 March 2023, the Active Learning and Research Committee focused on the presentation of three Research Reports by Professor Colin Thakur (Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) Research Chair - Durban University of Technology (DUT)). The presentation covered the following:

- Occupational Profiling of the Top 10 Sector Priority Occupations in the Insurance Sector
- Insurtechs - Current and Future Skills Needs and the Gig Economy
- The Benefits and Challenges of the Gig Economy - Perspectives of Gig Workers and Small Medium Micro-Enterprises.

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6. Unlocking Potential: The World Skills Competition's Role in Promoting Artisan Trades in South Africa (Ali Sibanyoni, Mamphela Malowa, Fumane Mboweni and Matheko Mpe)

Participation in the World Skills Competition represents a cornerstone in the development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, marking a commitment to excellence in skills acquisition and application. This paper delves into the effects of participation on students from various TVET colleges engaging in this competition.

1. Skill Enhancement

Participation in the World Skills Competition by students/competitors from various TVET colleges necessitates intense training by lecturers/facilitators in order to prepare for the event. Colleges in various provinces send their best students to compete both in the national and international stages of the competition. This enables the TVET colleges to invest in optimal skills development which has overall benefits for learners. This enhancement also assists in producing artisans exposed to quality learning.

2. National Exposure

Competing in both provincial, national and international stages expose artisans to best practices and knowledge in various trades. This includes exposure to latest technology in fields such as motor mechanic and robotics. The competitions are enabling the competitors to learn from experts and competitors from different backgrounds, bringing valuable knowledge and techniques back to respective colleges. Lecturers and facilitators are also getting exposure. This exposure is in turn enabling empowerment of colleges and students.

3. Collaboration between TVET Colleges

The Competition enables the colleges within various provinces to advance collaborations and partnerships between themselves as they arrange and prepare the competitions. The other partnerships that the colleges benefit from are college-to-university, college-to-industry, social partnerships and other national partnerships.

4. Recognition of Artisan Trades

The participation of artisans in various trades enable recognition of trades by overall society. This recognition is assisting in promoting the careers and trades of artisan professions. This will also assist in motivating the youth to enter various trades of artisans.

5. Networking and Collaboration

The competition provides a unique platform for artisans and their lecturers to network and collaborate with peers, educators, and industry experts. These has potential to enhance ability of TVET colleges to further foster partnerships. This networking and collaboration has potential to enhance collaboration of rural TVET colleges.

6. Bridging the Skills Gaps

TVET colleges from various provinces often face challenges in producing artisan trades that responds to developmental needs of districts. The World Skills Competition serves as an intervention for bridging the gap between training and work exposure.

7. Reflection on Challenges

While the World Skills South Africa Competition has undoubtedly played a pivotal role in promoting artisan trades in various TVET colleges, operational challenges persist. These challenges are mainly related to finances and logistical support for the competition. These challenges has potential to derail the gains that have been made over the past few years by World Skills South Africa. However, there has been progressive developments as organisational matters related to World Skills are being improved through strategic planning, departmental commitment, collaboration, and financial resourcing.

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7. Enhancing Artisan Development through Evidence-Based Approach (*Fumane Mboweni, Matheko Mpe and Vinolia Mogashoa*)

The development and support of artisans are vital components of a developing economy like South Africa. Artisans, with their specialised skills and expertise, play a pivotal role in various industries such as food processing, construction, mining, manufacturing, and emerging sectors like the green economy and manufacturing of technological equipment. Recognising the significance of artisan development, the Institute for National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessment/National Artisan Development (INDLELA/NAD) has embarked on a comprehensive research-based approach to evaluate the achievements of the Chief Directorate during the 2015-2023. The main goal of the intervention was to assess with the view of improving the INDLELA/NAD programme delivery impact. This approach also aims to streamline the training programmes and initiatives offered by INDLELA/NAD to ensure a more effective and inclusive artisan development ecosystem that promotes transformation. The results of the study were also aimed at contributing towards the priorities enlisted in the National Apprenticeship and Artisan Development Strategy 2030 such as supporting the apprenticeship and artisan development system (DHET, 2022).

The research employed a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively evaluate INDLELA/NAD and its programmes during the review period.

The results of the study are themed around transforming the artisan development system for the future and highlight significant changes and improvements that have been made. This includes collaborations, inclusivity and transformation, data management, integration with the industry, promotion of artisan careers and others.

