

# **Stories of experience: Lecturers' pathways of learning to teach in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges**

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## **Researcher's Declaration**

**I, Tshepang Monica Mashiloane, UKZN student number 216075161 declare that:**

1. The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
2. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This dissertation does not contain others' data, tables, pictures, graphs, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers.

**Signed.....**

## **Supervisor's Declaration**

This dissertation is submitted with / without my approval.

.....  
PROFESSOR. DAISY PILLAY

## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this work to my parents Daniel and Doris Mashiloane -  
on your shoulders I will forever stand tall, confident and proud.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:**

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- My participants for sharing their stories and time with me.

## ABSTRACT

*This study titled, “Stories of experience: Lecturers’ pathways of learning to teach in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges”, draws on the reconstructed stories of four participants, Queen, Aya, Khuse and Joshua. These four participants are lecturers who work in two KwaZulu-Natal TVET colleges, within the Hospitality and Business Studies department. In their stories they share their personal and professional experiences. Their experiences came into being through a series of life events and gave a glimpse of who they are, what meanings they adapted to negotiate their complex selves and their choice of being teachers in TVET colleges.*

*This study is grounded by the narrative inquiry approach which uses stories as the methodological approach to generate stories of lived experiences. In understanding the participants’ lived experiences, the study is located within the interpretivist paradigm. To generate data, I used collage inquiry, artefact inquiry and unstructured interviews to capture the meaning in the daily lives of participants. I captured their personal-professional knowledge, hopes, feelings, challenges, aspirations, inspirations of what it means to be a TVET lecturer in relation to the various reforms and policy requirements.*

*I used Rodgers and Scott’s (2008) Social Identity Theory and Bell and Gilbert (1994) Model of Professional Development Theory to analyse the participants lived experiences. The personal-professional identities of TVET lecturers are an ongoing process and constructed and reconstructed against internal; self-motivation, self-initiated learning and external; relationships, socio-political, religious and cultural forces. It is these forces that shaped and continue to shape lecturers’ identities. Lecturers pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges enabled them to develop a range of networks and relationships both socially and professionally. Engaging in varied forms of formal- university courses, non-formal- collage based-initiatives and informal- organized social interactions spaces of learning, they widened and deepened their understanding of what (content) they were teaching, who (diverse students) they were teaching and where (context) they were teaching.*

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
Adv Dip TVT	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching
BA	Bachelor of Arts
B Ed	Bachelor in Education
BP	Business Practice
CATHSETA	Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
CP	Computer Practice
CFS	Computer Financial Systems
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
F&B	Food and Beverage
HoD	Head of Department
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
IT	Information Technology
LO	Life Orientation
MBA	Master in Business Administration
M Ed	Master of Education
ND	National Diploma
NLC	New Life Centre
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
PGCHE	Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and Training
SACE	South African Council for Educators
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
VE	Vocational Education
VEOP	Vocational Education Orientation Programme

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# CHAPTER ONE

## *Lecturers' who choose to teach in TVET colleges*

### 1.1 Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges are part of the formal education sector and those who choose to teach in them should have both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills (Alexander, Buthelezi & Seabi, 2009; Clarke, 2009; Gewer, 2016; Guntherie, Harris, Simons & Karmel, 2009). Those (lecturers) who teach in TVET colleges have various “historical, social background and educational qualifications” (Buthelezi, 2018, p. 367) and are likely to only have specialised or technical knowledge, with industry (workplace) experience (Downing, 2017). This means that those who choose to work in TVET colleges lack in pedagogical knowledge (teaching experience). Lecturers are “seen to have a lower status as opposed to school teachers”, more-so in South Africa, because currently there is no TVET teaching qualification offered at university level (Papier, 2017, p. 44). Being inadequately qualified (Lolwana, 2016) characterise lecturers as being weak (Duncan, 2017). Thus, in the absence of a TVET qualification and the negative stigma attached to lecturers (Adendorff & Van Wyk, 2016; Wedekind, 2010), the acquisition of their knowledge and how they use it for their practice is worth being explored.

This study explores personal and professional lives of individuals who teach in TVET colleges. In studying their personal and professional lives, I want to know and understand how their lived experiences shaped and is shaping who they are as TVET lectures. In this chapter I will explain my personal, professional and contextual rationale for conducting the study, as well as provide an overview of the theoretical framing. The chapter concludes with a synopsis of the main ideas of the remaining chapters.

### 1.2.1 Personal rationale: My personal story as a TVET lecturer

*If anyone asked me what I wanted to be when I was growing up, I would boldly say I wanted to be a teacher. I loved teaching so much, that at home, I used the back of the wooden bathroom door as a chalkboard to teach my younger*

**Figure 1.1 a drawing of myself writing on the chalkboard**



Source: [www.123rf.com](http://www.123rf.com)

*brother how to tell time. I even stole chalk from school, so I could write with it at home. When my father discovered that I was damaging the bathroom door, he mounted an old billboard on the garage wall for me to use as a chalkboard. My parents' garage was now my new classroom and I recruited three of my brother's friends to be my learners.*

*In grade 5, I was voted class captain and my homeroom teacher gave me the duty to write notes on the chalkboard for other learners to copy because she said I had a beautiful handwriting. This made me love writing on the chalkboard even more because as I wrote those notes alone during lunch breaks, I would pretend that I was a teacher and the empty chairs were my learners.*

*When I applied for university in 2001, my father did not allow me to study a Bachelors' degree in Education (B Ed). He said a lot of qualified teachers were unemployed and this was also during the time when teachers' Colleges were either being closed or merged with universities. I then applied and was accepted at a university in Pretoria for a National Diploma (ND) in Hospitality Management from 2002-2004. After completing my diploma in Hospitality Management in 2005, I volunteered to teach at Calton TVET college<sup>1</sup>. After two years of voluntary lecturing at Calton College, I was employed permanently as a TVET lecturer.*

*I taught at Calton college within the Hospitality Studies department for eight years. In the eight years I had no formal mentorship and induction of how to*

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonym of the TVET college I worked in for 8 years

*teach. I relied on my passion for teaching, Hospitality knowledge and speaking to other lecturers whenever I needed help. The lack of mentorship, and a lack of teaching qualification as per DHET requirement (SACE, 2011) propelled my decision to pursue formal studies. Between 2008 and 2012 I studied a Bachelors' Degree in Hospitality Management and a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and Training (PGCHE).*

According to DHET (2013, p. 9) TVET college lecturers need to have three specialised forms of learning [knowledges or competencies] “learning about the subject, learning about how to teach the subject and learning about the application of, and relevance of the subject in the workplace. When I started teaching at Calton college I only had subject knowledge, workplace experience and no teaching qualification and these reasons form the bases for this study. Just as I started with a lack of TVET specific knowledge, I want to explore the educational lives of those who choose to teach in TVET colleges to understand the following three aspects: 1) an attempt to find out who they are; 2) which experiences informed their decisions to teach in TVET colleges, and 3) in the course of their teaching, how they navigate the specific learning (knowledge) needed to teach in TVET colleges. A study of the context, hopes and fears of lecturers is important because TVET lecturers are “expected to model learning and teach students to master knowledge and skills” (Muhammad & Jaafar, 2015, p. 143). Therefore, it is imperative that lecturers’ lived experiences be explored as they negotiate their role amidst specialised TVET specific knowledge and skills.

### **1.2.2 Contextual rationale: Political and professional imperatives**

TVET education in South Africa started during the colonial period when South Africa was under British control (Wedekind, 2010). It was at a very small scale and the British missionaries trained Africans in TVET skills in schools. It was after the 1922 Apprenticeship Act (Kallaway, 1974), that the modern TVET college system emerged. During the apartheid era, colleges were only meant to train white working class to be apprentices (Wedekind, 2010). Over time, because of high demand of artisans, the Blacks, Coloureds and Indians were allowed to learn in TVET colleges (Badroodien, 2004; Wedekind, 2010). As it was the case with all other social sectors during

apartheid, the TVET colleges were racially segregated which saw the unevenness of distribution of resources, and furthermore, the African TVET colleges were located far away from industrial areas and centres of economic activity. The democratic government of 1994 made changes so that TVET colleges could be racially inclusive in the new democratic South Africa (Akoojee, 2009).

Ever since 1994, TVET colleges in South Africa have gone through various reforms; in 2002, one of them was that 152 technical Colleges were merged into 50 larger multi-campus institutions and renamed *Further Education and Training* (FET) Colleges. The focus of FET Colleges was to “address education and skills development goals for individuals and industry” (Akoojee, Gewer, & McGrath, 2005, p. 110). In 2013, FET Colleges were renamed to TVET colleges, so that they could be aligned to the international standards of post-school education (DHET, 2013). The international standards alignment meant that FET Colleges who trained students in technical skills, had to shift to training and developing students for careers. While FET emphasized skills development, the focus of TVET colleges is to “develop students for workplace and/or self-employment” (DHET, 2013, p. 16). The career focused curriculum changes from FET to TVET were made in the hope of “growing the economy and solving socio-economic problems” (Wedekind & Watson, 2016, p. 5). The democratic government made all these changes to address the inequalities brought by the apartheid era.

Although the curriculum and focus changes (shifts) from technical to FET to TVET colleges were made, it is still the same lecturers who are expected to teach against these changes (Ngubane-Mokiwa, 2013). The reforms in TVET colleges affected lecturers because they were not adequately trained to embrace and adapt to the new responsibilities that were brought by these changes. This according to Wedekind (2010, p. 312) shows a “top-down decision making style as it disempowered and negatively impacted the morale and identity of lecturers”. (Akoojee, 2009) found that these shifts seem to have left lecturers feeling helpless. The lack of literature that specifically addresses TVET lecturers’ experiences as they teach in the newly reformed TVET colleges makes it worthwhile to study the educational lives of those who choose to teach in TVET colleges and how they respond to the changes in the curriculum and college focus.

Though this sector has been part of the education system for a long time, it still faces numerous challenges (Beukes, 2018). One of its major challenge is having a specialized professional qualification that would ensure acquisition of these learnings. To resolve this challenge, DHET's policy on professional qualifications for lecturers, made "available professional qualifications that are specifically designed for lecturers teaching in TVET colleges" (2013, p. 7). Yet there has not been a university to date that offers these qualifications. Leaving lecturers to continue facing challenges and having to find alternative ways of negotiating their roles of TVET teaching.

### **1.2.3 Research rationale: TVET lecturers personal and professional development**

As a M Ed student, I want to focus on lecturers' personal and professional selves and their learning to becoming TVET lecturers. This is because those who choose to teach in TVET colleges have "various educational backgrounds, training and recruitment status" (Grollmann, 2009, p. 1186). This means that they have diverse identities and knowledge, making what they do different from each other. According to the Green Paper on Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013), the mastery of skills and lecturers' understanding of Colleges' professional expectation seem to be lacking. Blom (2016) explains that this lack brought about the indiscriminate pouring of money into the college system without understanding the needs of lecturers. This scenario underscores the need for a research such as this to understand those who teach in TVET colleges as they negotiate who they are, what they know, how they acquired that knowledge and what they do.

Registering as a M Ed student in Teacher Development Studies at UKZN was the option I took up for engaging in my professional learning. It was at one of the initial meetings with my supervisor that I was asked to share about the possibilities of my study. Inspired by an artefact, I told a story about a compact mirror I bought in Russian whilst a student (see Addendum A and **Figure 1.2**) to my M Ed research support group. I then transcribed my mirror story and identified six lines and/or phrases from this written narrative with my supervisor to create the Pantoum poem titled 'The mirror I always carry'.



**Figure 1.2 My compact mirror**

The mirror I always carry

The mirror I always carry...

Something for myself?

Mixed feelings

Overcome something difficult

Something for myself?

Speak the language

Overcome something difficult

I felt at ease!

Speak the language

Mixed feelings

I felt at ease!

The mirror I always carry

A Pantoum poem is a “French poem based on Malaysian forms using repetition of lines throughout the poem, the first line is usually similar to the last. It is an exploration of the lived experience of the research subject-participant” (Furman, 2006, p. 562). The poem emerged from the narrative that I wrote about my Russian experience. In the text I elaborate my professional rationale by using quotes in single quotation marks ( ' ') as metaphor of how this study will explore lecturers lived experiences. Like the

mirror I always carry, I believe that reflecting on my lived experiences and feelings (tensions and fears) is an important part of my personal and professional learning and development.

#### **1.2.4 The concepts of the Pantoum poem**

The Pantoum poem has evoked different perspectives that I want to explore about the TVET lecturers and the complexities of their everyday experience. Like looking in a mirror, I want to study what kind of engagements (learning, changes and confrontations) those who are professionally unqualified (Grollmann, 2009) undergo to develop themselves for the TVET context and be able to 'speak the language'. Therefore, reflecting on what they have in relation to what is expected from them. Those who choose to teach in TVET colleges are shaped by personal values which are central to who they are as professionals (Korthagen, 2017). The variance lecturers have in embodied and tacit knowledge when juxtaposed against the new context can bring 'mixed feelings'. Therefore, it is vital to study the lecturers' lives because one needs understand what these lecturers do for themselves being faced with these 'mixed feelings'. In the attempt of filling my knowledge gaps of TVET lecturers, I want to know to know how they overcome anxiety and 'mixed feelings' of the new context. I want to know what they do to 'feel at ease' in managing feelings that come with being in a new context.

Bell and Gilbert (1994) Model of Professional Development Theory (which is based on teachers yet adopted for this study because of some similar teaching roles teachers and lecturers have) states that at a personal level, teachers (lecturers) go through a level of anxiety which prompts them to respond by doing something to overcome this anxiety both socially and professionally. In order for TVET lecturers to 'speak the language' (acquire TVET specific knowledge and skills) of teaching diverse adult students, they need personal and professional development so that they can respond to the 'language' of these students. I want to know how the process of learning to 'speak the language' these lecturers undergo in order to "move towards being experts" in their practice (Kelly, 2006, p. 514). Therefore, I want to understand the person in the professional being because one cannot speak about the professional self without looking into the personal self as these two are intertwined (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This poem has helped me crystalize what I want to theorise about people that choose to teach at TVET colleges. Through memory work and stories of TVET

lecturers', I want to explore and understand TVET lecturers lived educational experiences. More specifically I want to make visible their past and present experiences and their meanings and how these inform their everyday practices in vocational education and development.

Duncan (2017) explains that TVET lecturers are of great importance towards the success of TVET education. Papier (2010) describes TVET education as an important aspect in the economy of most countries in the world. Because it is an important sector, TVET education is supposed to be the skills and economic pillar in a society. This pillar role is affected by of the low quality of lecturers who are inadequately professionally developed (Chua & Jamil, 2012).

Essentially, Paryono (2015) affirms that there is a general low professional quality amongst TVET lecturers in most countries in the world which Wedekind and Watson (2016) also concurs about South African lecturers. The low professional quality in South Africa, is due to a lack of TVET specific teaching qualifications for those who choose to teach in TVET colleges (Buthelezi, 2018). Even though lecturers are seen as "key strategic players and effective components" who are required for the success and sustainability of TVET education (Akoojee, 2008, p. 297). My focus on the lecturers' pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges is within the context of knowing their personal and professional experiences and how these experiences shape their practice. The social identity and the model of professional development theory will be used as theoretical framing for the study.

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

The study will be underpinned by two theories. Firstly, Rodgers and Scott (2008) Social Identity Theory, which assumes that a teacher's [TVET lecturer] identity is shaped by various internal and external factors. This identity is shaped in relation to a context that requires lecturers to have subject knowledge, knowledge of how to teach the subject and how the subject relates into the workplace. Rodgers and Scott theory would help me tease out who they are and how their experiences have brought an understanding of them negotiating the specific knowledge expectations (subject knowledge, ability to teach the subject and work place experience). The Social Identity

Theory has been used by many scholars who study issues of identity (Biesta, 2010), thus fitting for this study which is about the personal and professional selves of lecturers. Secondly, I used Bell and Gilbert (1994) model of professional development theory. Using this theory will help me know and understand what how these lecturers negotiate the complexities of the context they find themselves in, and which spaces and/or people do they access in order to learn for the TVET context.

## **1.4 Key Research questions**

Placing under the microscope TVET lecturers' everyday experiences, I want to explore and understand what and how their prior and present experiences shape their engagement with vocational education. The following critical questions are what underpins the study:

### *1. Who are the lecturers teaching in TVET colleges?*

In answering this question, I will be able to get a general overview of personal and professional, past and present life experiences that shape TVET college lecturers' identities.

### *2. What personal and professional experiences shape the choice to become TVET lecturers*

This question will allow me to explore what and how personal and professional experiences have shaped lecturers' choice of teaching in TVET colleges. The TVET lecturers' experiences will inform the knowledge, skills and values the lecturers have acquired in being able to take up the role of being TVET lecturers.

### *3. How do lecturers negotiate their everyday practice in TVET colleges?*

By responding to this question, I will be able to know what lecturers do to enact their practice.

## **1.5 Research methodology**

Regarding the methodological approach, this is a qualitative study within an interpretivist paradigm. Qualitative research is a process that analysis data about

meanings individuals have about life's experiences (Lewis, 2015). Exploring TVET college lecturers' lived experiences, I will be using narrative inquiry which "provides individual stories" S. Lewis (2015, p. 473) that help in finding "meaning and making sense of one's life" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 45). Clandinin (2006) explains that narrative inquiry as a methodology uses life stories which are generated directly from the individuals concerned. The narratives could be through the utilisation of oral narratives as well as storytelling (Barton, 2004). Because the study aims to know how and where TVET lecturers acquire their knowledge and understanding for the TVET context, this methodology is fitting as participants shared their experiences through stories told using different methods. Unstructured interviews, art-based method and memory work were used to generate data, aiding lecturers to narrate their stories.

## **1.6 Chapter Outlines**

The organisation of the study is as follows:

In this chapter I narrated my journey [personal rationale] as a TVET lecturer and the contextual and professional rationale that underpins the study. I have given a brief overview of the three critical research question, annotated literature review, theoretical and research design. In concluding the chapter, I have highlighted what each chapter of this thesis is about.

In Chapter Two, relevant research literature is interrogated to provide the key debates, discussions and contentions that inform the study, and glean the multiple viewpoints of what and how TVET lecturers negotiate their roles in teaching VE. This chapter also includes the theoretical framing which will allow insight into who and how these TVET lecturers came into the knowledge and understanding of VE.

Chapter Three, outlines the methodological approach, paradigm and my choice in using narrative inquiry to frame this study. Furthermore, I elaborate on the research setting for the study, choices of participants, data generation methods and analytical framing for the stories.

In Chapter Four, presents the stories of the four TVET college lecturers. These narratives provide a rich and complex glimpse of each participant's journey into becoming a TVET lecturer. To conclude the chapter, I composed Pantum poems for

each TVET lecturer to answer the first critical research question ‘Who are the lecturers teaching in TVET colleges?’

Chapter Five presents the second level of analysis by answering the second critical research question about the personal and professional experiences that shape lecturers’ choice to teach in TVET colleges. To answer this question, I used thematic analysis derived from the concepts in Rodgers and Scott’s (2008) theory of Social Identity.

In Chapter Six, the last level of analysis is presented, using collage portraiture and Bell and Gilbert’s (1994) theory as an analytical framing. In this chapter I respond to the last critical research question.

To conclude this thesis, in Chapter Seven I present my learnings and provide recommendations for further research about TVET college lecturers.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### ***Review of Literature***

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In Chapter One, which summarized the main components of the study, particular emphasis was given on the personal, contextual and professional rationale that motivated the need to understand the personal and professional experiences of those who teach in TVET colleges. In this chapter I provide a critical review of literature relevant to lecturers in TVET colleges.

The purpose of this literature review chapter is to offer scholarly discussions of who TVET lecturers are, their role in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, and the historical context of TVET colleges in South Africa. Guided by the need to understand what and how lecturers have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to teach in TVET colleges, I found it efficient to review the literature in three sections, namely: *Section A* - TVET education and its discourses; *Section B* - lecturers' professional development and their experience of teaching in TVET colleges; and *Section C* - the theoretical and conceptual framework (Social Identity Theory and the Model of Professional Development).

