

“Public TVET College Responsiveness: Recent Research Findings”

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Research Study Context

I. Strategically-mandated role of TVET colleges:

- ✓ **National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III Strategic Objective 4.3:** *“To promote the growth of a public TVET college and university system that is responsive to sector skills needs and priorities”.*
- ✓ To contribute to **national economic development** and growth through **regionalised skills development programs, job creation and poverty alleviation.**
- ✓ The **mechanism** for achieving these outcomes is to build sector-wide **strategic partnerships**

Research Study Context (–cntd.)

II. Public TVET college programming

Programme provision occur in terms of two distinctly separate streams:

- a) **National (academic) programs** comprising **National Certificate (Vocational) (NCV) programmes** and **Report 191 (NATED) programmes**, which together make up the bulk of college programming
 - Ministerially (DHET)-funded and lecturers are mostly permanently employed and paid by the DHET
 - The NCV programs involve a workplace-based experiential learning component which requires colleges to establish linkages and partnerships with workplaces
- b) **SETA-accredited occupational and skills programs** as well as non-accredited **short courses**. These programs occur in terms of a **self-funding** model (including the contracting of program staff).

Research Study Context (–cntd.)

III. Fibre Processing & Manufacturing (FP&M) SETA and strategic objectives:

To support and guide TVET Colleges regarding its NSDS III-mandated role by –

- ✓ promoting partnerships with public TVET colleges to improve the supply of skills and education and training within the FP&M sector
- ✓ improving college capacity and performance so as to ensure quality, relevant and responsive programme delivery (including workplace programmes for students and staff)

Research Study Context (–cntd.)

RESEARCH AIM

- To generate information that will assist the FP&M SETA to devise a strategic approach to TVET college partnerships support.

WHAT DID WE DO?

- I. **Develop geographic area-specific economic profiles on information about:**
 - economic growth and development strategic priorities and plans (sectoral)
 - extent of the FP&M SETA sub-sector activity/ employers in the region
 - TVET college representation, program provision, scope of linkages and partnerships
- II. **TVET College-specific profiling:**
 - College capacity to support teaching and learning
 - practices pertaining to occupational program planning
 - challenges and constraints around programme provision and partnerships

Research Study Context (–cntd.)

Research Sample:

Geographical and spatial distribution of sample colleges (12 colleges, 4 provinces)

PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION	SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION			TOTAL
	Urban	Peri-urban	Rural	
Gauteng	3			3
KwaZulu-Natal	2	2	2	6
Mpumalanga		1		1
Western Cape	1	1		2
Total	6	4	2	12

FINDINGS – THEME 1: Spatial distribution of FP&M-related programme offerings

Province	No. of Colleges	FP&M SETA Programme offerings	FP&M SETA accreditation
Gauteng	3	4	1
KwaZulu-Natal	6	13	3
Mpumalanga	1		1
Western Cape	2	2	1
Total	12	19	6

Specific Finding 1:

- ***Limited current FP&M SETA programme provision (though the KZN colleges' contribution set to increase significantly in the immediate future)***

FINDINGS

Theme 2: Program Planning

I. Economic/ labour market intelligence-driven program planning?

Specific Finding 2:

- *Broad awareness of sectoral priorities and trends, plans and programs*
- *No direct impact on occupational program planning*

Specific Finding 3:

- *Reactive Occupational Program Planning*
- *No dynamic alignment to micro-level skills development*

II. Impact of current funding model on Occupational PQM planning

Specific Finding 4:

- *Funding (source) availability essentially drives Occupational PQM planning – overrides sector-focused strategic considerations*

FINDINGS

Theme 3: Institutional Capacity to Support T&L (cntd.)

I. LECTURER CAPABILITY

Specific Finding 4:

- *The majority of staff members are qualified to teach the content knowledge of programmes, but fall short in respect of professional teaching knowledge and skill*

Specific Finding 5:

- *Limited workplace or practical knowledge*

Specific Finding 6:

- *Insufficient proficiency in learner assessment*

FINDINGS

Theme 3: Institutional Capacity to Support T&L (cntd.)

II. PLACEMENT CAPABILITY

Specific Finding 7:

- *Limited work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities for STUDENTS*

Specific Finding 8:

- *Unreliable job placement for GRADUATES due to systemic short comings*

Specific Finding 9:

- *Insufficient support for LECTURER upskilling through workplace exposure*

FINDINGS: THEME 4

Current Challenges, Constraints & Support Needs

I. Industry-/employer-related aspects:

Specific Finding 10:

- *Resistance to buy-in and commitment from industry/employers*

II. SETA-related aspects:

Specific Finding 11:

Funding-related

- *Funding support experienced as too limited in scope*
- *Disconnect between SETAs and colleges in respect of training planning and funding*

FINDINGS: THEME 4

Challenges, Constraints & Recommendations (cntd.)

II. SETA-related aspects (cntd):

Specific Finding 12:

Accreditation and verification-related aspects need attention/ review:

- *The accreditation process too cumbersome and should be streamlined*
- *Centralised accreditation of assessors problematical for rural colleges*
- *SETAs should conduct Continuous External Verification (vs summative only)*

Specific Finding 13:

- *SETA visibility and engagement with colleges to be addressed*

FINDINGS: THEME 4 (cntd.)

Challenges, Constraints & Support Needs

II. SETA-related aspects (–cntd):

Specific Finding 18:

- *Need for college engagement with regional and provincial skills development forums*
- *SETAs ideally placed to facilitate such collaborative engagement*

III. College-related aspects:

Specific Finding 19:

- *Infrastructure cannot support multi-programme training needs*

Conclusion

Limitations in respect of strategic and dynamic collaborative partnerships and sustainable funding emerge as the key constraints that inhibit TVET college responsiveness and thereby fulfilling their strategically-mandated role and responsibilities as agents for economic growth and development.