Findings entailed the following areas:

- Enhanced Clarity and Collaboration
- Inclusivity of Artisanal programme beneficiaries
- Improved Data Management
- Industry Integration
- Entrepreneurship Focus
- Efficiency of Artisanal programmes
- Legislative Support

- Alignment with Labour Market Needs
- Promotion of Artisan Careers

Based on the research findings and results, the following recommendations are put forth:

- Continued Stakeholder Engagement: INDLELA/NAD should maintain its focus on effective stakeholder engagement, utilising dedicated platforms and feedback mechanisms such as National Apprenticeship and Artisan Development Advisory Body and stakeholder forums.
- Accelerate Digitisation: Fast-tracking the digitisation of processes will further improve efficiency and transparency especially through improvement of data monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Legislation Enactment: Prioritise the enactment of legislation and policy development to solidify INDLELA/NAD's leadership role and enhance accountability within the system.
- Industry Collaboration: Strengthen collaboration with industries, involving key role players such as employer associations and chambers in curriculum development, standardisation and placement plans for beneficiaries.
- Sustainable Funding: Ensure sustained and clear budget allocation for INDLELA/NAD to maintain operational efficiency that is in line with its mandate.
- Skills Alignment Research: Continue conducting research to ensure that artisan programmes meet the evolving demands of the labour market and contribute towards development of local economic development in various districts.
- Promotion Career Development: Invest in continued efforts to promote artisan careers and attract learners through accessible and responsive career development for learners across all districts.

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8. Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority-University of Witwatersrand Centre for Researching Education and Labour Partnership Research Outputs: Opinion Editorials (*Leigh Anne Naicker and Shivanthini Nagalingam-Potter*)

Research dissemination is central to the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority's (PSETA's) research partnerships with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). One of the greatest challenges facing the Public Service sector is translating research findings into evidence-based practices that will be actively disseminated and widely adopted. This article highlights PSETA's research dissemination efforts in relation to the publication of Opinion Editorials (Op Ed) by the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL).

Through the PSETA-Wits REAL research stream 1, E-Learning and Skills Development within the Public, the Op-Ed titled "Upscaling e-Learning in the Public Service sector" was authored by Wits REAL researcher, Dr Wilma van Staden. The Op-Ed discussed how the pandemic coupled with government's commitment to prioritise Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Technology has forced a rethink around the provision and importance of e-learning to deliver a public service that is agile, user-centered, transparent, secure, and data-driven. This translates into employees who are constantly learning digital skills on the job. Whilst Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) sped up the move to e-learning, the Op-Ed questioned the extent of uptake and its corresponding challenges.

Through research stream 2, Jobs, Qualifications, and Occupations in the Public Service sector, the Op-Ed of the same title will be published in the Public Sector Manager in September 2023. The Op-Ed deliberates on the effective management of Human Resource Development (HRD) and Human Resource Management (HRM) as not only key to building skills but also to the planning of skills needed to build a state that has the capabilities to deliver services to the citizens of this country. It argues that the mapping framework provides the Public Service sector with a methodology to strengthen skills planning however whilst the mapping framework will effectively be able to assist the Public Service sector in thinking about how to plan around skills, the information obtained through this process will in turn assist the PSETA to decide on how to respond decisively to the skills needs of the Public Service sector.

Through research stream 3, Public sector policy directions and priorities associated with the United Nations's Sustainable Development Goals: Impact on Occupations and skills demand in the Public Service sector, Wits REAL researchers Dr Jenkin and Dr Sibiya authored the Op-

Ed titled “*Evaluating the State’s capacity to achieve quality inclusive education to meet its SDG obligations. Does the public service have the skills to develop a capable state?*”. The Op-Ed was published in the Public Sector Manager magazine in May 2023. Whilst public servants should be focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the focus should not just be on meeting the 2030 deadline but looking beyond to ensure sustainability and commitment to effective delivery in line with the principles of Batho Pele. The Op-Ed argues that in a country like South Africa, SDGs should not just be a tick-box exercise.

Through research stream 4, Review of Professional Competency Frameworks in the Public Service sector, researchers Prof De Clercq and Ms Mlauzi authored the Op-Ed titled “*Using Competency Frameworks to Build a Capable State*”. The Op-Ed was published in the Public Sector Manager magazine in April 2023. The Op-Ed called for a new ideological mind shift and ways of working which focus on the citizens of the country and this will also require changes in organisational arrangements, structures, cultures, leadership as well as different Competency Frameworks. It argued that Competency Frameworks should transcend intra-organisational and sectoral boundaries and embrace group dynamics, institutional dynamics, social regulation structures, and feedback mechanisms.