#### **2.2 SECTION A: TVET education and its discourses**

##### **2.2.1 Background**

According to Anderson (2009) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) education emerged firstly during the industrial revolution period in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in North America and Europe. During that time countries saw a rise of productivism which called for the need of skills artisans to work in the machinery that was invented. TVET was therefore seen as the sector that would be instrumental to the provision of skilled labour force for the rising industrial activities. As a result of the importance of TVET education, a number of TVET colleges were established which were meant to train students to acquire skills for industrial purposes. TVET colleges were established to provide skills and labour force with technical competencies

through providing vocational programmes that would sustain the economic growth of countries (Akoojee, 2008; Gewer, 2016). This idea was based on the fact that young people had to be equipped with other advanced skills besides literacy for them to survive in competitive world economies (World Bank, 2006). In a number of countries, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Scotland, TVET education has been given more focus from 1990's (Chappell, 2003). Akoojee (2008) states that even Southern African countries including South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Mozambique and Mauritius have geared up towards revitalisation of TVET education. Rasul, Ashari, Azman, and Abdul Rauf (2015) posit that most countries in the world have seen the need to strengthen the TVET sector because of the important role it plays in providing workforce enriched with skills and competencies that is needed for diverse expanding economies as well as creating job opportunities for the young able-bodied citizens.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges act as a bridge between the school education system and the working world (Buthelezi, 2018). It aims to offer young people training into various professions of different kinds of special knowledge, skills and techniques (Crossley-Craven, 2015). It is meant to prepare students for a career and thus boosts the economy (Downing, 2017; Finch & Crunkilton, 1999). Papier (2010) further explains that in most countries the value of TVET is instrumental for poverty alleviation, creating employment chances for the young people which subsequently lead to the country's economic upliftment. The misconception about the TVET sector is that it is more concerned about job entry as opposed to educating people, whereas the correct notion is that it is concerned about future training (Oketch, 2009). Meaning that it offers students both theoretical and practical skills and knowledge for future careers. UNESCO (2013) notes that TVET education offers trainees with specific skills and competencies that remain useful when trainees enter industry. The trainees acquire experience in the work environment which opens for future inventions in the world economy. Furthermore, TVET education is crucial in communities and their development. According to DHET (2013), TVET colleges are one of the country's pivotal institutions which are rooted in and serving the country's communities.

Prior to further explanation of TVET education, key concepts or TVET education terminology has to be clarified. Firstly, most literature refer to *vocational teachers*

instead of *TVET lecturers* but in South Africa the “identity of teachers to being lecturers was made” (Akoojee, 2008, p. 301). Wheelahan and Curtin (2010) however, observe that in most countries in Europe these two (teacher and lecturer) are used interchangeably. Secondly, the use of the terms *TVET education* and *Vocational Education (VE)* appear to be used synonymously in literature (Beukes, 2018; van der Bijl & Taylor, 2016). UNESCO (2013) clarifies that the term Vocational Education is commonly used by Anglophone countries and further maintain that TVET and VE share one thing in common which is the training aspect. This implies that for both TVET and VE the main concern is preparation of students for adult life through equipping them with competences in vocational skills (UNESCO, 2013).

### **2.2.2 TVET colleges in South Africa**

According to Wedekind (2010) TVET education was first introduced in South Africa by the British colonialists and it was linked to mission schools. TVET colleges however “emerged after the 1922 Apprenticeship Act and were designed to provide theoretical training for apprentices attached to work places” (Wedekind, 2010, p. 303). It is imperative to note that the colonial and apartheid system which governed South Africa that time only allowed the whites to train in TVET colleges (Akoojee, 2009; Wedekind, 2010). It was only after the growth in the South African economy that Africans, Indians and Coloured South Africans were allowed to enrol at TVET colleges but not as apprentices, only to be equipped for skilled (artisan) labour. It was only in the 1980’s where Africans were permitted to be apprentices (Badroodien, 2004).

Essentially, South Africa’s TVET colleges were established to train young people and give them vocational skills that would drive the economy of the country (Buthelezi, 2018). Beukes (2018) notes that the TVET sector in South Africa is faced with numerous challenges. Paryono (2015) found that as much as the South East Asian countries have positioned TVET learning as a crucial input to the countries’ economic development, the professional quality of TVET lecturers is however still very low. Oketch (2009) shares a similar story for Africa as well, citing lack of proper training for TVET lecturers as the main challenge for most African countries. TVET colleges have two major curriculum streams, one which runs parallel with schools and cater for

learners who have passed grade 10 to 12 and another for further education and is for learners who have passed grade 12 (Papier, 2010).

TVET colleges just like any other sector in South Africa had experienced a major shift from the exposure of more than 40 years of authoritarian apartheid system. The apartheid governance brought about inequalities and imbalances in TVET colleges (Buthelezi, 2018). According to Wedekind (2010), ever since South Africa ushered into independence in 1994, the TVET sector has been greatly reformed. From 2000, TVET colleges in South Africa went through major transformations which were aimed at improving the sector (Sayed, 2003). In fact, these transformations “have spanned all aspects of the system, from the design and the funding arrangements of the system through to the detail of the curriculum; and from the structural organisation of institutions to the qualifications offered in them” (Wedekind, 2010, p. 302). The reforms saw a makeover of the Colleges where by 152 Colleges that operated separately during apartheid being merged into 50 multi-site Colleges. This brought different TVET lecturers of different backgrounds to work together in the merged Colleges (Buthelezi, 2018; Papier, 2010; Akoojee, 2008). Furthermore, the revitalisation of the TVET colleges in South Africa saw the introduction of a new “school like” curriculum in 2007, the National Curriculum Vocational (NCV) which was a response to the shortage of artisans in the country (Erasmus, 2009).

### **2.2.3 TVET lecturers’ professional knowledge**

The transformation of the Colleges was later faced with one problem it did not anticipate, which was the gap that non-professionalism of lecturers would create. This gap is linked to the limitation in subject knowledge, pedagogy and industrial experience. Lecturers are expected to have specific TVET teaching knowledge, they can be categorized into: competencies (knowledge and skills), technical (content or subject) knowledge and skills, pedagogical (teaching or ability to teach the subject) skills and relevant industrial (workplace) experience (Akoojee, 2008; Duncan, 2017).

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) 2018 report indicates that a majority of the lecturers at TVET colleges have TVET related qualifications although not all of them are teachers that are professionally qualified. The older lecturers

constitute those who have previous industrial experience as artisans thus they bring with them a vast industrial and workplace experience. On the other hand, the new lecturers lack the workplace experience as they come straight from the world of education; they just have their degree or diploma qualifications.

According to Duncan (2017) TVET lecturers are the most important elements in determining the quality of TVET colleges graduates produced. It is argued that high quality and highly experienced TVET lecturers produce students that are highly skilled. In South Africa where this study is based, the TVET lecturers are weak in the areas of technological skills, pedagogical skills as well as industry experience (Duncan, 2017). In his study Duncan concluded that the only thing that can help is to address the professionalism of lecturers for better practice.

Wedekind and Watson (2016) lament that only a few TVET lecturers have a combination of pedagogical knowledge with technical industrial experience. This requirement is an international standard which expects the lecturers to have industry knowledge as well as classroom pedagogical knowledge. This suggests that TVET lecturers are tasked with a responsibility which is far above a teacher in a school system. It is on the basis of such great task placed upon them that this study seeks to understand the lived experiences of the TVET lecturers. TVET lecturers are tasked to know the professional content interactions and teaching activities for them to be able to teach their students satisfactorily. They are required to produce motivated, competent, adaptable and self-reliant graduates from TVET institutions (Buthelezi, 2018). This purpose implies that TVET lecturers who are tasked with preparing the young people for work need to have the right knowledge and experience in order to do so (van der Bijl & Taylor, 2016). It has been argued that the proper delivery of high quality TVET is dependent upon the competency of lecturers and the lecturers' competences is measured in terms of their theoretical content knowledge as well as their pedagogical and technical knowledge (Union, 2007).

#### **2.2.4 Who are the TVET lecturers occupying TVET responsibilities?**

According to Buthelezi (2018) the TVET lecturers in South Africa are varied in many ways; social background, historically and in the educational qualification and experience they possess. The common characteristic among the lecturers is that there can be divided into two; older and new lecturers. When the NCV curriculum was introduced, a majority of old and new lecturers felt they were inadequately qualified to teach the new curriculum (Ngubane-Mokiwa, 2013). This is because lecturers were expected to marry practice and theory into their practice, making them to shift from the known to the unknown (Buthelezi, 2018). According to Wheelahan and Curtin (2010), the TVET lecturers were expected to be practical as they taught in their Colleges so that students would be able to benefit the experience of real work environment. The new lecturers lacked this practical aspect and the old lecturers were better equipped with field experience, they only lacked in the knowledge of teaching the subject (Akoojee, 2008). It is argued that teaching in TVET colleges is becoming increasingly diverse for lecturers as workplace experience is on its own no longer sufficient since TVET teaching now requires both practical knowledge and content knowledge (Ananiadou, 2013).

According to Papier (2010) the introduction of the NCV in 2007 affected lecturers causing a major shift on how they treated vocational education. One of the changes was the addition of new core subjects, Mathematics, Life Orientation and language (MELO) which demanded a more cognitively disciplinary skill than the previous curriculum (Breier & Erasmus, 2009). Adding these subjects raised a very critical issue because lecturers who were supposed to teach these new core subjects were likely to possess a general school teacher identity rather than a TVET lecturers' identity (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). Lecturers are battling to deliver the NCV curriculum because older ones are not familiar with it and the new ones lack industrial experience (Buthelezi, 2018). The battle has seen many TVET lecturers resigning from their jobs and those left, struggling in their practice (Blom, 2016; Papier, 2010). Lecturers are also made to deal with a high work load, a high number of students in their classrooms, and limited teaching resources making it difficult for them to teach efficiently (Buthelezi, 2018; Wedekind and Watson, 2016).

### **2.2.5 Dilemmas of lecturers in TVET colleges**

According to Wedekind (2016) TVET lecturer's ill-preparedness has caused them to be marginalised as those who are not active in the process of their own professional development. Instead they are 'told' what to do by researchers who seem to be more knowledgeable of their practice than themselves (Johnson & Golombek, 2002). van der Bijl and Taylor (2016) point out that some TVET lecturers in South African Colleges are engaged in communities of practice to address their lack in professional development. Colleges are encouraged to organise effective placements to improve lecturers' practical knowledge and skills (Buthelezi, 2018).

While waiting for a formal TVET teaching qualification to be implemented, lecturers can engage in various forms of learning; formal, informal and non-formal. According to Marsick and Watkins (2001, p. 25) "formal learning is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based and highly structured, it leads to a formal recognition (diploma, certificate). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004). Informal refers to learning that is "spontaneous; for example, within the family circle, the neighbourhood, and so on" (Eshach, 2007, p. 173). This type of learning involves impulsive random learning where an individual usually learns from observing the behaviour or practice of others and it is controlled by the learner (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Typically, it does not lead to certification (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004). Non-formal learning "occurs in a planned but highly adaptable manner in institutions, organizations, and situations beyond the spheres of formal or informal education" (Eshach, 2007, p. 175). It is the type of learning that basically happens on the job. Non-formal learning is intentional and intrinsic from the learner's point of view (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004).

A key discourse is that TVET lecturers' role requires them to have a dual identity which is to be liberal and be aware of economic enterprise, placing them in a state of tension between 'industry and educator expert' (Papier, 2010, p. 106). Papier further argues that lecturers "in South Africa find themselves subject to contradictory, complex and confusing demands as they struggle to construct an identity aligned to images

espoused in policy” (Papier, 2010, p. 106). These roles must be constantly negotiated between different contexts-education and workplace (van der Bijl & Taylor, 2016).

Oketch (2009) states that the issue of TVET in Africa has been addressed by many sectors in various contexts. He points out that in many African countries there has been a dilemma about whether they should concentrate on general education or vocational education. Oketch (2009) further asserts that TVET in general is favoured in Africa and internationally as a remedy to youth unemployment, which in turn reduces poverty and offers chances of skills training to the learners who fail to fit in the standards of general education systems (Oketch, 2009).

Although there exists the official South Africa’s policy link between economic growth and TVET education, I assert that it is through the stories of the TVET lecturers that the knowledge and understanding of such a link can be clearly understood, which underpins the rationale for this study.

## **2.3 SECTION B: Lecturers’ professional development and their experience**

In this section, the professional development of TVET lecturers and their experience of teaching in TVET colleges is discussed.

### **2.3.1 Lecturers’ professional development**

According to Grollmann (2009), professional development of lecturers is a crucial factor in determining success in their practice. This implies that the professional skills as well as the competencies of TVET lecturers is critical in their task of teaching in TVET colleges. Paryono (2015) argues that the low professional quality lecturer’s is attributed to their recruitment. For South Africa, lecturers who work in TVET colleges are usually fresh from training and lack the industrial and teaching experience (Buthelezi, 2018).

Essentially, professional development resonates with professional knowledge. According to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) professional knowledge is specialised

kind of knowledge that is required for a person to perform a specific job or vocation. Measuring TVET lecturers' professional knowledge is just like in any other profession and requires specific types of interventions which can only be obtained from specialised training. They need knowledge of relevant concepts, theories and practical applications of this specialised for working in knowledge in industry (Chua & Jamil, 2012). Therefore, if lecturers lack TVET professional knowledge, teaching in a college will pose challenges.

Currently in South Africa, there are no universities which have specialised faculties that offer TVET based qualification(s). The only pedagogical training available in some universities is the National Professional Diploma in Education and a pilot programme for TVET colleges (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). This poses a question about the pedagogical approaches lecturers adopt in the absence of formal education. As Wedekind and Buthelezi (2016, p. 123), found that "most vocational education lecturers are artisans and trainers recruited from industry and only have technical qualifications. They are expected to teach without a formal teaching qualification, meaning that a majority of TVET lectures have not been trained professionally to be able teach VE effectively (Wedekind & Watson, 2016).

TVET lecturers change from being craftsmen and became more like teachers using mostly classroom-based teaching approaches than skills training (Buthelezi, 2018). Therefore, lecturers need to have more content knowledge and pedagogy to be able to operate at the expected level. (Shulman, 1986, p. 9) defines content knowledge "as the amount and organisation of knowledge in the mind of a teacher, and pedagogy as that which goes beyond knowledge of subject matter to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching". TVET college lecturers' experiences are to be discussed based on these two knowledge aspects. Shulman (1986) continues to elaborate that pedagogical content knowledge includes ways a teacher makes his/her teaching of certain topics difficult or easy for students.

Malloch and Helmy (2015) argue that TVET colleges lecturers' professional development lies in them focusing more on methods of teaching specific content because they are seen as the primary drivers in the teaching and learning process. Their learning and development will ensure attainment of policy goals and curriculum

objectives (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). It is thus the lecturers' and policymakers' joint responsibility to ensure that adequate knowledge and skills underpins lecturers' methods of teaching (Buthelezi, 2018). How and where knowledge of teaching is acquired for lecturers teaching in TVET colleges is central and key to them having a balance between pedagogical, content and industry-based knowledge and skill (Malloch & Helmy, 2015).

### **2.3.2 Experiences of teaching in TVET colleges**

Generally, vocational education lecturers in some of the developed countries are better established as professionals compared with those in developing countries such as South Africa (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). At the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) conference in 2012, it was noted that:

“Existing [education] systems generally tend to provide the same pre-service training preparation for TVET teachers as received by their counterparts across the wider field of teaching. Moreover, many TVET teachers enter the classroom without the benefit of an industrial background and having often lacked the opportunity to experience the world of work” (UNESCO, 2012, p. 5).

In a study of 300 TVET lecturers in Bangladesh, Chua and Jamil (2012) found that the TVET system in that country was affected by low quality of lecturers that work in the TVET colleges. The study discovered that the low quality of the lecturers was a result of a limitation in professional development. TVET lecturers' muted voice in policy, current conditions of service and casualization of work have an impact on their motivation to learn and add on to existing skills (Blom, 2016). This lack of motivation is further aggravated by perceived low status and the lack of professional identity (Papier, 2011). In South Africa, the TVET lecturers' identities shifted with College mergers as they were unclear of their role and expectations within the new TVET setting (Wedekind, 2016). Thus, it is inevitable that an unclear role can lead to lack of motivation for TVET lecturers (Naiker & Makgato, 2017).

In their study of four provinces in South Africa, Wedekind and Watson (2016) found that there is a difference between qualifications and experiences of lecturers teaching

in TVET colleges. The findings state that a lecturer might have discipline and workplace experience but lack pedagogical knowledge or others have the pedagogical content but lacks workplace experience (DHET, 2013). It is imperative to note that the policy on TVET lecturers' qualifications clearly states that a lecturer should have a specialised vocational teaching qualification as well as industry experience (DHET, 2013).

According to 2010 statistics the majority of TVET lecturers possess a general school related qualification instead of having the necessary qualification that is stipulated by policy (Buthelezi, 2018). Most of the TVET lecturers have a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) and this is because there has not been a specialised qualification for TVET lecturers in South Africa (Wedekind and Watson, 2016). In response to this qualification challenge, a National Professional Diploma in Education for Vocational Teachers (NPDE: VT) initiative programme was offered by some universities to cater for lecturers who had occupational qualifications alone without a qualification in education (Papier, 2011). This initiative failed to attract all TVET lecturers who had the limitation in qualification, thus the professional challenges in TVET colleges still exists (Buthelezi, 2018).

Internationally there is a dilemma and debates about lecturers' experiences and required training for TVET teaching. Some scholars recommend that the training for TVET lecturers should be offered at a university level and combined with in-service learning and lifelong programmes (Akoojee, 2008; Wedekind, 2010). This view suggests that TVET teacher preparation and training should take longer because the TVET student lecturers should be exposed to practical workplace experience. Another view is that pedagogical training requirements should be lowered for TVET who are recruited from the work place or industry (Blom, 2016). Grollmann (2009) sees these contestations as the major cause of the challenges faced by TVET lecturers in their practice. Papier (2011) says further research is required to unpack the pedagogical needs of TVET lecturers.

### **2.3.2 TVET lecturers- roles and responsibilities**

If TVET colleges in South Africa are to compete internationally they need to ensure that lecturers are highly skilled as their professional counterparts (Buthelezi, 2018). These counterparts being primary and high school teachers who already have a predetermined pedagogy. The knowledge of who they are professionally puts school teachers at an advantage of knowing what and how to teach. The perceived role and identity of lecturers teaching in TVET colleges needs to be solidified by a clearly defined pedagogy (Papier, 2017). Grollmann and Rauner (2007) argue that the lecturers' self-identities are very crucial as this supports their development. TVET lecturers in general are not granted high status roles whereas improving their professional status can influence their practice positively (Grollmann & Rauner, 2007). Blom (2016) maintains that the South African TVET lecturers are affected by low status as well as lack of professional identity.

Grollmann and Rauner (2007) found that while lecturers support skills development in the workforce, there is no high status for this role, making their experience and morale of teaching deteriorate instead of developing. Unlike in countries such as Finland where there is a definite distinction between college lecturers and school teachers, South Africa still needs to have this clearly defined to instil a professional vocational environment. Wedekind and Buthelezi (2016), found that there seems to be a great demand on lecturers' performance in the classroom by policy, yet that is not equally met by the type and length of training and development given to meet these demands. Kraak and Paterson (2016, p. 39) observed that "policy reforms often disregard the people who have to implement policy ambitions".

This study therefore hopes to provide an insightful understanding of who these lecturers in relation to their contextual realities.

## **2.4 SECTION C: Theoretical Framework**

This study is framed by a theoretical and conceptual framework. The social identity theory perspective and the model of professional development helps to explain how

TVET lecturers mediate their past and present educational experiences within the new technical and vocational environment.

### **2.4.1 The Social Identity Theory**

Rodgers and Scott (2008, p. 733) explain that the social identity theory has four basic assumptions:

- (1) that identity is dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political and historical forces to bear upon that formation,
- (2) that identity is formed in relationship with others and involves emotions, (3) that identity is shifting, unstable and multiple, (4) that identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time.

Firstly, Rodgers and Scott's theory (2008) explains that the context individuals find themselves in inevitably shape who they perceive themselves to be. The study seeks to understand what and how the identities of lecturers who teach in TVET colleges are influenced by the social, cultural, political and historical forces. Rodgers and Scott, (2008, p. 735) also assert that "through multiple contexts one forms multiple relationships and brings forth multiple aspects of self-shaped by the conditions of their work". Therefore, secondly, the TVET lecturers' interaction in various contexts becomes important in explaining identities as relational, shifting and multi-dimensional and how their emotions shape, and are shaped by these contexts. Thirdly, the study also explores how the contextual influence of TVET lecturers' shape the multiple relationships they form and negotiate, as this opens rather than fix identities. Lastly, because identity is an "ongoing process" it will be through the TVET lecturers' stories of their lived educational experience that an understanding of who, and how their identities are constituted in and through the multiple and complex relationships in the context of vocational pedagogy within the TVET system, is sought.

Rodgers and Scott (2008, p. 733) defines identity "as the academic metaphor for self-in-context". Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) point out that identity is dynamic as it shifts over time as a result of influences of a variety of factors as well as forces. This

study suggests that the fluid identities of those who choose to teach in TVET colleges is continually changing, and their beliefs and perspectives are open to change.

The identity of teachers (TVET lecturers) offers a site for their negotiating of practice. Furthermore, their identities as lecturers opens up opportunities for them to create a teaching environment that works for them and the society at large (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This means that lecturers can choose to be creative and have a voice in their practice. Cohen (2008, p. 79) observes that identity is key to the “values, beliefs and practices” that guide and directs lecturers’ practice and commitment towards to work.

Lasky (2005) and Walkington (2005) maintain that an individual (TVET lecturer) who can identify themselves in relation to a context (i.e. students and college community) can perform their duty very well. It is undeniable that ‘who one is’- the personal is core to their practice and it is personal or individual experience. The personal as well as professional experiences individuals go through inform the meaning that shape an individual’s identity (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Day, Kington, Stobart, and Sammons (2006) point out that it is impossible to separate one’s experiences from his/her identity. This means that the knowledge, training, workplace practices, change of VE curriculum influence TVET lecturers’ identity. Thus, Rodgers and Scott (2008) Social Identity Theory will help explain who TVET lecturers are and how their personal and professional experiences shape their identity. and how they negotiate who they are as individuals teaching in TVET colleges.

#### **2.4.2 Model of professional development**

Bell and Gilbert (1994) model of professional development was used to theorise TVET lecturers’ everyday practice. The model identifies three aspects for the process of teacher development; personal, social and professional development. Firstly,

Personal development means that an individual identifies aspects of teaching as problematic, deals with restraints and gains a sense of being empowered. Secondly, social development entails an individual seeing isolation as a problem. To avoid isolation, individual’s initiates collaborative ways of working

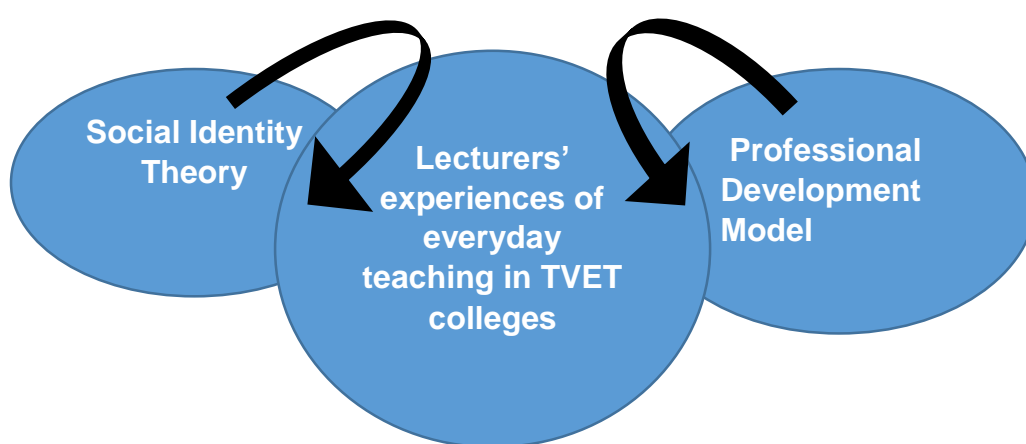
with others. Lastly professional development is when individuals try out, develop and initiate new ideas to enrich their practice (Bell, & Gilbert, 1994, p. 483).

According to Hofstein, Carmeli, and Shore (2004) personal development means the personal changes and struggles one goes through which influences their practice. Social development involves re-negotiating and rethinking what it means to be a TVET lecturer. Professional development includes seeing how as a TVET lecturer, one can improve in the knowledge of one's practice.

The Model of Professional Development is also used to underpin this study because it generally assumes that the quality of education in any teaching and learning institution is directly linked to the professional development of educators [TVET lecturers] (Thair & Treagust, 2003). Professional development is affected by a range of personal, conceptual as well as social dimensions' individuals go through (Bell & Gilbert, 1994). This model therefore, provided a lens through which the understanding how TVET lecturers enact their practice in light of their lived experiences can be understood. According to Duncan (2017), TVET lecturers need to possess personal as well as social competencies in order to teach in TVET colleges.

Bell and Gilbert (1994) maintain that the teaching task which teacher [TVET lecturers] practice in the Colleges is basically a social activity, which implies that teacher development is mainly dependant on social interactions. For that reason, I used the collage to trace and track the social lives of the four participants for this study based on the idea that their social interactions determine their teacher development competencies (Tytler, Smith, Grover & Brown, 1999). This method will be elaborated in the Research Methodology Chapter. Tracing their lived experiences which is their personal and social lives, I was able to contrast their experiences against the concepts of the professional development model. This also alludes to that in order to track professional development of lecturers it is important to recognise and explore problem(s) individuals experience in practice and how they overcome these problems (Bell & Gilbert, 1994).

In exploring TVET lecturers' pathways of learning to teach VE, the Social identity theory was able to offer a lens of knowing and understanding who these individuals are and what and how their lived experiences shape their choice of teaching in TVET colleges. In understanding what they do in practice, the Professional Development Model offered a lens into the professional lives of lecturers. Since the personal and professional are intertwined and one cannot speak on the one with the other, using both these theories offered in-depth understanding of lecturers' lives. The diagram below (**Figure 2.1**) which I created, shows how these theories are intertwined and holistically explain TVET lecturers' pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges.



**Figure 2.1 Theoretical framing diagram**

## 2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed literature on TVET education, I then deliberated on discourses of TVET education then proceeded to discuss TVET lecturers' professional development. The experiences of teaching in TVET colleges were also discussed before closing the chapter with the theoretical and model that frames it. Rodgers and Scott (2008) teacher identity theory as well as Bell and Gilbert's (1994) model of professional development are the two theories and models respectively that have been used in this study to describe teacher identity- The personal-professional lives that are blended in relation to the dynamic TVET context and how they engage with practice and the significant relationships they have that enhance teacher development. The next chapter outlines the research paradigm, approach and methodology that have been utilised in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### ***Research Design and Methodology***

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Narrative inquiry “is about how people experience the world” and this experiences is related through telling their stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 3). In this study lecturers related about their pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges. The stories (narratives) of four individuals who have various experiences and have chosen to teach in TVET colleges were captured. I used narrative inquiry because it aligns itself to the interpretivist paradigm. The flexibility of the interpretivist paradigm allowed stories of participants to be told and interpreted in a non-linear way.

In the previous chapter the literature and theoretical framing that underpins this study were discussed. In this chapter, the research design, research setting and why narrative inquiry was chosen as a methodology for this study will be discussed. I will explain why I chose the participants and the data generation methods, namely, collage inquiry, artefact inquiry and unstructured interviews, as well as how the data was analysed and interpreted. Further I will outline the process of the ethical consideration for this study.

The social identity and model of professional development theories used to frame the study have been key in the methodology chosen. The elements of these theories provided key concepts which aided in narrating and analysing the participants’ stories will be discussed.

#### **3.2 The Research Process**

##### **3.2.1 Qualitative Research Design**

The qualitative research approach mainly uses words rather than numbers in exploring and understanding meanings individual or groups assign to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). This approach “is an ever-present thought in human affairs and a persistent feature of human life” (Eisner, 2017, p. 34). The qualitative approach is

based on assumption of people's interpretation and it is a descriptive type of research, which cannot be interpreted by any statistical technique (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The descriptive information is collected through personal stories which people narrate and is interpreted by the researcher as they collect the information through seeing, observation and/or hearing from the participants (Creswell, 2014). Thus, in using this approach I was able to use participants' stories and interpret the experiences which led them to choose to teach in TVET colleges.

The nature of narrative inquiry (i.e. story orientated) justifies the use of the qualitative approach because it frequently uses words in its analysis collected through stories (Clandinin, 2006). On the one hand a qualitative approach advocates for understanding meanings and on the other, narrative inquiry assumes that meanings are discovered through stories of lived experiences. The qualitative approach can use the arts as means of making the social world known (Eisner, 2017). Therefore, the qualitative approach and narrative inquiry are aligned and suitable and relevant to evoke lecturers' stories of lived experiences in understanding their pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges. The art-based methods of generating data have the ability to unearth hidden truths and a more reflective response from the participants.

Generating data using the art-based method is used as a thinking tool because participants can deepen their thoughts into forgotten experiences (Turtle, 2007). This means that these tools are an important prompt in generating stories within qualitative research.

My study used TVET lecturers' words as collected through their stories, to know and understand what and how they have acquired the knowledges and skills needed to teach in TVET colleges. Through art-based methods (Collage and Artefact inquiry) I was able to uncover what and how they relate their social lives into their lived educational experiences. These methods will be discussed in detail in subsection 3.4 below.

### **3.2.2 Research Paradigm**

An interpretivist paradigm often seeks for individual's reality of experiences, understandings and perceptions (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The basic assumption of this approach is that reality is what people observe it to be (Hoss & ten Caten, 2013). Using this paradigm enabled me "to build rich understandings of the life-world experiences" of TVET lecturers and their role of teaching (Taylor & Medina, 2011, p. 5). Using this paradigm means that, as a researcher I was able to view the world through the eyes (experience and perception) of participants. Their 'eyes' enabled me to construct and interpret understanding of the phenomenon from the generated data (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Instead of assuming, I used the TVET lecturers' stories [eyes] so I could know and understand their experiences in learning to teach vocational education. The interpretivist paradigm thus enabled me to access and understand the lived realities and meanings of TVET lecturers' role as they see it.

### **3.2.2 Selection of Participants**

Sampling is the selection of a small number of participants within a large population that the researcher considers to be a representative of the entire population (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). In finding participants, I asked contacts from friends and former colleagues who still work in TVET colleges for names of people who would be willing to be part of my study. I used convenience sampling based on the participants who would be available and easy accessible (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012) on site. Despite the large number of public TVET colleges, I choose four TVET lecturers based in KwaZulu-Natal because of my current residential location, the participants' availability and willingness to be part of my study. Creswell (2014) notes that participants should be willing to provide information that would shed specific light to issues being studied. I visited each participant separately to explain to them the purpose of my study and their role so we could agree on the time, venue and dates for the data generating process.

According to (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012) convenience sampling is said to increase the chances of biasness as well as sampling error (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-

Hamidabad, 2012). As a former TVET lecturer, I had to ensure that I use objective probing questions when participants spoke about their collages and artefacts. I had to be cautious not to allow my personal experience to interfere with conversations we had by either agreeing or disagreeing with any information I might have experienced prior as a lecturer.

Lecturers were conveniently chosen as participants as a result of finding their contacts from friends and their willingness to participate in the study. It is only after the data generation process that their TVET teaching experience was found to be within the various college reforms and curriculum changes. Firstly, in 2002 Colleges changed from being Technical colleges to Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges, and secondly in 2013, FET were renamed to TVET colleges. Queen, Aya and Khuse started working in TVET colleges when colleges were still FET Colleges and the new NCV curriculum was already introduced, and Joshua started working as a lecturer in 2001 while they were still Technical colleges. The table below indicates their varying levels of teaching experience

LECTURER	TVET WORKING EXPERIENCE IN YEARS
Queen	8 years
Aya	8 years
Khuse	8 years (in South Africa)
Joshua	17 years

### **3.2.4 The Research Context**

The place where stories are generated is important in narrative inquiry because there is great significance and attention to detail that sets the tone for experience within that environment (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Data was generated during November and December which was the final examination period for colleges. Therefore, meetings with participants was scheduled during their free time from academic duties. Meetings took place on the Edgewood campus at UKZN and in their College Campuses which was convenient for them. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) suggest that data generation sites depend on suitability and feasibility. Therefore, together with my

participants each one chose comfortable and easily accessible place(s) for us to generate the data. All four participants come from two colleges and three different campuses. Queen and Joshua are from the same college and campus, while Khuse and Aya are from the same college but different campuses. I met each one separately because of the difference in working schedules and location. I met Khuse first at his campus in his office, as he felt it was more private and comfortable.

My first meeting with Queen was challenging because I waited for her in wrong restaurant which had the same name as the one we were supposed to meet in. Secondly, because I was unfamiliar with the area, I struggled to find secure parking and that wasted time. Eventually when I found her, she could only spare 20 minutes of her time. To cover up for lost times and avoid delays, we had two more meetings which were an hour and half long for our next. We decided to meet at her campus because it was easier for both of us.

From the onset Joshua and I agreed that it would be best if we meet at his campus for all our appointment. But the challenge was that each time we were supposed to meet he kept on postponing, so eventually we met one Saturday for four hours. He said he preferred that we meet and complete the collage, artefact and unstructured interview due to his busy schedule during the week.

Aya and I were supposed to meet at her house for our first appointment. Due to unforeseen circumstances she changed the venue and we met at my university campus for our first appointment. The challenge in changing the venue was that I did not have enough time to book a quiet and private space. Eventually we sat in the library boardroom for an hour then had to finish off the conversation on the library gardens because the boardroom needed to be locked at 16h00. Despite the changes in venues, all participants felt at ease in their chosen space because we freely and openly spoke about other personal issues. The fact that I met each one on their own, made it easier to negotiate feasible and comfortable spaces for each one.

### **3.3 Narrative as a Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 What is narrative inquiry**

Narrative inquiry is the study of people's lived experiences (Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008) and this experience "is narratively constructed and narratively lived" (Clandinin, 2006, p.39). These experiences are studied through stories (Bell, 2002). Narrative inquiry assumes that stories are fundamental in explaining human experience (Clandinin, 2006). Therefore, through stories of self (told and experienced), lecturers can tell what and how they acquired and use their past and present learnings for teaching in TVET colleges. Lecturers will use their personal stories to tell about their various professional backgrounds. These stories are an expression of their world of teaching as they experience it daily (Huber, Keats Whelan, & Clandinin, 2003) and they elicited unconscious information (Bell, 2002). Because narrative inquiry involves working with people's consciously told stories, one needs to recognise that these rest on deeper experiences of which people are often unaware. Furthermore, narratives allow researchers to present experience holistically in all its complexity and richness" (Bell, 2002, p. 209). Narratives use stories to understand the changes and challenges of life events. It attempts to turn events into stories to pinpoint experience within a time and space. It includes the feelings, goals, perceptions of people a researcher wants to understand, thus leading to obscure and complex knowledge of human experience (Kim, 2015). In essence, rather than predicting one's experience and view of events, narrative inquiry seeks to "understand patterns of individual's life" (Wang & Geale, 2015, p. 195) .

#### **3.3.2 The core elements that constitute narrative inquiry**

Narrative inquiry works within the "three-dimensions of temporality, sociality and spatiality" (Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin, 2013, p. 574). These three-dimensions "help the narrative inquirer to study the complexities of people's lived experiences inside and outside of an inquiry" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 27). In this study, *temporality* meant that I had to draw attention to the "past, present and future" of TVET lecturers' lives and how over time they came to the knowledge and understanding of what it

means to be a TVET lecturer. The *sociality* dimension refers to personal and social conditions— personal conditions are the “feelings, hopes, desires” of the researcher and participants, and the social conditions are the conditions in which individuals’ experiences and events unfold. The second social condition is that, as a researcher, I cannot separate myself from the inquiry relationship because I interacted (socialised) with the participants as they related their stories (Wang & Geale, 2015, p.195) . Lastly, with reference to the *spatiality dimension*, individual identities are linked to their experiences which occur in certain places. I looked for specific locations (e.g. physical location) within the participants’ stories and how these give meaning to their experiences (Wang & Geale, 2015) and who they become as they relate to these spaces in being TVET lecturers. Caine et al. (2013, p. 577) asserts that individual stories told are “situated and understood within larger cultural, social, familial and institutional narratives” It is in these spaces as stated by Caine et al (2013) that lecturers experience came from. As individuals engage within these spaces’ identities are formed and who they are is shaped by these contexts. This is parallel with Rodgers and Scott’s Social identity theory that one’s identity can be formed through multiple contexts.

On the basis that narrative inquiry is about “real-life experience” (Wang & Geale, 2015, p. 195), it is best suited for this study as TVET lecturers’ own story telling process will allow for multiple interpretation because each one has a unique pathway that led them to teach in a TVET college (Kim, 2015). Through TVET lecturers stories the study attempts to illuminate meanings of how personal stories and events shapes their understanding of VE (Kim, 2015).

### **3.3.3 Challenges and limitations in using narrative inquiry**

Narrative inquiry is time-consuming and requires trust from participants because they share intimate personal stories about themselves (Bell, 2014). In negotiating the amount of time needed to complete the collage, all participants agreed to keep the magazines and do the collage during their spare time. This was because data was generated during the students’ exam period. Even though Khuse said compiling the collage and looking for an artefact felt like *homework*, he still agreed to participate.

Aya, Khuse and Joshua kept postponing our appointments several times. This made me feel anxious and I thought they would pull out of the study as they had valid work pressure reasons. To ease my anxiety, I had to keep phoning and texting them to check on the progress of their college work before talking about research related matters. The continuous contact was to build a level of trust by showing empathy and ensuring that they neither withdrew nor withhold any information in our conversations (Bell, 2014).

### **3.4 Data Generation**

The data generation methods described in this section were used to respond to the key research questions, namely, 1) Who are the lecturers teaching in TVET colleges? 2) What personal and professional experiences shape the choice to become TVET lecturers? 3) How does TVET lecturers' understanding of vocational education enable and/or disenable them in their everyday practice?

In this study, stories of TVET lecturer's experiences were prompted and told through narrative and creative methods including collage inquiry, artefact inquiry and unstructured interviews. The reason for choosing creative (art-based) methods is because they have "unmatched potential of promoting deep engagement, lasting impression and therefore possess unlimited potential to educate" (Leavy, 2017, p. 37). As lecturers relate their stories using various methods, together we will learn about the experiences that shape their learning to teach in TVET colleges.

The qualitative researcher often uses words in their analysis and often collect or construct stories about those they are studying (Clandinin, 2006). The individual interpretation of TVET lecturers experience, "interpretation and worldviews" requires multiple forms of data collection (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 89). Working collaboratively with the participants I compiled a collage and told a story about my artefact together with participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The reason for this was to ensure that participants perceive me as their equal instead of an authoritative researcher. It was therefore important that I participated in the data generation methods used, namely collage inquiry, artefacts and unstructured interviews. The

narrative inquiry research design is graphically described in the following table showing how each method was used to respond to the key questions:

Research question	Narrative inquiry method	Context	Participants	Data source
1) Who are the lecturers teaching in TVET colleges?	Memory-work  Open ended questions	KZN TVET colleges	Four TVET college lecturers	Collage  Artefacts  Unstructured interview
2) What personal and professional experiences shape the choice to become TVET lecturers?	Memory-work  Open ended questions	KZN TVET colleges	Four TVET college lecturers	Collage  Artefacts  Unstructured interview
3) How do lecturers negotiate their everyday practice in TVET colleges?	Memory-work  Open ended questions	KZN TVET colleges	Four TVET college lecturers	Collage  Artefacts  Unstructured interview

### 3.4.1 Collage Inquiry

Butler-Kisber and Poldman (2010, p. 1) expound that “the word collage is taken from a French verb *coller* (to stick), which is the process of using images or materials, gluing them on a flat surface to portray phenomena”. They further describe a collage as an introspective triggering tool and a way of theorising. It is able to build “initial ideas, concepts or early thoughts about a phenomenon and elicit unconscious thoughts about the research to make connections among data” (p. 12-13). According to

Gerstenblatt (2013), using collage inquiry enables the researcher to weave together the collage images participants with their words. Russo-Zimet (2016) argues that the use of the collage inquiry makes the researcher and participants to be able to deliberate on sensitive issues that could have been difficult to express.

The prompt question I used in completing the collage was ‘Tell me a story about the day in a life of a TVET lecturer’. After lecturers completed these collages, they explained what “pictures, photos, words from magazines and other print media” meant (Van Schalkwyk, 2013, p. 678). These pictures, photos or words were a representation of TVET lecturers’ developmental lives as they prompted an “autobiographical memory” (McAdams, as cited in Van Schalkwyk, 2010, p. 681). The creative, non-linear approach of collages meant that lecturers could express their feelings using images.

I decided to compile my own collage (**Figure 3.1**) prior our meeting with the participants, so that I could show them what a collage was and explain to them through my story how I wanted them to relate their own stories. For them to complete their collage, I provided them with magazines, glue and scissors because I did not want them to struggle in compiling the collage. I had a variety of magazines and each one chose the type of magazines they thought would be useful in compiling their collage. Joshua added images from a newspaper as he reads it daily, while the other three only used magazines.

Completing a collage is time-consuming and needs engagement, this may not be enjoyed by all participants (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2011). In addressing this issue, I extended the time Khuse needed to complete his collage as he was not keen in compiling the collage and while he was completing it away from me, I kept regular contact with him. Joshua and Aya also took longer because of the exam period and I assured them that they could take as much time as they needed because I understood that the process could be tedious.



**Figure 3.1:** Collage portraiture: My day as a TVET lecturer

### 3.4.2 Artefact Inquiry

Turkle (2007) says that objects can connect individuals to the world and emotions, and “objects have the potential to evoke and carry with them autobiographical narratives” (Pithouse-Morgan & van Laren, 2012, p. 50). Through artefact retrieval lecturers can reflect of about lived past experiences (Clandinin, 2006) because using objects can evoke forgotten memories or events (Turkle, 2007). I asked lecturers to bring an object that is significant to their role of teaching in TVET colleges. In asking them about the object I used the prompt question ‘tell me a story about this object’. As they told me their stories, I asked probing questions with the aim of finding out how the object related to their personal and professional lives.