Through research stream 5, A critical review of skills demand and supply in the Public Service sector, the Op-Ed titled “*Building a More Capable and Developmental State Demands Ditching the Supply Fetish*” was authored by WITS REAL researchers, Prof Anne McLennan and Mr. Themba. The Op-Ed was published by the Daily Maverick on 04 April 2023. The Op-Ed provided important insights into whether skills are a factor in hampering the performance of the state. The Op-Ed indicated that PSETA was in a unique position to be a power broker because of its strategic position within the skills matrix as a labour market intermediary to bring together the key plays in the broader skills ecosystem to facilitate greater coordination.

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STATISTICS AND FACT SHEETS

1. Statistics on Post-School Education and Training: 2021 (*Nthabiseng Tema*)

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has consistently released the annual Statistics on Post-School Education and Training (PSET) in South Africa report since 2010, and the latest report for 2021 was published in March 2023. These reports serve as essential tools for decision making and strategic planning across various levels of the PSET system. They also play a crucial role in monitoring progress toward achieving the targets outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP).

In addition to providing the most recent statistics on 2021 student enrolment and completion, the report encompasses a diverse range of information. This includes the statistics on staffing levels at PSET institutions, as well as information about Workplace-Based Learning (WBL), financial data, notably that pertaining to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the National Skills Fund (NSF), the skills levy fund and voted funds.

Data for the various sectors are acquired through a range of sources, namely, Technical and Vocational Education and Training Management Information System (TVETMIS), Sector Education and Training Management Information System (SETMIS), Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), annual survey data for registered private colleges and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges, annual reports submitted by registered private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the DHET levy system, NSFAS and NSF Annual Reports, NSFAS database and the National Examinations Database for TVET, CET and private colleges.

In summary, the report reveals that in 2021 nearly 1.3 million students enrolled at public and private HEIs, with public HEIs accounting for the majority (1 068 046), while private HEIs enrolled 232 915 students. Graduates in both public and private HEIs were 233 257 and 54 551 respectively. TVET colleges had 589 083 in 2021, with 47 750 completing N3, N6 and NC(V) Level 4. Private colleges on the other hand enrolled 85 787 students, and 9 848 completed N3, N6 and NC(V) Level 4 in 2021. In 2021, 143 031 students enrolled in CET colleges, and 25 780 achieved the GETC: Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Level 4 qualification.

During the 2021/22 financial year, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) registered 130 264 learners in learnerships, internships and skills programmes, and 94 715

learners obtained certificates in these programmes. Furthermore 14 379 learners registered in various artisanal learning programmes, with 11 974 registered in scarce skills trades. In the same period, 19 536 learners completed their artisanal learning programmes, with a significant majority (16 597) completing in scarce skills trades. The NSF supported 272 skills development projects in 2021/22 financial year, benefitting 81 532 individuals.

Additional information can be found in the 2021 report accessible through the link: <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/HRDPlanningNew.aspx>. The reports for the previous years (2010-2020) can also be accessed through the same link.

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2. Factsheet on New Entrants in Technical and Vocational Educational and Training Colleges: 2021 (*Nthabiseng Tema and Sonnyboy Manthata*)

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) regularly publishes annual statistics on Post-School Education and Training (PSET) institutions. However, it is worth noting that the report does not cover information pertaining to new entrants in the Technical and Vocational and Education and Training (TVET) colleges. This gap has prompted the development of this factsheet.

Data on new entrants in TVET colleges is crucial for assessing the demand for new enrolments and the necessity for adequate physical facilities. It also offer insights on the capacity of TVET colleges to accommodate potential new entrants. Such data can be used undertake future projections of new entrants and thereby support enrolment planning in TVET colleges. These projections can be used by DHET to communicate education and training opportunities at TVET colleges to the public and prospective students.

In summary, the factsheet highlights that 195 420 new entrants were enrolled in TVET colleges in 2021, which is a significant decline when compared to 2020 (243 554). Northlink TVET college registered the highest number of new entrants in 2021 followed by Majuba TVET college.

Age group analysis of new entrants in 2021 reveals that the vast majority (95.6% or 186 867) of them were youth aged 34 years and younger, while 4.4% (8 553) were 35 years and older. About 4 787 of the 8 553 new entrants aged 35 years and older enrolled for Report 191, and this cohort will likely require Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in future for them to complete a National N Diploma. This figure was higher than the cohort identified in 2020 (7 627). Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) only accommodate unemployed youth aged 18-35 years old for placement into WIL programmes, which implies that the 4 787 new entrants will not be able to do their WIL component through SETAs.