### 3.4.3 Unstructured Interviews

According to Cohen et al. (2018, p. 506) an interview is “an exchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest”. Likewise, Creswell (2014) describes an interview as a human interaction for the purpose of knowledge production. For this study I chose unstructured interviews which are open, flexible and allow participants to freely narrate their stories (Cohen et al., 2018). Atkinson and Delamont (2010) note that the unstructured interviews are designed to help a researcher to gain a better understanding of the participant's life stories. I decided to conduct the unstructured interviews last because I used them as a clarity seeking tool on issues that were not adequately answered in the collage and artefact inquiry. I met each participant in a private quiet place because unstructured interviews require a high degree of trust between researcher and participants since it probes even deep personal information

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The interview was mainly conducted in English, any IsiZulu words used were directly recorded and translated in compiling their narratives. I used a recorder and my cellphone to record the interviews. I transcribed the data generated during the interviews as detailed as possible to retain the 'voice' and tone of the lecturer participants in verbatim.

In ensuring that lecturers' voices were audible, I asked to place the recording devices closer to them as we spoke. The only challenge was that the last part of Aya's interview was recorded outside, though it was during a quiet time of the day in the university library garden. So, I also had to take down notes as she spoke.

### **Negotiating the researcher-participant role**

When I first met each participant, I was anxious because they all came through referrals and I did not know them personally nor professionally. Queen and Joshua were referred to me by a friend who use to teach at Orkney college. While Joshua and Aya's telephone number was given to me by another M Ed student who teaches at Grand college. I had to be conscious about forming relationships with them by being open about my study and what led me to conduct it. I told them my story about Russia and how I resigned as a TVET lecturer to pursue full-time studies. Having stayed in KZN for two years, I had come to realise that there is a difference in how the Zulu and Pedi (myself) culture communicates, despite being in a professional setting. Despite cultural differences, how we related was mainly influenced by each participant. Queen and Aya were very open and easy to get along with and we kept contact even after the data generation process. When I spoke to Joshua, I had to be more formal and serious, while Khuse was much of a joker and informal person.

Wang and Geale (2015) refer to a narrative inquirer as one who has a dual role. Firstly, one are in an intimate and professional relationship with the participant. Reflecting back on our initial and ongoing conversations, I needed to constantly create a space where we could easily talk about personal matters before or after the data generating process. I also made sure that I reminded participants of our appointments a day before, to ensure that they were still willing to participate. Halcomb and Peters (2016) express that a researcher needs an element of flexibility in order to maintain appropriate relationships with participants. At times appointments were shifted until

participants were ready and could share their stories without personal obstacles. This way assuring them that they were not mere subjects of the study. Also removing the power relations allowing them to comfort of relating their stories as a 'researcher'.

### **3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation of data**

#### **3.5.1 Narrative Analysis**

The process of "data analysis is one where the researcher often writes into the reconstituted story a chronology of events describing the individual's past, present, and future experiences lodged within specific settings or contexts (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 330). Narrative inquiry assembles and collates "events and happenings as its data and uses narrative analytic procedures to produce explanatory stories" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). To gather data about TVET lecturers lived experiences, I used collages, artefact retrieval and unstructured interviews as data generating methods. This process helped in reconstructing each participants story, using direct words to ensure that I wrote it using their voice. When each story was reconstructed, I gave it back to each participant for proofreading and confirmation. Cohen et al. (2011) states that when participants proofread their written verbatim it helps to correct errors and allows participants to add or remove information, this makes the analysis to be enough and authentic.

#### ***Analysis of narratives***

Polkinghorne (1995) makes a distinction between narrative analysis and analysis of narratives. Narrative analysis is an in-depth analysis of each narrative, whereas analysis of narratives analysis themes across all data which takes the form of narratives. To answer the first research question 'who are the lecturers teaching in TVET colleges?', I used the identity concepts of Rodgers and Scott's (2008) social identity theory to compose a Pantoum poem for each participant. The social identity theory has four assumptions that assume that identity is dependent on context, formed in relationships, it is shifting, unstable and multiple and that it involves construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time. The Pantoum poem is useful for expressing "strong emotional responses" (Furman, Langer, & Taylor, 2010, p. 63).

The reason why I used the Pantoum poem is that the use of poems allows for expressing feelings that might have been hidden (Furman, 2006). Prendergast (2009, p. 546) asserts that “like narrative inquiry, poems are interested in drawing on the literary arts and are an attempt of expressing human experiences”. I used the four social identity theory assumptions as guiding tools to highlight words and expressions from the participants’ stories to compile their individual Pantoum poems.

I used the same Rodgers and Scott (2008) Social Identity Theory to answer the second research question ‘what personal and professional experiences shape lecturers’ choice to teach in TVET colleges?’ In analysing this question, I used the concepts to develop themes from the lecturers’ stories about their personal and professional lives. To analyse the last research question ‘how does TVET lecturers’ understanding of VE enable and/or disenable them in their everyday practice?’, I used Bell and Gilbert (1994) professional development model. The model consists of three aspects (personal, social and professional). The personal aspect is about individuals identifying some aspect of their teaching as being problematic, the social aspect is about seeing isolation as a problem and initiating collaborative relations with others. While the professional aspect is when individuals try out and initiate new ideas to enrich their practice (Bell & Gilbert, 1994). These aspects were used as guiding tools in compiling one collage portraiture for all four lecturers. A collage portraiture uses images and words to supports and liven the analysis of an interpretation that might be somewhat “dry and detached” (Gerstenblatt, 2013, p. 305). Using the model aspects, I highlighted personal, social and professional experiences in the lecturers’ stories to compile the collage portraiture. The collage portraiture was used as a visual aid in analysing and answering the third research question.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, discussions on research paradigm for this study was provided, the methodological approach, and the reasons for the use of narrative inquiry to frame this study were elucidated. Furthermore, I elaborated on the research setting for the study, how participants were chosen and the data generation methods and analytical framing. In the next chapter, the narratives of the participants will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### ***Narratives of TVET Lecturers***

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In Chapter three I presented the methodology and research design that was used for this study. In this chapter, the TVET lecturers' reconstructed stories as narratives is presented. These narratives draw on their lived experiences, presenting their past-present, personal and professional lives. Through their narratives, we discover who they are, and how their lived experiences shape who they are and what they do in TVET colleges.

Identity is ever-changing and influenced by various internal (emotions) and external (context) factors (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Thus the complexity of one's identity makes it difficult to fully contain or define an individual using one aspect of their lives. In understanding who TVET lecturers are, various experiences as influenced by family, friends, society, culture, political etc different experiences of knowledge and skills background of TVET college lecturers is evident of the dynamic identities within this educational sector.

Data for TVET lecturers' stories were elicited from using collages, artefact inquiry and unstructured interviews. I recorded the explanations of the collage and artefact as well as the interviews. I then transcribed the recorded explanations and interview conversation. This enabled me to explore critical experiences and incidents that shaped these lecturers' pathways to teach in TVET colleges. To ensure anonymity together of the participants the following pseudonyms were allocated to the participants: Queen, Aya, Khuse and Joshua.

To synthesise each TVET lecturers' narrative, I used an individualised Pantoum poem to answer the first research question 'Who are TVET college lecturers?' The reason for using poetic analysis is because poems are simple and powerful with different effects. They can be informative and have the ability to clarify experiences (Poindexter,

2002). The advantage of using poems is that they use minimal words yet have the power to express emotions and engages one's senses (Furman, 2006).

To formulate each lecturer's Pantoum poem, I looked for phrases, sentences and words that depicted issues that related to their emotions, various shifts in context, influences as well as tensions and contradictions in their careers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). This way I could answer the first research question using a lens that acknowledged that teacher identity is a multifacet role (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

Although each TVET college lecturer has their own Pantoum poem, there are some characteristics that are similar amongst them. Such similarities "communicate universal truths" (p. 562) of who TVET college lecturers are (Furman, 2006).

## 4.2 QUEEN'S STORY

### A curious practical learner

*I completed matric in 1986 and ever since I started working, I have been teaching.  
This is beside the fact that I hated teaching with a passion.*

Queen. 17 November 2017

### Passion for fashion

My name is Queen, 'Q' for curious and this is my story. Growing up, I watched my mother work on her sewing machine. Being a curious teenager, I asked to help her with cutting patterns and sewing hems. The time we spent together made her teach me all aspects of dressmaking.

From the time I started high school, I really struggled academically. To an extent that my parents would say "this one is not so bright, we should take her to *isikole sezandla* (skills school). Therefore, from 1982 to 1983 I was enrolled into a Catholic skills school for dressmaking to complete standard 6 and 7 (grade 8 and 9). As a dressmaking learner at the Catholic skills school, my performance improved and I was the top of my class. This achievement started a special relationship between myself and my

dressmaking teacher Sister Mary<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes during lunch breaks, we would talk about my personal life and she would encourage me by quoting bible verses. At other times she would ask me to help those who slackened behind with their sewing. Sister Mary really loved me and was one of those people who made a difference in my life.

After completing the two years, I went back to a mainstream school to finish standard 8 to 10 (grade 10 to 12). To my parents' disappointment after grade 12 I fell pregnant. This felt like a big mess because instead of studying further, I had to stay at home. Fortunately, my mother and Sister Mary were still in contact and through that relationship from 1987 to 1988 she offered me a teaching job.

While teaching at the Catholic skills school I asked Sister Mary to save part of my salary so I could register for a Fashion design diploma at <sup>3</sup>Bright Technikon (university). I saved enough money to pay for my first year at university in 1989. While studying I realised that I was really good and ahead of my classmates. To an extent that lecturers would ask me to help my classmates. Being a top fashion designer student, I thought I would be one of the best designers in my hometown with an exclusive clothing line. Unfortunately, before year end exams there was a university strike and that was the end of my fashion designer dream because I could not write my year end exams. The unfinished fashion designer diploma had a negative impact on my self-esteem and confidence.

### **My mother, my number one supporter**

Despite my parents' promise to take me back to varsity, they never did. So, in 1990 my mother gave me her dressmaking school to teach and manage. I wanted to develop the school into something extraordinary but did not succeed because I was competing with fashion designers whilst I only had dressmaking experience. The impact of managing the dressmaking business meant that I became the breadwinner instead of my mother. I was expected to take care of everyone at home despite lack of support. So, my dream of turning the school into something extraordinary never happened because it clashed with reality (i.e. no support and taking care of others). All of this caused the school to only last for 2 years.

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<sup>2</sup> Pseudonym of Queen's dressmaking teacher at the Catholic skills school

<sup>3</sup> Pseudonym of the university where Queen studied Fashion design

After an unsuccessful period of managing the dressmaking school, I got married and had children. During that period of marriage, I had financial difficulties. My mother was the one who would feel me when I was down and every now and then would bring bags of food for my family. I mean I would ask her “ma what have I done that I am so poor?” and she would say “Q don’t worry; you will be fine”. When she came it felt like Christmas because we would eat everything.

### **Cushion scatter business**

From 2002 to 2003, my husband and I had a scatter cushion business. We made and sold high quality scatter cushions. Unfortunately, in its third year, operations stopped because suddenly the flea market had competitors who sold similar (inferior quality) cushions at our cost price. Here we are thinking but our ‘fabric is quality’ and people seem not to care and buy from competitors anyway. During this stage it seemed that everything I did in my life was not successful. Everything I touched was for a season, nothing grew nor seem to last.

This made me ask God, what is this? Why am I here? What is my purpose? What is my calling? So, one Tuesday morning whilst at home I thought to myself, I love people and I have worked in community development. I love seeing people progress with their lives, so what can I do with this? I thought perhaps I can enrol at a college and become a social worker. That would be easier as I had a certificate in community development and besides my final matric results were not so great. During that thought process, I hear something saying, ‘Bible College’ and I thought no ways. I responded by saying God if it is you saying this ‘Bible College’ then send somebody to confirm what you just said.

### **Responding to the ‘Bible College’ call**

The same Tuesday while waiting for God to confirm what I had heard in the morning about ‘Bible College’, I went to church for a women’s prayer and fasting service. During the service we were asked to testify, and a lady testified about how God had blessed her with a job. While listening to her I thought but I don’t have anything big to say. The only thing that has happened is my husband getting a job, can I really go and testify about that? Suddenly the programme director said, “there is someone here who has not testified.” I promise you it felt like someone hit me on the thigh to get up and testify, I thought this is crazy. When I finished testifying, the programme director asked to

speak to me at the end of the service. After the service I waited eagerly for her and she said:

*“God said I must tell you that He has called you and your family into ministry”.*

When I got home, I told my husband and children about what had happened at church. My husband said, “don’t change my life, I didn’t marry a minister and I do not want to be humiliated”. I said \*Mandla please let us not interfere with God’s work even if we do not have money, we will do what God has said.

### **Falling in love with teaching**

I sold the one domestic sewing machine we had left to my neighbour for R750. I used the money to register for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theology at Holy Seminary (Bible College) from 2003 – 2007. This was the same Bible College I had attempted to study in when I was in my 20s in 1993. I went there with one pair of shoes, two maternity dresses and a jersey that my sister had given to me because we were poor.

Three months as a student at Holy Seminary, I got a scholarship and soon after that I got a facilitator job at a New Life Centre (NLC). NLC was a Non-Government Organisation which trained people living, affected and those working with people infected with HIV/AIDS. This group of people were a combination of church leaders, caregivers, medical personnel, family etc. I was actually appointed, I was drawn and called out by Laura, the facilitator who said, “you know you good, you seem to know how to relate with people”.

Coming from a community worker background, I knew a lot concerning HIV/AIDS. Laura offered to train me as a facilitator and asked me to facilitate the HIV/AIDS

programme for her. As soon as I said yes to God to study Theology, it was as if I opened a new door. My life just went well, things just started to click and add up. Everything that I did at NLC was exactly what I was learning at Bible College, it was the meeting of content and context. I discovered my passion for teaching while



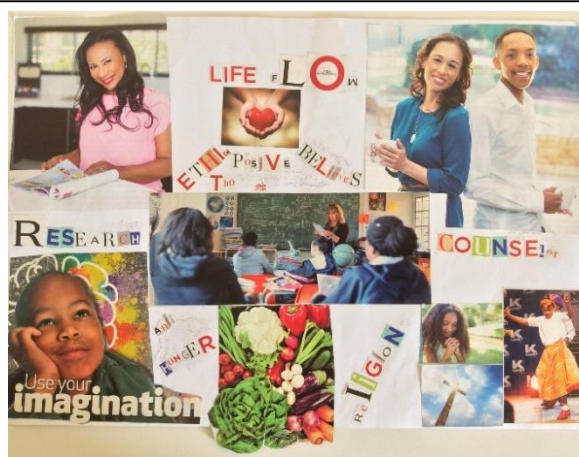
**Figure 4.1: Queen’s T-shirt artefact**

studying Theology and working at NLC. For me that period of facilitation was fun and I suppose that's how I fell in love with teaching.

## Life as a facilitator

The time I spent working as a facilitator was the best years of my life. I had such positive feedback from my students that I believe it was the grace of God for that time. I mean the ability to facilitate a programme with people from vast knowledge and professional backgrounds (i.e. doctors, nurses, rural women) all in one group was beautiful. This is where I learned the importance of creating relationship within learning. To achieve this, I made sure that I knew all my students' names on the second day of each group sessions. To an extent that having good relationships with students has now become a conscious decision.

**Figure 4.2:** Queen collage: ‘A day in a...



**Figure 4.2: Queen collage: ‘A day in a life of a TVET lecturer’**

The leadership style at the NLC was interactive, with meetings at the beginning of each year. The manager would outline the strategies, past failures and resolutions. Our manager guided us into the year ahead, we knew what was expected of us and how it was going to be achieved. In addition, every Friday was our debriefing time, where we spoke about challenges we had during the week. The coordinator would use outcomes from those meetings to organise specialised training for staff.

## 'I google things'

Due to financial mismanagement I left NLC to join Orkney TVET college in 2010. I came here because I needed job security. I needed to know that I would get a salary at the end of each month. I was employed to teach Life Orientation (LO). My strength of the subject is its theoretical component because of the principles of my BA Theology Degree which are about moral regeneration.

I remember when I first got here the HOD gave me a textbook and a big file with policies and said, 'read through this'. I thought to myself, when am I going to get time to read through this file? Nobody showed me how to use the file for teaching.

I later discovered that the file had subject and assessment guidelines that I was meant to use for teaching. Yet, for my first lesson I only used the textbook, googled more information about personal development which was the first topic and then taught. Basically, I just facilitated the book, not the curriculum. It is only now that I am studying Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) that I understand what the curriculum is and how to use the policy documents in the file for my practice.

### **Working at Orkney College**

One thing about being here at Orkney TVET college is that I have always felt swamped with work. Every now and again I ask myself whether the job security that I needed is enough. Is this job not being a detriment to my spirituality? I mean my principles are about the church and Christ. Therefore, there should be clear direction about the work one does: where am I, what work am I doing and to whom is the work being done? Regardless of this feeling I have been able to incorporate counselling from my Theology degree into teaching. My students and I have a spot outside where we casually stand and talk, and it wouldn't show that we are having a counselling session. I think I have been blessed to do this for both students and my colleagues.

### **Teaching myself**

When I started working for the college, we had an opening meeting with the rector similar to the one we had at NLC. The rector spoke about the vision, organisational effectiveness and objectives. When I heard that, I thought wow this is it! I mean if his leadership objectives are clear and achievable then surely all those who lead under him should be the same. Well to my disappointment, when I engaged with campus management, they did not carry the same leadership sentiments as the rector.

There is lack of training and development strategies which is not conducive to one's professional development. To an extent that as LO lecturer I bought myself laptop and taught myself computer skills. I downloaded online tutorials to learn how to use and teach computer programmes. When one is in class, it feels like you are on your own, so you do what you know best. I am saying this because I recently discovered that the

textbooks, we use come with classroom activities and those are loaded on the college's server. Other LO staff members did not tell me about this, I accidentally heard about it while printing out my PGCE work in another lecturer's class. When I asked the LO team leader about it, she said "oh you did not know, I thought you knew! Therefore, there is a need for the college to create good working systems and environment. People around here hoard information and will only share it with their 'cliques'. We need good working and management systems to develop and support staff members.

### **Combating hunger**

In order to help our students' combat hunger and make extra money for themselves, in 2012 myself, Joshua and another colleague started a vegetable garden. The aim was to feed and teach them practical skills of administering a business. Unfortunately, only the first group of students whom we started the garden with understood this concept. The preceding groups were only seen when it was harvest time and came in numbers to collect food parcels. In the end the project failed because students did not understand nor want to work for the garden to succeed. Management and other staff members did not give us much support either. I was very disappointed because in the first year of its existence we were in talks with one of the local supermarkets and they were willing to buy our vegetables if they met their required standards. But like I said laziness was the major reason for this project failing.

### **Understanding my practice**

Apart from teaching myself computers, the college paid for us to go for International Computer Driving License (ICDL) training and an OTDP course for a year. These courses are meant to help me in my teaching practice. From June 2014 until now I am studying PGCE, this is because I was told that to secure a permanent post, I need to have this qualification. It has helped me in understanding my practice particularly the curriculum. I love researching and reading up about new information.

## So, who am I as a TVET college lecturer?

*If I were to wake up every morning and somebody said go and teach, counsel and find out who are those African children. Help them to find themselves and deal with their issues so they can move forward, I would do that any day. You can pay me what you are paying me it is fine, because my satisfaction will come from the fact that I have made a difference in the life of a child.*

Queen. 17 November 2017

My experiences as a community worker, facilitator and theology student has contributed the teaching skills I need as a TVET college lecturer. Though I hated teaching and wanted to be a fashion designer I have been curious enough to build caring relationships with my students. The Pantoum poem titled '**Q for curious**' answers the question 'who are TVET college lecturers?'

### **Q for curious**

Q for curious

My purpose

Fashion designer?

Bible College?

My purpose

Conscious

Bible College?

Seeing people progress

Conscious

Fashion designer?

Seeing people progress

Q for curious

### 4.3 AYA'S STORY

#### An opportunist

*I do not think I had the passion and the love of becoming a teacher*

Aya 11 January 2018

#### **My grandmother, my world**

I grew up in Hammarsdale and lived with my grandmother, cousins, aunts and uncles. The reason for living with my grandmother was because both my parents found teaching jobs far from Hammarsdale, in Ixopo. When I was in grade 3, my parents asked that I move in with them in Ixopo but that only lasted for two years. This was because they found no suitable caregiver to look after me, so in grade 5 I moved back to Hammarsdale to be raised by my grandmother.

Back in Hammarsdale, my life at school was not easy because I was an obese and asthmatic child. I was teased and bullied most of the time and I don't think children back then understood that bullying was a very sensitive issue. Being bullied made me not voice out issues especially when I was being falsely accused. I was such an introvert that I did not play any sports because of my weight nor make any friends. My love for music made me sing in the school and church choir as well as at home.

Though I grew up with my cousins but because I was the youngest amongst them, I could not play with them. Instead of playing sports at school and street games with my cousins and their friends, I spend more time indoors with my grandmother who was my world. I must say the time we spent together developed our special relationship.

#### **Music, my first love**

My grandmother was my closest friend; every Sunday we would watch Imizwilili (a choral music show) together. We would mimic and sing along as various choral music groups performed. I suppose, this is where my love for music began. I think Hospitality was my second choice when I applied at university. Even though I always loved music, my parents never understood what choral, opera, stage or theatre was. When applying at university, my father said I should study a 'proper' career or stay at home. As a result, I had to side line music to study a diploma in Food and Beverage (F&B). I opted

for the F&B diploma because I developed an interest to work in a cruise ship and travel the world.

Whenever I get a chance of pursuing music, I still do. I am part of the college choir and also help with administrative issues. We usually practice 3 or 4 times a week in the afternoons. When it is competition time, we practice throughout the night from Monday until the competition is over. One of the highlights of my teaching career has been the ability to continue singing even though I never studied music professionally. The ability to teach and sing is as if God has given me the ability to do all of this. This has kept me going and singing has helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses as a human being, both personally and professionally.

### **Stumbled into teaching**

I never had a passion for teaching but somehow, I stumbled into it. In 2008, when I was a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Food and Beverage Diploma student, I met <sup>4</sup>Tumelo Tau at a university in Durban. Tumelo and I were classmates and I noticed that he usually came to class once in three or four months. Being the person that I am, I approached him and asked why he was not attending regularly? He told me that he was permanently employed as a teacher in a high school in Escourt. With that being said, we decided to exchange cellphone numbers so that I could give him information regarding any homework, tests and assignments. Our regular contact after we both finished university made Tumelo tell me about a college lecturing job.

### **Forced into Grand College**

Tuesday, 17 April 2010 I graduated for my Food and Beverage Diploma. The next day (Wednesday 18 April 2010) I got a call from Tumelo asking me whether I was working yet. When I said no, he told me that <sup>5</sup>Grand College was looking for a Hospitality Studies lecturer. He convinced me to apply and hand deliver my CV on the very same day because the closing date was that afternoon.

Thursday morning, 19 April 2010 Grand College phoned and told me that I needed to come to the college. The lady who phoned me did not specify whether I was going to be interviewed or what? On my arrival I was interviewed and at the end of the interview

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<sup>4</sup> Pseudonym for Aya's friend

<sup>5</sup> Pseudonym for Aya and Khuse's college

I was told that I could start work the next day (Friday 20 April 2010). I don't think I had the passion and the love of becoming a teacher. I became a lecturer because I merely shared information with Tumelo and our relationship led to him telling me about Grand College's lecturing post. When I think back of how I was introduced to teaching, I actually feel that Tumelo 'forced' and pulled my hand to do what I am doing today.

### **My parents, my coaches**

When I started, I had no idea what the CATHSETA programme was about. The programme manager at that time gave me files and said, "I trust that you fully understand what Hospitality is about" Unfortunately, she gave me Tourism files instead because she taught both Hospitality and Tourism. It was a mere fact of 'swimming' and seeing myself out. Fortunately, both my parents are teachers and they helped me with lesson plans and any administrative work that I was supposed to do. So, I got the coaching that I needed from home and that helped me learn how to 'swim'.

Even though I never saw myself as a teacher, my parents have done their share in motivating me to be at a level I am in today. In our culture I think parents are happy when they are able to pay for your first degree or diploma. What you do after that is highly up to you. Whether you continue with your studies or not, remains your choice because they would have covered the basics of giving you your first degree. When it comes to them motivating me in my career, they have done their fair share. When they see me pay my own bills they are happy too. Now that I am an experienced teacher, I do not consult a lot with them unless I have a problem that needs clarity and guidance.

### **Planting a seed**

Every day when I am with my students, I feel like a farmer who plants a seed (knowledge and skills) into their lives because I always share with them my life story. In my experience, there is no information that is unnecessary or a waste of time. Whatever I give them daily they can either implement it today, tomorrow or in the future. I see myself as the main branch and all my students are the branches that need to attach themselves to me. For a tree to survive it needs proper nutrition, like water and sunlight.

When I started as a TVET lecturer I was only 19 or 20 years old because I finished school when I was 16 years. Understanding that my age did not stop me to excel as a lecturer even though some people might look at me as being young.

I have been able to teach and reach out to a large crowd that listen to what I have to say.

Just like a key either opens or closes doors, I am key that opens or closes the door of



knowledge for my students. So far I think I have influenced a number of students to succeed. Last year three of them graduated from a university of technology. I usually share my journey of success with them and offer guidelines on how they can reach their own goals. Therefore, I need to make sure that I plan my lessons very well. I make sure that if I am stuck I liaise with other lecturers. If there is

a section that I don't understand I use the team-teaching platform, which allows other lecturers who are more knowledgeable in a section to teach on my behalf. I sometimes code switch (explaining in IsiZulu) to ensure that students understand content.

### **Choosing to study**

In 2013-2014 I completed my BTech in Food and Beverage Management after that I personally registered for PGCE. This was because I had nothing tangible for education nor did I have a clue of whether I was doing things correctly. Three months into the course, the college announced that government would pay for lecturers who were studying PGCE.

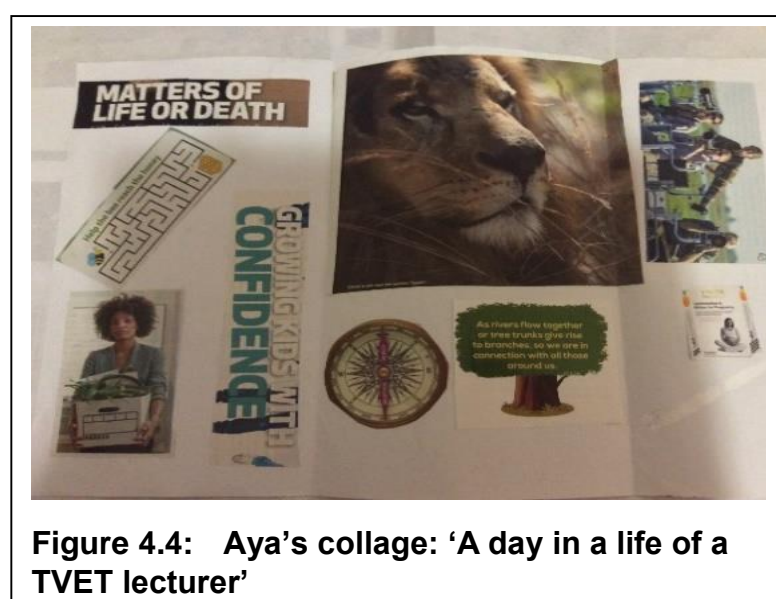
The decision to further my studies was to join a pool of knowledge. I needed to associate myself with other teachers and lecturers who could help me when I felt stuck. I identified a knowledge gap between my practice and written policy, PGCE and now B Ed Honours are slowly helping me breach the knowledge gap. I will not say that I have managed to strike a 100% balance between policy and practice, but so far, I think these courses (PGCE and B Ed Honours) are helping in doing so. Whatever problems or challenges I face I can share and discuss with my classmates (teachers and lecturers).

At work, there are lecturers who are studying elsewhere, but I feel that they just create unnecessary competition. Competing about who graduates first, what they know and what they have. They don't want to share the knowledge they have acquired from

studying further. Do not ask me why they behave this way because I do not know. My campus does not have time scheduled for us as lecturers to discuss and support each other regarding lecturing matters. People don't want to admit weaknesses or challenges that they have. They only want to paint the picture that says, "yes I am competent and I am fine".

### Room for development

Ever since I got here, I have never heard anyone from senior management saying that "I am still developing myself because there is a gap in TVET colleges". Instead they ask why am I studying and how come I ask so many questions? I think there is still room for development, because people that run TVET colleges have no idea what they are doing themselves. What happens is that people get positions because they need an income. I don't think they are passionate about teaching, they are content with a guaranteed salary and being able to pay their bills.



**Figure 4.4: Aya's collage: 'A day in a life of a TVET lecturer'**

The college has an internal database with all policy documents. You find that lecturers do not read their policies and how to implement them. They don't take time to understand what is required for teaching and learning to continue. If you have any problems or questions regarding policies, there is no one to ask or

answer. Lecturers just carry on without questioning, for them it is about lecturing and doing your own research. Whether what you do responds to what is expected and the core function of TVET colleges it is no bother. As long as you have lectured and obtain good results, that is enough. There is a lot of things that are happening that make us to be left in the dark so as a result you need to take your own step and say, "what can I do personally to enlighten myself".

## So, who am I as a TVET college lecturer?

*Everything that I do is not based on my own knowledge. Because I believe that we stand on the shoulders of giants, so we need to do research. Research leads to growing confidence. If you know something based on how well it was taught, you build up the confidence that says I know it.*

Aya. 8 February 2018

Despite being 'forced' into teaching, I have been able to integrate my first love of music into it. As a TVET college lecturer I have been able to identify my own knowledge gaps and therefore the need to study further. Today I see myself as a farmer, whose responsibility is to impart knowledge and skills to my students. Just as I fill my knowledge gaps from my university class mates, I intend to do the same for my students. My Pantoum poem titled '**Branch- myself**' answers the question 'who are TVET college lecturers?'

### **Branch-myself**

Music with grandmother

Didn't have it all

Stumbled

Branch-myself

Didn't have it all

Ask questions

Branch-myself

Enlighten myself

Ask questions

Stumbled

Enlighten myself

Music with grandmother

## 4.4 KHUSE'S STORY

### Farm workers' son

*To succeed in life, you must be resilience.*

Khuse. 10 January 2018

### Growing up

My name is Khuse and this is my story. As a little boy growing up in the village of Zimbabwe, I never imagined myself driving a car. I thought cars were a luxury for rich people and this put me off cars completely. I never cared for car brand names nor saw myself owning a car. All this has changed now that I am grown and matured, I know that a car is a necessity and not just a luxury. My parents were poor farm workers and farming was our main source of food and income. After school my siblings and I would relieve them by helping in the farm, herding cattle and doing other house chores.

### A resilient learner

Going to school was never easy, I did not get a proper and decent education I deserved from childhood. There was a shortage of school fees and other necessary resources. I can still recall going to school with an empty stomach, travelling long distances with no shoes and patched or mended school uniform. However, this did not deter me from studying very hard. I still managed to achieve very good results throughout my education life because growing up poor taught me to be so resilient in life.

The reason I have continued studying till this day is because I don't easily give up in life. I believe that education, hard work and dedication are virtues to success. Because my schooling experience was not one of the best, I am using studies as a compensatory behaviour. I mean now I can study anywhere I want because finances are no longer an issue as opposed to when I was young.

## **My uncles, my inspiration**

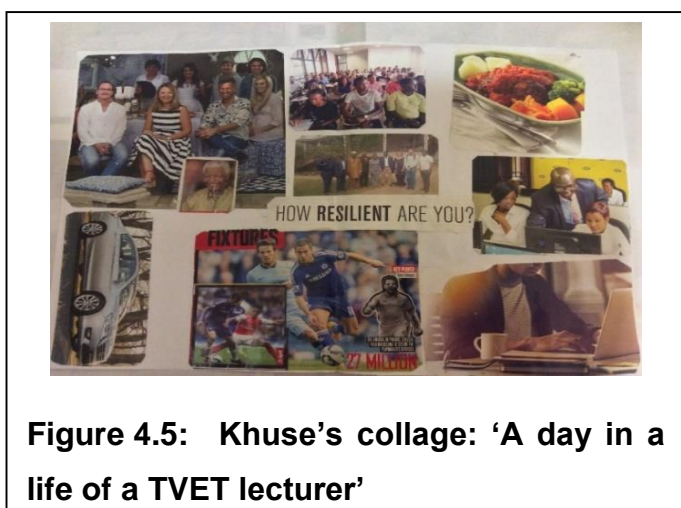
When I was in high school, I lived with two of my uncles who were both teachers. Even though I did not live with my parents they still worked very hard to send money for me to go to school. My uncles were my source of inspiration because they were teachers, I thought and believed that their lives were good.

Having a teacher in a family was a great achievement, and the whole village respected you for having an educated child in the family. Being a teacher was one of the most respected and well-paying job during those days. The societal esteem teaching had, made me love the teaching profession. While in high school, I led a lot of study groups for various subjects this made me think I would be a good teacher one day. When I took up the profession, I felt like I was born a teacher, teaching to me was more of a calling than anything else.

## **I have always taught**

I have never done any other job besides teaching. I have a Diploma in Business Administration as well as a Teachers' Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education. Both these diplomas took me three years each to complete. From 2000 to 2007 I taught at a Technical and Vocational college in Zimbabwe and in 2008 I moved to South Africa and started teaching at a Grand TVET college. My country was going through a lot of turmoil, so I decided to move to South Africa. Even though I tried to start businesses here and there back home and in South Africa, but I was never successful.

## **Vocational Education**



The technical and vocational diploma helped me to be more than equipped to teach. It taught me how to deal and treat college students and understand that they are adults with problems just like you and me.

Fortunately, I have never had a problem with students that I could not resolve, or which prevented me from teaching. I suppose this is because of the TVE diploma that has prepared me to cope with a college environment. I was once asked in an interview about challenges I had faced in the classroom. I found that question to be difficult because I have not encountered any challenges that I could not resolve.

I found that Zimbabwean students understood vocational subjects better because our education system allows them to take two technical subjects while in high school. Compared to the students back home, South African students need me to go an extra mile to help them understand and pass the subjects I teach them. Apart from inviting guest lecturers, I also incorporate the use of videos and extra lessons. When teaching them about Entrepreneurship, I usually invite friends who have businesses to take them through the stages of starting a business. I still help those who come to me with drafting business plans.

### **Accepting the challenge**

When I joined Grand College in 2010, I knew nothing about Pastel Accounting, but I accepted the job because I wanted the challenge. The college asked why they should give me the job if I did not know Pastel, I told them I would manage. So before lecturing Pastel, I spent time on my own studying the programme. For instance, I would use a taxi to be at work earlier and prepare the lesson before I could teach the students. It took a year for me to understand and master the programme. Currently in the whole of Grand College, I think I have the best students. Right now, I was checking my results and I got 100% pass rate.

### **Developing myself**

When I started working for Grand College, I only had a diploma but now I have a Masters degree in Business Administration (MBA). At our college you can count the number of people who have Masters, so for me this is a great achievement. So, when it comes to personal and professional life, I have developed myself. And whatever I learn from my own studies I teach it to my students. As a lecturer I must not always relax and say to myself I know this or that. The more I improve myself the more my students also improve.

Through studying I increase my self-motivation and confidence in the students I

teach by always telling them my story and stories of those who grew up poor but succeeded in life.



**Figure 4.6: Khuse's laptop artefact**

I feel like we need to share the bread that we have with our kids especially our African children.

### **Working hand-in-hand**

Working within the South African context has its challenges, but management always tries to help. Yet there are some things that are beyond their control like set functions and systems from DHET. I mean if there isn't enough budget for us to be trained, there is nothing the college can do about it. To this day the college has sent me for a facilitator and assessor training, hoping I will go for moderator's training soon. These trainings have helped in improving my lecturing skills.

I am one person who likes to interact with different kinds of people. When I have free periods sometimes, I share lunch and catch up on sports with the men from the Business Studies department. During these lunch sessions we also talk about work related issues. After college ends and on weekends, we (men from my campus) also play soccer. On some weekends some of my college colleagues and I have social gatherings. I enjoy these interactions because colleagues seem to be more open relaxed and willing to share information which they would usually not share within the college environment. I suppose this is because we don't have scheduled time at the college to work and learn from each other.

## So, who am I as a TVET college lecturer?

*I would say that my laptop is my baby, because my life is here. Everything I do is here. Sometimes when I get home, I find myself sitting with my laptop doing this or that. In essence my life is centred on this laptop.*

Khuse. 10 January 2018

I feel my teachers' diploma in technical and vocational education has prepared me to teach at a TVET college. Though I had a tough upbringing because of poverty, but it is through that experience that I have been a successful lecturer today. Teaching in Zimbabwe and South Africa has motivated me to be a driver and take charge of my own personal and professional development. I have managed to maintain the aspect of self-motivation. My Pantoum poem '**Resilient life**' answers the question 'who are TVET college lecturers?'

### **Resilient life**

Driving the car

Wanted challenge

Share knowledge

Instil confidence

Wanted challenge

Isolated

Instil confidence

Self-motivated

Isolated

Share knowledge

Self-motivated

Driving the car

## 4.5 JOSHUA'S STORY

### An entrepreneur by choice

*I might have been a sacrificial lamb, but I wanted my life to help others not to go through the same difficulties I went through*

Joshua. 10 January 2018

### Beginning of my journey

Growing up in uGu district in the rural parts of KwaZulu-Natal, I found myself becoming a second-generation educator because my parents are both teachers. My name is Joshua, and this is my story. I had a chalkboard in my bedroom causing me to learn both at school and at home. I reckon teaching has always been part of me since I was 4 years old. As a child I was always fascinated by chappies chewing gum wrappers called 'did you know'. I used to read them because they had information about various worldwide issues.



**Figure 4.7: Joshua' collage: 'A day in a life of a TVET lecturer'**

Above having a chalkboard in my room, my father insisted that I read an IsiZulu newspaper to him daily. To this day, I start each day by speed reading the newspaper before my lectures.

### Source of information

I am the first born in my family and my sister would always ask me questions whenever we watched TV and I enjoyed knowing the answers. As a teenager, the only way I could command a female's attention was by doing their homework because I didn't have much money. So, I thought because I cannot give them money, I should use the

only thing that I have which is my smart brain. Besides doing the girls' homework, I found helping others with their homework became natural and enjoyable.

### **Mathematics and me**

When I was in grade 9 we were told that if you had average marks in a subject, you would not pass it in grade 12. Despite my below the average Mathematics marks, I was top of the English, Afrikaans and History class. My Mathematics performance was slightly below average and that made my teacher ridicule me. He would ask 'are you brilliant sir? And I would say yes, and he would say but your Mathematics marks do not reflect that. This was all because my second name is Brilliant and living up to this name brought pressure on my performance. In the past Mathematics and Science were used to close off other opportunities for us as black people. The former model C high school that I went to would not allow you to continue with Mathematics and Science in grade 10 to 12 if you were averaging at 50% by the end of grade 9. I feel that if I was kept in my local school, I would not have been denied access to continue with Mathematics. My friends who went to the local school would ask 'but we use to copy from you, look at us now we are engineers and you are just a teacher'. This is one of the reasons that I wanted my life to change and transform.

### **Teaching, my first choice**

While in school I thought of becoming a lawyer but, my Mathematics performance made me extremely shy. In 1998 I registered for a Teachers' Diploma at Edgewood College and teaching became my first, second and third choice. The choice was made from poor career guidance and being told that I sucked in Mathematics. I also knew that there was little competition in the teaching field. Even though it was during the era where a number of teachers in our country were qualified but unemployed. I was young and energetic which I thought raised my chances of being employed. In actual fact I wrote my final college exams in November 2000 and was employed at a TVET college by January 2001.

In my Teachers' Diploma I majored in Accounting and Business Management because I was always conscious that if I ever became a teacher, I would be an entrepreneurial type of teacher. I wanted my life to have purpose. Even though I was the sacrificial lamb, I wanted my life to eliminate others from through what I went through which was to have poor career guidance.

I grew up listening to hip-hop music and thus adapted their way of living, which is all about the 'hustle' (i.e. using various ways of making money). I wanted to teach that to my students, to be hustlers.

### **My father, my role model**

During the 90s my father was the first person in his family to be educated and he became a teacher. This was the only career choice given to black people because of apartheid. He was actually smarter than the children around him and he ended up helping them with their school work. My father was the first one to open a teachers' college of education in the rural area and last year the first PhD student graduated from that college. Many community members attended his local college that used primary school premises to function. He would hand pick lecturers across the province who could collectively develop content to teach at the college.

With time he came up with an idea that led to an establishment of a TVET college. With the assistance from the local king and my father's vision, his college merged with Orkney College and became one of its campuses. When this partnership happened, the college was now operating from its own building. All these years I did not know about my father's position and partnership with Orkney College. Even when I applied for the lecturing position in 2001 my father never told me about the merger, I recently found out. I suppose he did not want to be accused of nepotism.