The Factsheet also reveals that 2021 new entrants in TVET colleges were higher compared to public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (169 675). New entrants in TVET colleges were also higher in previous academic years (i.e., 243 534 in 2017; 222 399 in 2018; 219 793 in 2019; and 175 342 in 2020) compared to those in public HEIs (i.e., 193 282 in 2017 and 208 661 in 2018, 187 722 in 2019, and 209 522 in 2020). However, the TVET college figures

should be interpreted with caution as students are counted twice if they enrol in two different programmes in the same academic year (e.g., Report 191 and skills programmes).

Additional analysis conducted reveals that 43 863 new entrants in TVET colleges wrote Grade 12 in 2020. Most of these students enrolled for Report 191 and National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) programmes (33 715 and 8 682 respectively).

The full fact sheet is available through the following link:
https://www.dhet.gov.za/Planning%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Coordination/Factsheet%20on%20new%20entrants%20in%20TVET%20colleges_2021.pdf

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3. Fact Sheet on Gender for Students in Post-School Education and Training Institutions (*Nthabiseng Tema and Sonnyboy Manthata*)

Considering the disparities in unemployment rates between males and females, the Fact Sheet offers an in-depth analysis of the specific qualifications and programmes that students of different genders choose to enrol in and ultimately graduate in.

In a nutshell, the Fact Sheet indicates that in 2021, a larger number of females accessed public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Technical and Vocational and Education and Training (TVET) and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges as compared to males, while private colleges enrolled a slightly higher proportion of males as compared to females. Within public HEIs, over half of female students (54.4%) pursued their studies in the Other Humanities and Business Management fields of study, while males accounted for about 49.7% in the same fields of study.

Furthermore, the data indicate that certain qualifications/programmes attract more female students than males. One notable example, within the public HEIs, the most substantial gender gap in enrolment was observed in the Other Humanities field of study, with 96 390 more female students enrolling compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, significant gender disparities in the number of graduates were also observed in the Other Humanities field of study, where 23 425 more females graduated compared to males. The Science, Engineering and Technology was the only field of study where enrolment for males surpassed that of females.

In private HEIs, females' enrolment was higher (60.6%) as compared to 38.7% males, and similar proportions were observed for the graduates (62.6% and 37.4% respectively). The majority of both male and female students enrolled and graduated in the Business, Commerce and Management Studies field. Certain fields were also preferred by females than males, for instance, over 88% of enrolments in the Education, Training and Development and the Health Sciences and Social services fields were females, and similar proportions were observed in the graduates' data as well. Males on the other hand dominated the Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology and the Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences, Physical Planning and Construction and Agriculture and Nature Conservation fields.

In TVET colleges, female enrolment was notably higher across most programmes except for skills programmes. When looking at enrolment in N6 Report 191 programmes, the majority of female students enrolled and completed Management Assistant programmes, while males enrolled and completed predominantly in the Engineering Studies field. The disparity in enrolment and completion between males and females in the Engineering field was relatively minimal. Regarding National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) level 4 programmes, the majority of female students enrolled and completed their qualification in Office Administration. In contrast, males leaned towards enrolling and completing in the Engineering and Related Design programmes.

Male students in private colleges had a slightly higher enrolment rate in NC(V) and Report 191 programs, while female students were more represented in occupational qualifications, Report 550/NSC, and skills programmes.

CET colleges had 71% female enrolled in 2021, with General Education and Training Certificate (GETC): Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) level 4 and Grade 12 programmes experiencing high gender imbalances. Females' completion for GETC: ABET Level 4 was 14 968 higher compared to that of male students.

The findings reveal gender disparities in enrolment and completion, despite females outnumbering males in both enrolment and completion across almost all Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sub sectors. This observation raises questions about the factors influencing these decisions and their potential implications for the future.