### **Starting to work**

When I started working at Orkney College in 2001, I was based in my father's old college. I was appointed to teach Accounting, Business Practice (BP) and Computer Practise (CP). I did not know CP because I only did a computer literacy programme in my Teachers' Diploma. The college took me to another campus for a week, to observe and shadow an experienced lecturer in CP. The lecturer gave me a textbook and asked me to follow her. When I observed her teaching the subject, I realised that as long as I had visual ability and could read and understand English, teaching CP would be easy. I also learned basic typing skills. When I started in 2001 there was only two academic staff and one student group where I taught CP and Accounting. In 2002 we had two groups at different levels, and I taught all 4 subjects (Accounting, CP, BP and Computer Financial Systems).

### **Making computers easy**

Having to teach all these subjects, I decided to study MS Office in 2001- 2002. Unfortunately, the campus closed down because it only had two groups of students. Then I was transferred to another campus. I was told that I could use my experience of starting a programme in another campus. When I was there, I taught Accounting and Business English.

I was given extra Computer classes to teach on Saturdays so that I could make extra money. My class had students who were relatively old and matured. It was a mixture of those who had never used a computer and those who knew how to use it but needed certification. Asking myself how I could make computer teaching easier, I decided to complete a PC architecture course in 2003. When I mastered PC architecture, I realised that the internet was a challenge for my students. I then registered for a networking course. When I completed networking, I studied an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) course to be able to teach adult students.

### **Slower than my friends**

After completing the ABET course, I tried twice to work in the Information Technology (IT) field. I found that my qualifications and experience were not adequate to earn a higher salary. I wanted to change from teaching to IT because I thought my progress was slower than my engineer friends.

In 2001 I had an unlicensed shebeen and my parents were against it as it tainted their image. In 2002, I went into the taxi business but because of violence I had to stop operating. I also had pool tables in all of Orkney's campuses. In 2003, I ran a public telephone business and within three weeks' public telephones were all over the streets. After this phase of unsuccessful businesses, I fell into depression. It was unfortunate that I could not relate to any of my colleagues at that time to help me through this phase of my life. Currently I think Queen is the only person who gets me here at college. Because we are both studying and can have engagements on a philosophical level. Others think I am 'too deep', so it helps to have such a close friend. Basically, with other lecturers, I just have brief interactions and have my 'deep conversations' with Queen.

## Losing focus

In 2004/5 I lost focus, I just floated, I didn't have my eye on the ball anymore. At the same time, I was not making money but had to pay black tax (family bills).

From 2005 and a couple of years after that, I was caught up in the phase of buying branded clothing and being image conscious. With the extra money I got from teaching part-time classes in 2011 I bought a car because I felt overdressed for riding a taxi to work. The part-time jobs were stopped, and I fell into depression again. In December 2011, I remembered that I was a 'hustler' (go-getter) and joined the local sports and recreation programme. The programme brought back my focus in life as we introduced sporting activities to the local community. I use the business contacts of the people I meet through the sports and recreation programme to help my students find holiday and/or in-service jobs. I must say it has been a great success story.

## Grounded information

I believe that academia is about being grounded in information. So, in 2013/2014 I completed a B.Ed. Honours. During my studies I met a retired professor who helped me with academic writing. His help made me develop my own academic writing simile checklist. The checklist helps one track the number of times they use a word or simile in an essay, thesis etc.

The professor's made me decided that once I complete my M Ed, I will create an academic writing application (APP). The design and development of this APP will be aided by my acquired computer knowledge and skills.

## Digitally inclined

One day I noticed that when I am in class students are always on their phones. There



**Figure 4.8: Joshua's cell phone artefact**

was one student who always googled everything I said.

Her facial expression told me that whatever I was saying she was crosschecking on the internet. Initially this made me uneasy, but I realised that the curriculum needs one to be digitally inclined and as

lecturers we have to incorporate technology in our teaching. That is why my research is on electronic mobile devices because I am a visual, sensual and physical person and I bring that into my teaching. I believe that I need to help students think outside the box.

Apart from being digitally inclined, I try to incorporate the aspect of socialisation in my students. At the beginning of each year I spent 2 days asking them 14 questions. These questions relate to their historical background, present life style and future goals. Even though I might not remember all 14 answers, but there are one or two aspects about them that I always remember. This icebreaker usually sets the tone for the rest of the year and allows me to easily teach them content.

### **So, who am I as a TVET college lecturer?**

*Many teachers look at hitting the glass ceiling if you become a director. But I look at the fact that my family has many teachers and I ask why they can't come together and start a new school. My perspective on education is how we can privatise education but still give back to the community.*

Joshua. 22 November 2017

Though the choice of becoming a teacher was made from poor career guidance, I made a conscious decision to be entrepreneurial. My involvement in failed and successful business ventures outside TVET lecturing, has led me to take the initiative of thinking outside the box. As a '**Second generation teacher**' educator the Pantoum poem answers the question 'who are TVET college lecturers?'

## **Second generation teacher**

Second generation teacher

Progress

Grounded information

Visual, sensual, physical

Progress

Entrepreneur

Visual, sensual, physical

Outside the box

Entrepreneur

Grounded information

Outside the box

Second generation teacher

## 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented TVET lecturers' storied narratives and offered a glimpse into their past and present lives. Using individualised Pantoum poem has helped teasing out how various contexts and relationships helped in the construction and reconstruction of their identities (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Each one has to negotiate different forces like (family, schooling, religion, society, political era, etc.) that has shaped and is shaping their professional selves and careers. Both consciously and unconsciously these forces made them develop certain interests, beliefs and values, which shape and continue to shape who they are as TVET lecturers. The poems helped synthesise key learnings which have become the basis for my analysis of data in the next chapter.

In the next chapter I draw key excerpts from these storied narratives and present them thematically to respond to the second research question. The personal and professional experiences each TVET lecturer had that made them choose to become TVET lecturers. I use Rodgers and Scott's Social Identity Theory (2008: see Chapter Two) as an analytical lens.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ***Personal and professional experiences that led to teaching in TVET colleges***

#### **5.1 Introduction**

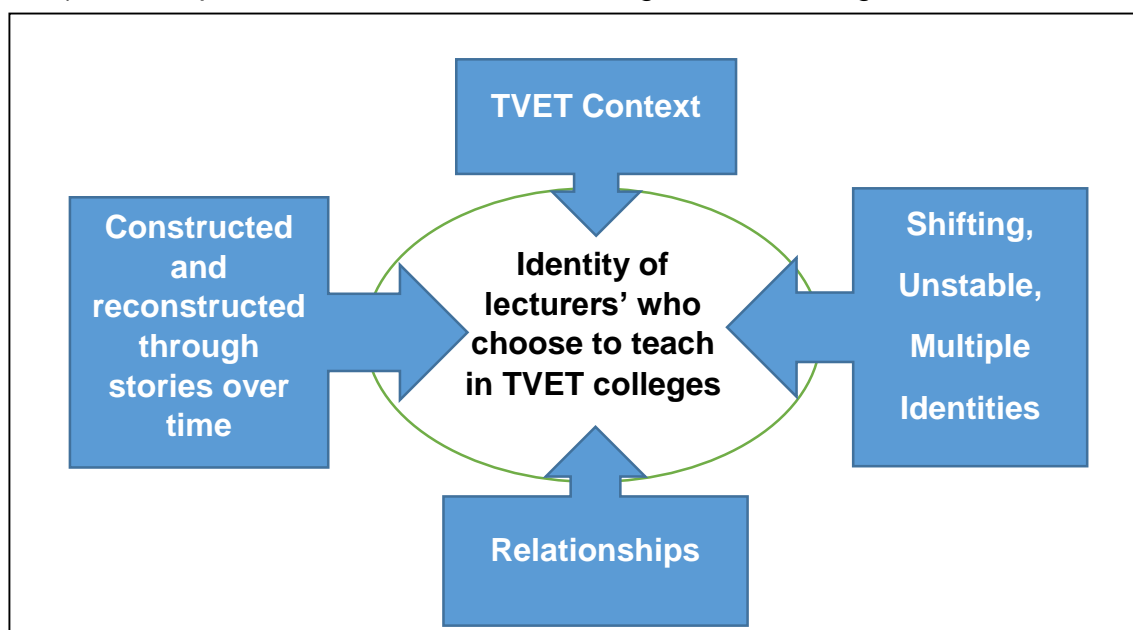
Personal experience is made up of past and present beliefs and values which are contextually shaped (Clandinin & Huber, 2005), while professional experience accounts for technical and contextual knowledge and skills (Olsen, 2015). In this chapter, I analyse the data in response to the second research question 'What personal and professional experiences shape the choice to become TVET lecturers?'

Experience is based on a series of events which can be influenced by culture, moral and ideologies (Brookfield, as cited in Day & Gu, 2010). Therefore, an individual's sense and interpretation of a series of events, within various contexts constitutes experience. It is important to realise that social conditions in which teachers [lecturers] live in, are dynamic and shape one's identity (Day et al., 2006). Both personal and professional experience are regarded as personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1986).

The personal and professional are intertwined (Day et al., 2006) and one cannot speak about professional identity without reference to personal identity. To understand and analyse TVET lecturers' personal and professional experiences, I adapted Rodgers and Scott's Social Identity Theory (2008) as an analytical lens (see **Figure 5.1**). Although the theory was developed on school teacher contexts, I borrow from the main concepts of this theory to understand the personal and professional experiences of TVET lecturers, who are in a different contextual reality. The theory explains how "internal and external" forces interchangeably shift teacher's [lecturers'] identity (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). The four foundational assumptions of this theory are: 1) "that identity is multiple and forms within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political and historical forces to bear upon that formation; 2) that identity is formed in relationships with others and involves emotions; 3) that identity is shifting, unstable and multiple; and 4) that identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008 p. 733). The theory is used to explain critical incidents and moments that shaped and are shaping present and

past, individual experiences (values and beliefs) of the TVET lecturers. It is these various lived experiences that will enable me to elicit TVET lecturers' choices for teaching in TVET colleges.

**Figure 5.1:** The figure below shows internal and external forces (Rodgers and Scott, 2008) that shape lecturers' choices of teaching in TVET colleges.



In this section I present an analysis of how various contexts, relationships and lecturers' responses to these have and are shaping lecturers understanding of self against their role as TVET lecturers, and how this self towards this role is shifting, unstable and multiple, as it is constructed and reconstructed through stories over time.

## 5.2 Queen – From marginalised girl learner to a LO lecturer

### 5.2.1 Significant female relationships

#### *“My dressmaking mother” – a role model at home*

Queen grew up in the 80's, in an era where girl children were socialised to be domesticated just like their mothers (Zhou, 2017). She spent a large amount of time with her mother who did not only teach her housework but also dressmaking. She recalls:

*Being a curious teenager, I asked my mother to help her with cutting patterns and sewing hems. The time we spent together made her teach me all aspects of dressmaking.*

The house work lessons she received from her mother was due to the typical tradition of that time: that girls would learn from their mothers and boys from their fathers (Halls, Uprichard, & Jackson, 2018). She acquired dressmaking knowledge and skills non-formally from her mother adding to her tacit knowledge (Boeren, 2011). Her dressmaking knowledge and skill was the reason she could study at a Catholic skills school when she was not coping with main stream schooling. She says:

*From the time I started high school, I really struggled academically. To an extent that my parents would say “this one is not so bright, we should take her to isikole sezandla (skills school)”. Therefore, from 1982 to 1983 I was enrolled into a Catholic skills school for dressmaking to complete standard 6 and 7 (grade 8 and 9).*

Her love and capacity for dressmaking gave her an opportunity to acquire a formal qualification for dressmaking (Boeren, 2011). It equipped her with knowledge that was useful for her to continue with school despite academic challenges (Makhaya & Nhundu, 2016). Thus, through her close-knit relationship with her mother she acquired a vocational based skill and knowledge.

### ***Sister Mary- a role model at school***

At the Catholic skills school she met another important female role model, Sister Mary, who had “a deep personal commitment” towards her as a learner (Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 82). She recalls:

*As a dressmaking learner at the Catholic skills school, my performance improved and I was the top of my class. This achievement started a special relationship between myself and my dressmaking teacher Sister Mary<sup>6</sup>. Sometimes during lunch breaks, we would talk about my personal life and she would encourage me by quoting bible verses.*

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<sup>6</sup> Pseudonym sister in charge at the Catholic skills school

Joining the skills school to follow a technical instead of an academic pathway improved her academic performance and started another close knit relationship (Hayes, Ryan, & Zseller, 1994). Being quoted bible verses as form of encouragement, introduced Queen to a form of spirituality which became her bases later in life when she chose a career.

It was her close-knit relationship with Sister Mary, which made it possible for her to be offered a teaching job at the skills school after finishing matric. She says:

*Fortunately, my mother and Sister Mary were still in contact and through that relationship from 1987 to 1988 she offered me a teaching job.*

Cooley and Unger (1991) state that if individuals are given social support with everyday activities it helps in social stimulation. Therefore, the love, support and dressmaking knowledge and skills she learned having good relationships with her mother and Sister Mary enabled her to pursue a career despite her teenage pregnancy. Her love for dressmaking led her to save part of her salary for her first year at university:

*While teaching at the Catholic skills school I asked Sister Mary to save part of my salary so I could register for a Fashion design diploma at <sup>7</sup>Bright Technikon (university).*

By saving money from her first job, Queen showed how much she valued education and was committed and motivated to study, thus she invested in her future (Everet alt, Marks, & Clarke-Mitchell, 2016).

### **5.2.2 Context: Career choice**

#### ***Dreams and realities of becoming a fashion***

Though Queen was committed to her studies, she was unable to finish her fashion design diploma because of a *university strike*. Her mother supported her by asking her to *teach and manage her dressmaking school business*. As a young woman who was in the brink of establishing her career, her mother's supportive response to her incomplete fashion designer diploma helped to lower Queen's stress levels (Cooley &

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<sup>7</sup> Pseudonym of the university where Queen studied Fashion design

Unger, 1991). After an unsuccessful period of managing the dressmaking school, she got married, had children and started a cushion business with her husband:

*From 2002 to 2003, my husband and I had a scatter cushion business. We made and sold high quality scatter cushions. Unfortunately, in its third year, operations stopped because suddenly the flea market had competitors who sold similar (inferior quality) cushions at our cost price.*

Her deeper understanding and confidence of dressmaking enabled her to initiate her own business with her husband. She was able to translate her “school-to-work” knowledge and skills which she learned at the Catholic skills school to make a living out of it through business (Hanushek, Schwerdt, Woessmann, & Zhang, 2017, p. 48).

When the business did not work out, Queen turned to her spirituality as a source of guidance.

### ***Moving into theology***

Queen’s strong spiritual beliefs was the major influence when she had to choose a career between social work and theology. She opted to study a *Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theology at Holy Seminary (Bible College)* from 2003 – 2007, which was informed by her deep spiritual values (Ensher, Nielson & Kading, 2017). She says:

*I asked God, why am I here? What is my purpose and calling? I thought perhaps I can enrol at a college and become a social worker. That would be easier as I had a certificate in community development and besides my final matric results were not so great. During that thought process, I hear something saying ‘Bible College’*

Duffy and Blustein (2005) found that when people are spiritually aware, it plays a significant role in deciding on a career. With spiritual values that she learned from the Catholic school, Queen acknowledges her spirituality as what helped her choose a religious based career.

Queen’s close knit and role model relationships with her mother and Sister Mary taught her dressmaking knowledge and skills. Knowing dressmaking led her to have different roles throughout the stages of her life (teacher, fashion designer university student, school manager and business woman). It was in these key relationships where she

learned to value education and developing spiritual beliefs. It is these key relationships that groomed dressmaking skills and through them she grew in knowing about other aspects of it (i.e. teaching and managing a school).

### **5.2.3 From NGO work to TVET lecturer**

#### ***Life as a facilitator***

While studying Theology, she became an HIV facilitator at New Life Centre (NLC). She says:

*Laura offered to train me as a facilitator and asked me to facilitate the HIV/AIDS programme. Everything that I did at the (New Life Centre) NLC was exactly what I was learning at Bible College. It was the meeting of content and context. I discovered my passion for teaching while studying Theology and working at NLC.*

Through this experience she developed facilitation skills and passion for teaching, which Kelchtermans (2009) says can develop overtime. The practical experience of being at NLC allowed her to value the theoretical knowledge she was gaining as a Theology student.

#### ***Relationships of care***

Queen was intentional to form good relationships with her students as a HIV/AIDS facilitator. She says:

*I learned the importance of creating relationship within learning. To achieve this, I made sure that I knew all my students' names on the second day of each group sessions. To an extent that having good relationships with students has now become a conscious decision.*

Though Queen did not pursue her dream of being a fashion designer, she drew on value for education, spiritual and facilitation skills to be conscious of good relationships for personal and professional learning (Bens, 2017). The act of knowing and calling students by name helped her create a valuable sense of being mindful of others and building good working relations (Wright, 2017).

### ***Working with management***

One of the successes of any organisation is to have an interactive downwards communication systems between employers and employees (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). It is this reason that Queen acknowledges the managerial style used at NLC to be a supportive and developmental one. She says:

*The leadership style at the NLC was interactive, with meetings at the beginning of each year. The manager would outline the strategies, past failures and resolutions. Fridays was our debriefing time, where we spoke about challenges we had during the week. The coordinator would use outcomes from those meetings to organise specialised training for staff.*

Queen's understanding of management was that it needed to be developmental. She worked with a manager that created an interactive working space that fostered good employee-employer relations. Lu, Lu, Gursay, and Neale (2016) allude to the fact that, if employers expect high productivity, they need to create an employee inclusive environment.

### ***Choosing to be a TVET lecturer***

Though Queen had a good working relationship with her manager at NLC, the NGO started having financial problems and because of that Queen found a job at Orkney college;

*Due to financial mismanagement I left NLC to join Orkney TVET college in 2010. I came here because I needed job security. I was employed to teach Life Orientation (LO). My strength of the subject is its theoretical component because of the principles of my BA Theology Degree which are about moral regeneration.*

Queen qualified to be an LO lecturer because of her BA degree which had related LO subject content.

### **Synthesis**

Queen's interests in a career choice while growing up was in a vocational career. Her interest and desire in various vocations changed overtime. Her role models inside and outside the home shaped her business skills and spiritual belief. It her tertiary

education in religious studies that gave her access to a job as an LO lecturer. It was her search for better employment that made her end up teaching at Orkney college. She started teaching with some content knowledge from her Theology degree and a non TVET teaching qualification and experience.

### **5.3 Aya- From an invisible child to a Hospitality lecturer**

#### **5.3.1 Significant female relationships**

##### ***Growing up voiceless and bullied***

Aya grew up in the 90's in a historically black township of *Hammarsdale* in KwaZulu-Natal. During the 80s and 90s most women started working, therefore those who were mothers started leaving away from home and abandoning their caregiver role (Council, 2003). So, it was so with Aya's mother who had to move together with Aya's father because they both found jobs in schools far from their home. This left Aya to be raised by her grandmother in a large extended family. She says:

*I grew up in Hammarsdale and lived with my grandmother, cousins, aunts and uncles. The reason was that both my parents found teaching jobs far, in Ixopo. Because they had no one to help in looking after me, I stayed behind to be raised by my grandmother.*

Being raised by grandparents "is a global phenomenon which may be caused by the absence or relocation of parents" (Dolbin-MacNab & Yancura, 2018, p. 3). Aya was unfortunate because living with her grandmother meant that she had to be raised within a bigger family as opposed to growing up with just her parents.

As a child who grew up in an extended family she had to grapple with "attachemnt issues" (Edwards, 2016, p. 254) because she had no one whom was the same age as her. Being the yougest child amongst the children in her grandmothers' house, she struggled to build relationships with siblings her age.

She says:

*At home it was also difficult to keep up and play with my cousins because I was the youngest amongst them.*

The inability to play and connect with her cousins was because of to her “poor socio-emotional well-being which may be casued by children who are raised by their grandparents instead of their parents” (Pilkauskas & Dunifon, 2016, p. 623).

The poor relations with her cousins at home was also extended to her school relationships. She struggled to fit in nor played sports because of her physical and emotional issues caused by her health problems. She says:

*My life at school was not easy because I was an obese and asthmatic child. Because of this, I was teased and bullied most of the time. I did not play any sports because of my weight nor managed to make many friends.*

Aya's isolation, emotional and health issues made her a victim of bullying (Evans, Adler, MacDonald, & Cote, 2016). These issues made it hard for her to build relationships with other children inside and outside the home. This had a negative impact on her self-esteem to an extent that she recalls herself as one who did ‘*not voice out issues*’

### **5.3.2 Enhancing self-esteem through a significant relationship**

#### ***Music as a space to connect with self and others***

The poor peer and family relations made Aya spend more time with her grandmother and build a close relationship with her instead of her cousins and classmates (Erola, Kilpi-Jakonen, Prix & Lehti, 2018). She recalls:

*...every Sunday grandmother and I would watch Imizwilili (a choral music show) and sing along. This is where my music journey began, through watching others sing and practicing with my grandmother, I learnt how to sing. This time we spent together made us develop a special relationship and she was my world.*

The special relationship with her grandmother created a space for her where she developed a sense of belonging and confidence (Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005). From watching a TV programme, she developed the capacity to *sing in the school and church choir*. For a child who grew up ‘voiceless’ and bullied, Aya found her ‘voice’ through music. The music that she learnt within a loving and caring relationship made her to be heard and noticed as she sang in the *church and school choir*. Learning to

sing allowed her to socialise with her peers through common interest which boosted her self-confidence and “well-being” (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016, p. 1240). She credits music as a platform which *has helped identify her strengths and weaknesses as a human being, both personally and professionally.*

### **5.3.3 Context: Career choice**

#### ***Taking up a vocational career in Food and Beverage***

In furthering her studies, Aya was inadvertently influenced by her parents. Refusing to pay for her career choice to study music, they insisted on a tried and tested qualification with a job guarantee.