The full fact sheet is available through the following link:[https://www.dhet.gov.za/Planning%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Coordination/FACTSHEET%20ON%20GENDER%20FOR%20STUDENTS%20IN%20PSET%20INSTITUTIONS,2021%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.dhet.gov.za/Planning%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Coordination/FACTSHEET%20ON%20GENDER%20FOR%20STUDENTS%20IN%20PSET%20INSTITUTIONS,2021%20(1).pdf)

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4. Fact Sheet: Adult Illiteracy in South Africa (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe*)

The White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (PSET) points out that the PSET system is expected to cater for adults who never attended school or who did not complete schooling. South Africa also has international obligations to ensure the provision of education for all. Among these obligations are the United Nations' (UNs') Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 that calls for an inclusive and quality equitable education for all, and to ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

The findings in this fact sheet show that nearly 4 million adults in South Africa were illiterate in 2021. The illiteracy rates stood at 9.6 percent for men and 11.3 percent for women in 2021. These statistics point towards the staggering disparities in educational levels in the country. It is therefore imperative for the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to understand the extent to which adults do not have the levels of education that could make them functionally literate, and to provide programmes that could deal with this challenge as a higher literacy rate is an essential requirement for any nation to bring it on par with other nations. No nation looks promising if it has a stable economic growth rate but poor literacy rates.

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to show the extent to which there is potential demand for programmes that address the challenge of adult illiteracy in South Africa.

The Fact Sheet can be accessed on the following link:
<https://www.dhet.gov.za/Planning%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Coordination/Fact%20Sheet%20-%20Adult%20Illiteracy%20in%20South%20Africa%20-%20March%202023.pdf>

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5. Fact Sheet on Not in Employment, Education or Training (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe and Elvis Ganyaupfu*)

The analysis of the shares of persons who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) has increasingly gained considerable attention and occupied a centre stage in policy discourses in the realms of education, skills and labour market analysis. Trends in NEET rates provide insights to diverse stakeholders (researchers, business and civil society, government, policy makers and others) on how to address a broad array of vulnerabilities relating to issues of unemployment, unequal access to education and training, early school leaving, dropouts and labour market rigidities and discouragement, among others.

Unemployment levels in South Africa are among the highest in the world and have remained consistently high over the past 15 years. While the unemployment rate provides as an important indicator of labour market tightness and spare capacity that remains in the labour market and the economy more broadly, persistently high NEET rates can signal the existence of large pools of persons willing to study and/or work but cannot find opportunities to study or engage in productive activities, suggesting that the economy could be operating below its full potential.

While recognising the recovery from 34.9% in 2021 to 32.9% in 2022, the unemployment rate in South Africa remains exceptionally high, suggesting the persistence of the adverse impact of the shock from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-19 global health pandemic on the labour market and economic activity. More alarming is that in 2022, over one-third (3.5 million) of young people aged 15-24 years were NEET. Many of the young people who are NEET are based in disadvantaged areas, including rural communities where opportunities for employment are limited.

The persistently high level of NEETs in South Africa presents itself as a socially explosive situation that requires urgent attention from the entire society. Since youth are a fundamental asset for South Africa, it is crucial to provide them with skills needed for sound socioeconomic development, and for future sustainability of our country.

As part of monitoring the performance of the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system, the Directorate System Monitoring and Labour Market Intelligence at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) developed this Fact Sheet to provide a detailed

profile of people who are NEET to support decision-making in the PSET system. Information about NEETs assists the Department, Community Education and Training (CET) colleges, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and other stakeholders to make informed decisions about PSET provisioning.

This Fact Sheet is therefore an essential information resource for policy-makers and education and training providers to guide improvements in the design and implementation of education and training policies that can respond to the NEET challenge in the country.

The Fact Sheet can be accessed on the following link:
<https://www.dhet.gov.za/Planning%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Coordination/Fact%20Sheet%20-%20NEETs%20March%202023.pdf>

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6. Throughput Rate of Technical and Vocational Education and Training College National Certificate (Vocational) Students (*Mamphokhu Khuluvhe*)

Information about throughput rates is crucial to understanding, among others, the level of efficiency of an education system. Throughput rates provide insights into how quickly or slowly students move through the system. The slower the movement of students from enrolment to completion, the greater the cost to the system. Moreover, the slow movement of students through the system (which is caused largely through high levels of repetition) creates a bottleneck in the system, resulting in constraints to the admission of the number of new entrants to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.

High throughput rates impede student progress, impact negatively on teaching and learning, increase costs, and impacts negatively on the ability of institutions to facilitate student success. Delays in the completion of qualifications entail a waste of resources both at individual as well as at collective levels. They also deprive the economy of adequate numbers of new graduates.

As part of monitoring the performance of the post-school education and training system, the Directorate System Monitoring and Labour Market Intelligence developed the attached Fact Sheet to provide information and insights into the throughput rate of TVET college students enrolled in NC(V) programmes. Such insights can be drawn upon to inform interventions to address relevant challenges and to improve accountability in the system.

The attached Fact Sheet is also accessible on the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET): website at www.dhet.gov.za

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