She says:

*Even though I always loved music, my parents never understood what opera, stage or theatre was. When applying at university, my father said I should study a ‘proper’ career or stay at home. I side lined music to study a diploma in Food and Beverage (F&B) because I developed an interest of working in a cruise ship and travelling the world.*

Though she started studying at university during a time when apartheid no longer restricted career choices, her parents restricted her career choice (Stead, 1996). Her parents’ traditional understanding of possible career options meant that Aya could not formally study music at university. To please her parents she found an alternative career choice which had a reputable social and professional status and assured employment post-graduation (Stead, Els & Fouad, 2004).

#### ***Reciprocal friendship***

While studying F&B at university Aya met Tumelo. As peers they developed a special relationship because she assisted him with lecture notes and assignments.

She says:

*When I was a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, I met <sup>8</sup>Tumelo Tau. I noticed that he usually came to class once in three or four months. I approached him and asked why he was not attending regularly? He told me that he was permanently employed as a teacher in a high school. We decided to exchange cellphone numbers so*

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<sup>8</sup> Pseudonym for Aya’s friend

*that I could give him information regarding any homework, tests and assignments.*

Aya offered to help Tumelo because she noticed that he was not attending lectures frequently. By helping him she initiated a friendship with Tumelo.

Her friendship with Tumelo opened up an opportunity for her to work as a TVET college lecturer:

*I don't think I had the passion and the love of becoming a teacher. I become a lecturer because I merely shared information with Tumelo. I got a call from Tumelo asking me whether I was working yet. He convinced me to apply for a lecturing post at Grand College. I was phoned for an interviewed and at the end of the interview I was told that I could start work the next day (Friday 20 April 2010)*

Her friendship with Tumelo went beyond the university walls even after they had finished their diploma (Brook & Willoughby, 2015). This friendship gave her an opportunity she was not looking for at the time she was unemployed. She had envisaged a career path in music, ended up studying F& B at university but now works as a Hospitality Studies lecturer in a TVET college.

## **Synthesis**

Personally, Aya's choice to teach in a TVET college was influenced by her relationship with her parents who made her choose a vocational career she was not interested in. Through a reciprocal-relationship she got an opportunity to change her unemployment status by applying for a job at Grand college. In the context of unemployment and the impetus to work, she started teaching at the TVET college, with only subject knowledge which she acquired from her F&B diploma (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). The role of being a Hospitality Studies lecturer was Aya's first job which she started a couple of months after finishing her diploma.

## **5.4 Khuse- From a poor farm workers' son to a Business Studies lecturer**

### **5.4.1 Growing up poor**

#### ***No dreams, no imagination***

Growing up in a low-income household, with parents who were farm workers was a struggle for Khuse and his siblings. They were expected to work in the farm after

school instead of playing. As children they had to share the responsibility of bringing income into the household (Garza, Trueba, & Reyes, 2015). Khuse unlike other boys did not dream of owning a car because of his poor upbringing

He recalls:

*My parents were peasant farm workers and farming was our main source of food and income. After school my siblings and I would relieve them by herding cattle and doing other house chores.*

As a child growing up in a poor environment, Khuse's self-image was dented as he felt powerless when he could not identify himself with other young boys growing around him (Grossman & Van der Weele, 2017). So much so that poverty made him have a negative outlook on life. To a point that as a young boy he did not identify himself with cars, which is a stereotypical toy for boys (Lewis, 2017). He says:

*As a little boy growing up in the village of Zimbabwe, I thought cars were a luxury for rich people. That thought put me off cars completely to an extent that I never cared for car brand names nor saw myself owning a car.*

His poverty stricken home made him think that he had a bleak future, to a point that as a boy did not think that he could own a car.

### ***Valuing education***

His poverty-stricken parents still had to ensure that he went to school. The low household income meant that they couldn't afford the best school nor everything else he needed for school:

*I can still recall going to school with an empty stomach, travelling long distances with no shoes and patched or mended school uniform. I did not get a proper and decent education I deserved, due to shortage of school fees and other necessary resources.*

Khuse's household income effected the quality of education he received, the length he had to travel for schooling and the resources he needed for school.

Despite not having an ideal upbringing and a stereotypical belief that he would never be a high-achiever (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015). Khuse managed to do well in primary school and his parents sent him to *live with two of his uncles who were both teachers* to complete high school. Contrary to Votruba-Drzal, Miller, and Coley (2016) study on children who grow up in poverty are unlikely to have high cognitive skills.

#### **5.4.2 Significant relationships**

##### ***Role models outside the home***

Erola et al., (2018) observed that extended family members play an important socio-cultural role and can be a valuable resource in helping with decision making. Khuse's outlook of life changed when he went to live with his uncles. The esteem and high societal view teachers had during that time, made him decide on teaching as a career. The different environment made him view life differently.

He says:

*My uncles were my source of inspiration because they were teachers, I thought and believed that their lives were good. Having a teacher in a family was a great achievement, and the whole village respected you for having an educated child in the family. Being a teacher was one of the most respected and well-paying job, during those days.*

Moving from his parents' home to live with his uncles played a major role in helping him identify himself with male role models within his family (Brown & Treviño, 2014). By living with his uncles, he saw and experienced how those who were teachers were treated and viewed positively by society.

##### ***Role model to others***

Another role that Khuse grew into as a learner in high school, was to help other learners with their school work. He recalls:

*While in high school, I led a lot of study groups for various subjects this made me think I would be a good teacher one day. When I took up the profession, I*

*felt like I was born a teacher, teaching to me was more of a calling than anything else.*

The low social status that was brought by poverty did not deter him from adapting into the new context when he lived with his uncles. Instead of being shy to interact with other learners because of his family status, he took up a leadership role while in school (Williams, 2015). His value for education and capability of being a mentor whilst a student opened up a space for him to interact and support his peers. He became a leader by taking the initiative to help others with their studies.

#### **5.4.3 Context: Career choice**

##### ***Taking up a career in vocational education***

Living with parents who worked in a farm led to Khuse developing an interest in business. He recalls how he *tried to start businesses here and there but was never successful*. This made him study formally about business at a university in Zimbabwe:

*I have a Diploma in Business Administration as well as a Teachers' Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education. Both these diplomas took me three years each to complete.*

Studying for Khuse became a place of possibilities. Drawing from his personal knowledge he continued with business, not to own any but to teach others about it through acquiring a qualification in vocational education. Khuse from Zimbabwe is the only one out of the four participants who has a qualification to teach in a TVET college.

##### ***Teaching vocational education in Zimbabwe***

Khuse assigns the students' level of understanding vocational subjects to their foundation in high school:

*I found that Zimbabwean students understood vocational subjects better because our education system allows them to take two technical subjects while in high school.*

His observation of the students understanding of vocational subjects is based on them learning it prior being in a TVET college. As opposed to South African students who might be in TVET colleges because of under-performance in high school (Powell &

McGrath, 2013). In moving to South Africa, Khuse would be faced with learning to teach learners in a different context.

### ***Seeking out greener pastures***

The political and economic instability in Zimbabwe made Khuse decide to come to South Africa in search of greener pastures (Crush, Chikanda, & Tawodzera, 2016):

*From 2000 to 2007 I taught at a Technical and Vocational college in Zimbabwe and in 2008 I moved to South Africa and started teaching at a Grand TVET college. My country was going through a lot of turmoil so I decided to move to South Africa.*

Khuse started teaching in a South African TVET college with relevant TVET qualification and seven years of teaching experience. His move to teach in South Africa was caused by political unrest in his country and thus a search for better employment conditions.

### **Synthesis**

Khuse's significant relationships is what provided the impetus for him to take up a career in teaching (Shaffer, DeGeest, & Li, 2016). His family-based relationships inspired him to take up a career in vocational education. He started working as a Business Studies lecturer in Grand college with subject knowledge and the ability to teach the subject.

## **5.5 Joshua- From school teacher graduate to Business Studies lecturer**

### **5.5.1 Significant male relationship**

#### ***Learning at school and at home***

Joshua was brought up by parents who were both teachers in the Ugu district of KwaZulu-Natal. His teacher parents ensured that when he was at home, he continued to learn:

*I had a chalkboard in my bedroom and it encouraged me to learn both at school and at home. I reckon teaching has always been part of me since I was 4 years old. My father insisted that I read an IsiZulu newspaper to him daily.*

Joshua's parents made sure that he continued learning outside of school (Thorndike, 2013). His father groomed him to be an eloquent and educated man like him. Reading about real life issues daily made him develop a good habit of reading which he uses to this day (Gambrell, 2015).

### ***Role model father***

Joshua looked up to his father as a role model because of his entrepreneurial initiative, achievement of being literate and being influential in their local community (Goings & Bianco, 2016). He says:

*During the 90s my father was the first one in his family to be educated and he became a teacher. He was also the first person to open a teachers' college of education in the rural area.*

Being educated during a period where career opportunities were restricted for black people did not stop Joshua's father to make a success of his life as a teacher. To an extent that he became Joshua's role model in choosing a career:

*I was always conscious that if I ever became a teacher, I would be an entrepreneurial type of teacher because I wanted my life to have purpose.*

Hoffmann, Junge, and Malchow-Møller (2015) advocate that entrepreneurial parents become their children's role models. Seeing his father's achievement inspired Joshua to decide that he would be an entrepreneur so that he could measure up to him.

## **5.5.2 Context: Building self-esteem as an informal mentor**

### ***Life in school***

As a learner in high school, Joshua developed the value for knowledge and ability to share it with his peers and friends. He used his reading and writing abilities to help his friends particularly girls with their homework. He says:

*I thought because I could not give girls money to charm them, I would use the only thing that I have which is my smart brain. I found that as we rode the bus to and from school it became natural to help others with their homework.*

Helping others at school showed that he cared and was “motivated to do this as a moral obligation towards his community of friends” (Wasko & Faraj, 2000, p. 155).

### ***A poor Maths student***

It was unfortunate that he could not help himself to improve his Mathematics marks which caused him to be ridiculed by his teacher:

*My Mathematics performance was slightly below average and that made my teacher ridicule me. He would ask ‘are you brilliant sir? And I would say yes and he would say but your Mathematics marks do not reflect that. This was all because my second name is Brilliant.*

Learners become anxious when they do not performance well in Mathematics as it can be associated with poor career choices (Bieg, Goetz, Wolter, & Hall, 2015). The shameful comments Joshua’s Mathematics teacher made, discouraged him. This is because “there is a stereotypical belief that boys perform better in mathematics as opposed to girls. Unfortunately, this view has a negative impact on learners even in adulthood” (Philipp, 2007, p. 295).

Joshua’s Mathematics performance prevented him from studying a “lucrative career” (Ndofirepi & Cross, 2015, p. 238) and because of his parents he chose to teach.

*While in school I thought of becoming a lawyer but, my Mathematics performance was not good and that made me extremely shy. In the past Mathematics and Science were used to close off other opportunities for us as black people. The former model C high school that I went to would not allow you to continue with Mathematics and Science in grade 10 to 12 if you were averaging at 50% by the end of grade 9.*

Joshua was in high school at a time when a “degree in education and humanities was mainly accessible in Black universities as opposed to Science, Commerce, Law, Business, Technology which was mainly found in white universities” (Wolpe, 1995, p. 279). The restricted career opportunities coupled with his poor Mathematics performance meant a career in being a teacher was more attainable for Joshua.

### **5.5.3 Context: Career choice**

#### ***Taking up a career to be a school teacher***

Joshua chose to be a teacher because of the prospect of being guaranteed a job as a black person in the apartheid era (Alexander, Buthelezi, & Seabi, 2009).

He says:

*In 1998 I registered for a Teachers' Diploma at Edgewood College and majored in Accounting and Business Management. I also knew that there was little competition in the teaching field.*

In 1998, at a time when Joshua qualified to work, his confidence of being employed was boosted by the fact that black people had more career opportunities post-apartheid (Alexander et al., 2009). This meant that as a young black man his chances of being employed were greater as other young people opted for other career choices.

### **Synthesis**

Joshua's personal experience of choosing to teach at Orkney TVET college as a Business Studies lecturer came from a role model relationship within the home. Though he chose to pursue a career in school-based teaching, his qualification was adequate for him to secure employment in a TVET college (Papier, 2011). He started teaching at Orkney college with only subject knowledge and no professional and workplace experience because he had never been employed.

### **Conclusion**

Rodgers and Scott's (2008) Social Identity Theory which provided an analytical lens for outlining TVET lecturers past-present and personal-professional lived experiences. This analytical lens enabled me to tease out what and how these experiences shaped their choice of teaching in TVET colleges.

My learning through this analysis highlighted how role model(s) and significant relationships in different social contexts played a significant role in each individual. Through observation and learning from these relationships, it enabled them to acquire valuable knowledge, skills and/or values about vocational education. Acquiring these particular knowledges, skills and/or values was learnt formally and informally (Fraser

et al., 2007). Through the analysis, I learned that particular experiences within particular personal relationships and role models provided the space to acquire particular knowledge and understanding that participants drew on to inform their choice to take up positions as TVET lecturers.

While three of the four participants acquired a range of skills and knowledges that was not tailored for TVET colleges, personal dilemmas (unemployment, better career opportunities and financial stability), propelled them to rethink themselves as TVET lecturers. Experiences of working as a facilitator, a TVET lecturer in Zimbabwe, training as an F&B specialist and becoming a business and accounting school teacher provided the basis for their understanding of VE and their choice to teach in South African TVET colleges. Their diverse understandings of what it means to be a TVET lecturer was shaped by their own contextual (unemployment and better employment conditions) realities and relationships – personal and social.

TVET lecturers start teaching in TVET colleges from different personal and contextual realities. Their experiences and meanings have been shaped by non-linear, dynamic contextual relations over time. Using these different knowledges, I show in chapter six what and how lecturers negotiate their role and teaching responsibilities in different TVET contexts having varied interests and personal and professional experiences.

## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### ***Negotiating teaching in a TVET context***

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In chapter five I analysed selected personal and professional experiences to explore the participants' choices of being TVET lecturers. In this chapter, I present how these choices shape and is shaping their daily practice as lecturers teaching vocational education. The question that drives the focus of this chapter is, 'How do lecturers negotiate their everyday practice in TVET colleges?

The analytical lens that will frame this chapter is Bell and Gilbert's (1994) Model of Professional Development. The model identifies three aspects for the process of teacher development, namely, personal, social and professional development. Personal development refers to how "an individual identifies aspects of teaching as problematic, deals with restraints and gains a sense of being empowered" (Bell, & Gibert, 1994, p. 483). Secondly, social development involves an individual regarding isolation as a problem, and to "avoid isolation, an individual initiates collaborative ways of working with others. Lastly, professional development occurs when persons "try out, develop and initiate new ideas to enrich their occupational practice" (Bell, & Gibert, 1994, p. 483).

I used collage portraiture (see **Figure 6.1**) as a tool to visually map the often silenced past and present experiences of lecturers (Gerstenblatt, 2013). Collage portriature is the use of different images and words used to tell stories that might be difficult to compose in words (Russo-Zimet, 2016). Collage portraiture is relevant to my study as it helps bring out "multiple realities and draws out naunces which textual analysis cannot reach" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 200). It also helped in developing the four THEMES [sections] for analysing this chapter.

#### **Collage portraiture as visual representation of the analysis**

I developed the collage portraiture below (**Figure 6.1**) as a visual representation of all four participants. The portraiture was developed using the three aspects of Bell and Gilbert's model of professional development. Personal development is about the

professional knowledge and skills lecturers had when they started teaching vocational education and their experiences thereof. Social development is about the various formal and informal spaces lecturers sought out to bridge the knowledge and skills gaps they experienced as they taught vocational education. Professional development is about the individual initiatives lectures took and are taking to deal with their everyday lives as TVET lecturers.

This chapter is divided into four sections;

**Section A – Personal experiences as TVET lecturers**

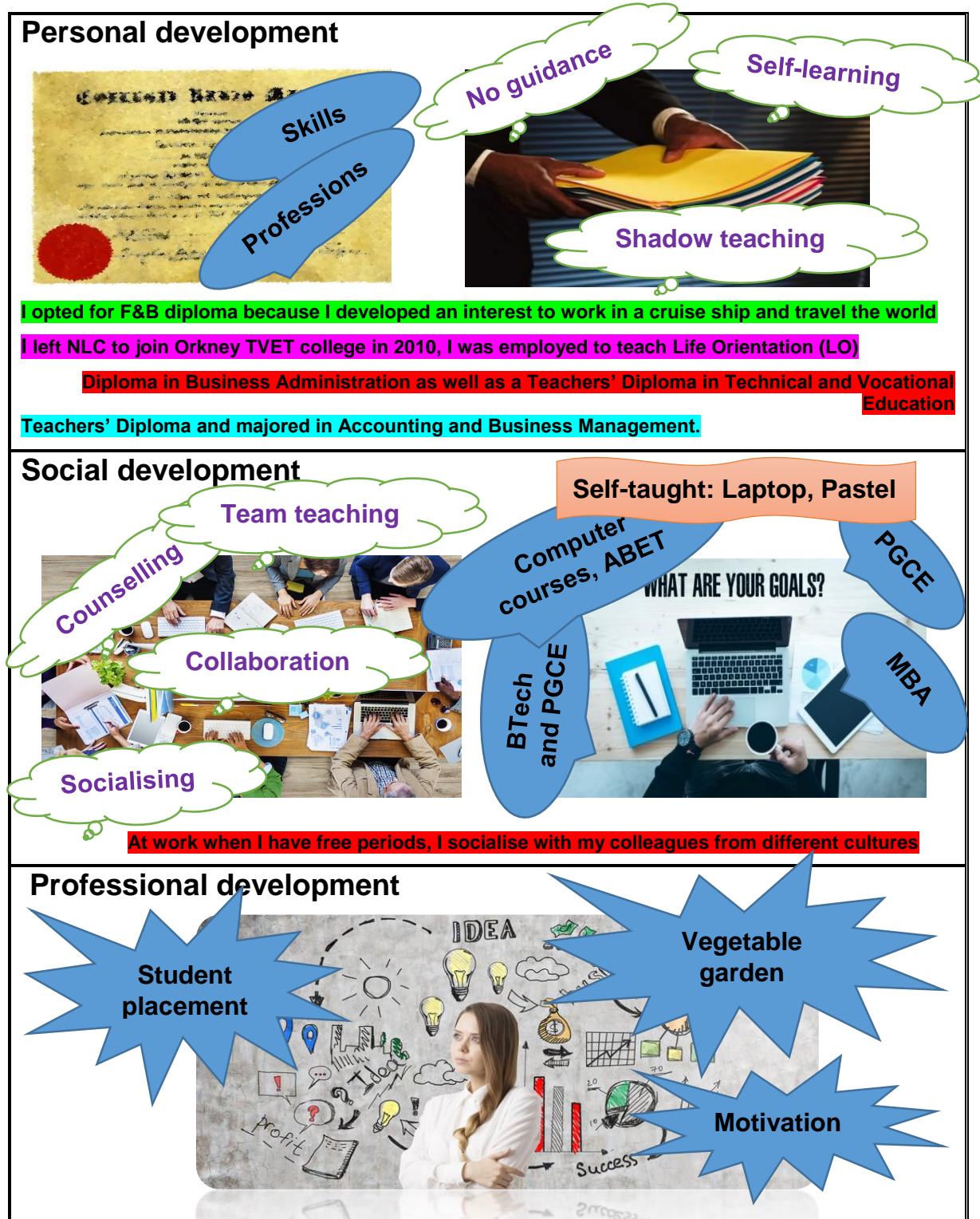
**Section B – Challenges of teaching in TVET colleges**

**Section C - Overcoming challenges of teaching in TVET**

**Section D – Ongoing professional development**

Section A, analyses lectures teaching experiences, exploring the knowledge, skills, feelings and challenges lecturers have when teaching in TVET colleges. Section B presents how lecturers negotiate the challenges of teaching vocational education. Section C presents the social spaces they engage in to cope with the challenges they face. Section D presents the various initiatives they take up to negotiate themselves when teaching.

**Figure 6.1:** A collage portraiture of all four lecturers visually depicting their personal, social and professional development to negotiate their everyday practices.



## **6.2 SECTION A: Personal experiences as TVET lecturers**

### **6.2.1 Teaching in a TVET classroom**

Most TVET lecturers have technical knowledge and skills but lack teaching qualifications (Wedekind & Buthelezi, 2016). Even with this lack they choose to work in TVET colleges because of unemployment, seeking for better employment opportunities and searching for income stability and security. In line with Wedekind and Buthelezi (2016) findings, three of the four participants studied in South Africa and started teaching Vocational Education (VE) with various qualifications which were not specific for TVET teaching. Khuse, who is from Zimbabwe is the only one who has a TVET teaching qualification.

Queen and Joshua teach at Orkney TVET college, in KwaZulu-Natal. Queen took up employment as a Life Orientation (LO) lecturer within the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) programme because she needed a stable income. The New Life Centre where she worked as a HIV/AIDS facilitator started having financial problems and affected how often she was paid her salary. On the other hand, Joshua had just finished his school-based teaching diploma when he was appointed as a Business Studies (BS) lecturer within the Report 191 programme.

Aya and Khuse teach at Grand TVET college. Aya started working as a skills programme lecturer, within the Hospitality department with a Food and Beverage (F&B) diploma within NCV programme. Working as a lecturer at Grand college was her first employment after completing her F&B diploma. With his VE qualification, Khuse joined Grand College in search of better living conditions in South Africa. He was employed to teach Business Studies (BS) and Accounting (i.e. Pastel programme) within Report 191 programme.

The different programmes these TVET college lecturers teach, require individuals who have a combination of the following competencies [knowledge and skills] “technical [content] knowledge and skills, pedagogical skills and relevant industrial [workplace] experience” (Duncan, 2017, p. 67) . All four lecturers started teaching VE, without the competency in either subject knowledge, ability to teach a subject or workplace experience. The lack in TVET specific knowledge and skills meant that each started teaching VE inadequately qualified for a South African context. Despite this they had

to “adopt and adapt” (Pillay, 2014, p. 87) different learning strategies to help them teach VE.

### ***Facilitated the book***

When Queen started teaching, she had non-TVET workplace experience and some Life Orientation (subject) knowledge which she acquired in her position as an HIV/AIDS facilitator. As a result, on her first day of teaching, she used the traditional method of teaching and searched online for more information:

*For my first lesson I only used the textbook, googled more information about the topic and taught. Basically, I just facilitated the book.*

Queen’s lack of a TVET teaching qualification, made her adopt a traditional method for teaching by using the textbook. She used a “cookbook-style” of teaching (Al-Abdali & Al-Balushi, 2016). Using the textbook and information from Google, meant that she took the initiative to use another resource and find more subject (content) related information. It is her facilitator experience that provided her with content presentation skills that aided her to teach VE (Gardner, 2014).

### ***Teaching as trial and error***

Aya had subject knowledge but lacked the ability to teach the subject and relevant workplace experience because she never worked prior teaching at Grand TVET college. She had to figure out new content for herself:

*When I started, I had no idea what the CATHSETA programme was about. The programme manager said, “I trust that you fully understand what Hospitality is about”. It was a mere fact of ‘swimming’ and seeing myself out.*

When Aya started teaching she had no guidance nor knew the content she was meant to teach. She neither knew nor had experience of teaching in a TVET college. She had to adapt what she learned in her Food and Beverage diploma into the new content of the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSETA) programme. The relation between the CATHSETA programme and her F&B diploma enabled her to apply her already acquired knowledge into a new context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

### ***I shadowed an expert***

Joshua started teaching with a school-based qualification in which he acquired some subject and school-based teaching knowledge. This is because he started working at Orkney TVET college immediately after finishing his teachers diploma at university. On his first day he was taken through a week of shadow teaching with an expert lecturer:

*When I started working at Orkney College in 2001. I was appointed to teach Accounting, Business Practice (BP) and Computer Practise (CP). I did not know CP because I only did a computer literacy programme in my Teachers' Diploma. I was taken to another campus for a week, to shadow an experienced lecturer in CP.*

Even though Joshua had a school-based diploma he still had to observe an expert in order to teach in a TVET college. By observing an expert, Joshua was able to adapt his school-based knowledge and skill into a TVET context (Naiker & Makgato, 2017).

### ***Self-initiated learning***

Khuse started teaching in South Africa with a TVET specific qualification and TVET teaching experience, which he obtained in Zimbabwe. To secure a job in Grand College, he had to learn a new subject, which was related to his Business Studies diploma:

*When I joined Grand College in 2010, I knew nothing about Pastel accounting but I accepted the job. So before lecturing Pastel, I spent time on my own studying the programme. It took a year for me to understand and master the programme.*

Khuse took the initiative of being self-taught. This action showed his personal motivation and commitment towards despite being in a different context (Zee & Koomen, 2016). He did not allow the new context to deter him from teaching himself content that would secure a job in South Africa.

All four TVET lectures started with either subject, ability to teach a subject and/or workplace experience (Duncan, 2017; Wedekind, 2016; Papier, 2010). The acquisition of these competencies allowed them to teach TVET colleges. My learning from the

analysis points out that at a personal level these four lecturers started working at TVET colleges without being adequately equipped in the different knowledges and skills required to teach vocational education. They each had problems that caused them to struggle and be “restrained” (Bell & Gilbert, 1994, p. 483) in how and what they were teaching. This made them resort to traditional methods of teaching because they were partly supported and relied on their own interpretation of what was expected of them when teaching vocational education. Furthermore, it limited their lesson planning strategies and the content they taught. Whilst teaching vocational education, they had to constantly negotiate the knowledge and skills gaps [lack] and how to apply personal and professional knowledge and skills into their new context. Therefore, each one personally devised and/or found different ways of dealing with vocational education teaching gaps.

In his research Shulman (1987) points out that for one to be able to transfer content knowledge to their students they need adequate preparation resources, presentation skills and adapting content for the specific context. Furthermore, Duncan (2017) found that exposure to the workplace helps lectures to be adequately prepared and to be relevant when teaching vocational education. In the absence of professional qualification and guidance, TVET lecturers resorted to self-learning, learning through trial and error, using the tried and tested and traditional ways of teaching vocational education. Each one used their own way of coping with the inadequacies they experienced.

### **6.3 Section B: Challenges of teaching vocational education**

The different knowledge and experiences lecturers had when they started working at TVET colleges, exposed them to various challenges in their practice. Some of the challenges that they faced were: a lack of support, varied mentorship and directive leadership styles, motivation from their managers and lack of collegial and collaborative colleagues.

### **6.3.1 Personal challenges of teaching vocational education**

Being supported by a senior (HOD) and helped through practice issues is a basic need for novice teachers [TVET lecturers] (Shandu, 2016). This however was not so for some of these TVET lecturers when they started teaching vocational education.

#### ***The lack of induction and mentoring support***

Queen was not inducted on the use of policies for teaching vocational education:

*I remember when I first got here the HOD gave me a textbook and a big file with policies and said, 'read through this'. Nobody showed me how to use the file for teaching.*

According to van der Bijl and Taylor (2016, p. 98) “poor leadership and management skills in TVET colleges negatively affect lecturers teaching and learning”. Not being guided by her HOD (manager), Queen was expected to interpret policies for her vocational education teaching at a time when she had no knowledge and understanding of them. The absence of an induction meant that she was left to figure out aspect of teaching for herself.

#### ***Teaching diverse students***

As a TVET lecturer, Joshua had to teach students who had different knowledges, he says:

*My class had students who were relatively old and matured. It was a mixture of those who had never used a computer and those who knew how to use it but needed certification.*

Joshua was faced with the challenge of having students with diverse knowledges. He was aware that his computer students had different interest and reason for choosing the programme they chose (Entwistle & Ramsden, 2015).

#### ***Teaching in a different context***

As a lecturer who acquired his TVET qualification in Zimbabwe, Khuse decided to use different strategies to meet the students' needs in his new context:

Compared to the students back home, South African students need me to go an extra mile to help them understand and pass the subjects I teach them. Apart

from inviting guest lecturers, I also incorporate the use of videos and extra lessons.

In enhancing his lessons and ensuring students understanding of subject, Khuse uses strategies that are not necessarily prescribed by the college. He does this to respond to the new contextual needs [South African students].

### ***No psychological support***

Joshua expresses:

*It was unfortunate that I could not relate to any of my colleagues to help me through a depression phase of my life.*

Joshua experienced great difficulties in establishing positive relationships with colleagues whom he could relate to at a personal level. The isolation during a difficult moment in his life made Joshua deal with his personal health issues alone instead of being supported by his colleagues (Hallam, Smith, Hite, Hite, & Wilcox, 2015).

### **6.3.2 Site based challenges of teaching VE**

With an understanding that relationships are spaces of learning (Hallam et al., 2015), some TVET lecturers had challenges in creating good relationships. They were faced with colleagues who had already established cliques amongst themselves which affected her ability to relate to them.

### ***Working in a non-collegial, unsupportive environment***

Queen was faced with a sudden shock of finding information by mistake, she says:

*I recently discovered that the textbooks we use come with classroom activities and those are loaded on the college's server. Other LO staff members did not tell me about this. When I asked the LO team leader about it, she said "oh you did not know, I thought you knew! People around here hoard information and will only share it with their 'cliques'".*

Queen's experience of distorted relationships with her colleagues negatively affected her experiencing an environment of sharing subjected related environment. (Ning, Lee, & Lee, 2015).

### ***Not a collaborative community***

Aya encountered a competitive working environment, she says:

*There are lecturers who are studying elsewhere, but I feel that they just create unnecessary competition. They don't want to share the knowledge they have acquired.*

Aya was disappointed that even though there are other lecturers who are studying like her, she has not been able to work together with them. Instead they had created a competitive individualised culture, where the ability to learn from her colleagues is non-existent.

### **6.3.3 Systematic challenges of teaching VE**

Managerial support helps in ensuring an improvement in the quality of college systems (Albashiry, Voogt, & Pieters, 2015). TVET colleges should not be any different in ensuring that they have a supportive environment.

#### ***Lack of common vision and mission***

The supportive, structured managerial style Queen experienced at NLC made her expect the same when she started working at Grand College. She says:

*When I started working for the college, we had an opening meeting with the rector like the one we had at NLC. I thought wow this is it! I mean if his leadership objectives are clear and achievable then surely all those who lead under him should be the same. Well to my disappointment, when I engaged with campus management, they did not carry the same leadership sentiments as the rector.*

The rector's opening address made Queen expect campus management to have clear goals like the rector. Unfortunately, this was not so and she was faced with the challenge of being managed within an environment that had poor quality management systems (Albashiry, Voogt, & Pieters, 2015).

### ***Top down approach***

Aya says:

*Senior management always asks why I am studying and how come I ask so many questions. If you have any problems or questions regarding policies, there is no one to ask or answer.*

Aya expects that there should be systems or person(s) in place that help in interpreting policies for practice. The absence of such made her decide to study further so that she could bridge the policy and practice gap. TVET colleges are responsible for creating an environment that cultivate lecturers' development for practice. This should not be a stand-alone factor but as one that contributes to TVET lecturers' growth and development (Grollmann, 2009).

### ***Financial constraints***

While Khuse has been able to receive adequate support from his line managers, the lack of financial support from DHET has hindered his professional development:

*Management always tries to help, there are some things that are beyond their control like set functions and systems from DHET. I mean of there isn't enough budget for us to be trained, there is nothing they can do.*

Khuse acknowledges that the support he receives from his line managers is adequate. In his opinion the low financial support from the Department of Higher Education is the primary cause for not being sufficiently trained at college level.

The disappointment such as an unsupportive and competitive working environment from management and colleagues caused lecturers to be disheartened. They were faced with the problem of being isolated, making it difficult for them try and bridge the knowledge gaps that they started teaching with. Each one had to seek alternative collaborative spaces for learning and developing in their role as TVET lecturers.

## **6.4 Section C- Overcoming challenges of teaching vocational education**

### **6.4.1 Alternative spaces of learning**

The lack of induction, guidance, mentorship and non-collegial institutional culture meant that each lecturer had to find alternative ways in dealing with challenges they faced when teaching vocational education.

#### ***Self-learning***

To deal with VE teaching gaps, Queen taught herself how to use a computer and registered for a school-based teaching certificate. She says:

*As an LO lecturer I bought myself laptop and taught myself computer skills. I downloaded online tutorials to learn how to use and teach computer programmes. From June 2014 until now I am studying PGCE. It has helped me in understanding my practice particularly the curriculum.*

Queen engaged in self-directed learning through self-teaching herself computer skills instead of waiting for the college to identify the knowledge gap she had. She also studied a school-based teaching qualification, where she gained an understanding of the vocational curriculum.

#### ***Networking with other teacher professionals***

Aya took up formal studying by registering for PGCE in the hope learning about how to teach in a TVET college:

*I personally registered for PGCE because I had nothing tangible for education, nor did I have a clue of whether I was doing things correctly. The decision to further my studies was so that I could join a pool of knowledge. I need to associate myself with other teachers and lecturers who can help me when I am stuck.*

Queen and Aya's initiative to study further was to acquire professional knowledge element which lacked in their practice (Hunde & Tacconi, 2017). According to Bell and Gilbert (1994) When Queen and Aya saw isolation as a problem they took the initiative in developing themselves professionally. Their decision to take up formal learning (PGCE) which is tailored for school teachers (Papier, 2017), they used certain

elements from it to bridge they personally identified as being a hindrance in their practice.

### ***Studying for vocational education***

Though Khuse has a VE diploma, he still studied further to upgrade his technical knowledge and skills. He says:

*When I started working for Grand College I only had a diploma but now I have a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA). For me this is a great achievement.*

Despite being professionally qualified to teach vocational education, Khuse still saw a need to study which acts as personal-motivation because of the value and esteem it has given him. Grollmann (2009) advocates that the continuation of TVET lecturers' as lifelong learners help elevate the quality of vocational education.

### ***Studying short formal courses***

Joshua realised that his computer knowledge needed to be enhanced and he studied different courses to achieve this, he says:

*Asking myself how I could make computer teaching easier, I decided to complete a PC architecture course in 2003. When I mastered PC architecture, I realised that the internet was a challenge for my students. I then registered for a networking course. When I completed networking, I studied an ABET course to be able to teach adult students.*

Joshua was conscious to respond to the knowledge gaps in his subject by joining a community of practice which was not within the college environment (Mayne, 2015). Studying different content and content teaching courses was a personal motivation of creating a supportive relevant learning environment for his diverse adult students (Ngubane-Mokiwa & Khoza, 2016).

## **6.4.2 Informal spaces of learning**

Through close knit personal relationships, vocational education lecturers have learned valuable lessons (knowledge, skill and values), which have helped them negotiate their roles as TVET college lecturers. TVET lecturers value the experiences of their

personal relationships by seeking to emulate them in their professional practice (Bukor, 2015).

### ***Casual relationships***

Queen expresses how she has been proactive to develop personal relationships with students and colleagues. She says:

*I have a spot outside where we casually stand and talk, and it wouldn't show that we are having a counselling session. I don't want to say I have been blessed but I have been able to do this for both students and my colleagues.*

Queen decided to use her counselling skills as a way of developing personal relationships within an unsupportive college environment. Her counselling sessions created a “customized” space encourages trust and learning within a “homey” environment (Waldock et. al, 2017, p. 587).

### ***Social spaces as sites of learning***

Khuse finds it useful to socialise with his colleagues because from that he gains work related ideas and knowledge. He says:

*On some weekends some of my college colleagues and I have social gatherings. I enjoy these interactions because colleagues seem to be more open relaxed and willing to share information which they would usually not share within the college environment.*

Khuse has found that it is easier to learn from colleagues within social activities (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). These activities have made it easier for Khuse to find a space to openly talk about work related issues within a relaxed environment. As a Zimbabwean teaching in South Africa, his social activities show that he avoids isolation and initiates collaborative ways of learning from others (Bell & Gilbert, 1994).

### **Synthesis**

TVET lecturers have acquired valuable lifelong lessons through informal-incidental or informal-planned ways of learning (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & McKinney, 2007). At a social level, these TVET lecturers had to look for alternative ways of collaborating with others in the absence of formal structures in their Colleges. They have individually taken the initiative of not only relying on the college to support and develop them, but

they too have been able to access other spaces of learning for their personal practice at various TVET colleges.

## **6.5 Section D – Ongoing professional development**

The challenges TVET lecturers came across made them seek for other alternative spaces of learning and continuous development outside the confinements of the college rules and regulations. When one takes the initiative to develop themselves, they start constructing a sense of being (Pasupathi, Mansour, & Brubaker, 2007).

### **6.5.1 Building professional relationships**

According Sedio and Mapotse (2016) the purpose of TVET colleges in South Africa is to respond to the skills demands of the economy. Lecturers are faced with the need to constantly adapt to various contextual and professional issues and be agents of change amidst not having a professional qualification to help them respond to these changes and demands. Lolwana (2016, p. 11) found that most Sub-Saharan Africa TVET colleges have few lecturers who have a combination of “pedagogical competencies, technical qualification and industry experience”. Despite formal qualifications of this combination, Queen and Joshua tried to teach their students about “industry experience” from their acquired tacit knowledge. Queen learned business from her mother’s dressmaking school, while Joshua witnessed his father start the first college in their rural community. They carried that knowledge to their practice when they initiated a project that would help students practically understand what the workplace is about. This being in line with one of the objectives of vocational education, which is to teach students lifelong skills (Ibatova et al., 2016). Queen explains that...

*...the aim of the vegetable garden was to feed and teach them practical skills of administering a business.*

Queen used the vegetable garden as a way of being socially responsive to her students’ needs while practically teaching them about the business they were learning in class.

The vegetable garden project also helped Joshua to develop a professional interactive character and therefore forge a close relationship with Queen. Joshua says:

*Currently I think Queen is the only person who gets me here at college. Because we are both studying and can have engagements on a philosophical level. Others think I am 'too deep'.*

Queen and Joshua created a platform of professional learning for their students which in turn has also become a support system for Joshua. Amongst other requirements, the complexity of teaching [vocational education] requires that TVET lecturers have “personality, intellect, previous experience, judgement and knowledge of content” (Olsen, 2015, p. 4). To achieve this, TVET lecturers need support from each other because their personal well-being impacts their professional well-being.

### **6.5.2 Networking partnerships**

Being partly raised in extended families and recognising the importance of starting relationships Aya agency to change has made her tell her personal success story as to her students. While Khuse's hard and poor upbringing helped him to be self-motivated. Through these experiences they have developed open communicative relationships with their students to encourage them both academically and emotionally.

Aya expresses:

*So far, I think I have influenced a number of students to succeed. Last year three of them graduated from a university of technology.*

Khuse invites business owner friends to help:

*I am very confident in the students I teach Business Studies. When teaching them about Entrepreneurship, I usually invite friends who have businesses to take them through the stages of starting a business. I still help those who come to me with drafting business plans.*

The basic need of being relational is one of the keys of eliciting intrinsic motivation in students (Orsini, Evans, Binnie, Ledezma, & Fuentes, 2016). Aya and Khuse's use various strategies has helped students reach their personal and academic goals.

And Joshua uses his personal contacts:

*In December 2011, I joined the local sports and recreation programme. I currently use those contacts to find holiday and/or in-service work for my students. I must say it has been a great success story.*

Joshua entrepreneurial abilities has enabled him to help his student gain practical real work experience, as this is part of the required knowledge and skill for students in TVET colleges.

As they matured in their roles as TVET lecturers, each individual has had to make critical decisions on aspects of their teaching that they found lacking in accordance to their understanding of what is expected of them in their practice (Biesta, 2017).

## **6.6 My learning**

My learnings from this analysis highlights that all four lecturers started teaching at TVET colleges with particular knowledge gaps. At a personal level each experienced a sense of helplessness and incompetency. Instead of being complacent in bridging these gaps they sought out varied spaces of learning. In these spaces they have learnt both formally and informally. At a professional level, they devised various ways of creatively developing their knowledge for their everyday practices in TVET colleges. They used their past and present, personal and professional experiences to enrich their practice (Bell & Gilbert, 1994).

Therefore in their practice these TVET lecturers adopted activities that enable them to learn and develop unique strategies and approaches to teaching and learning.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

In analysing this chapter, I used Bell and Gilbert's theory (1994) as an analytical lens. The theory allowed me to gain an understanding into the everyday practice of the four lecturers teaching in TVET colleges and what and how they negotiate their learning for development. In negotiating the challenging TVET context, lecturers choose to engage in a range of self-initiated learning, professional [PGCE and ABET] and subject specialization [computer-based] qualifications as a way of meeting the requirements of the workplace (Evans, 2004). They choose self-learning so that they could be competent in lesson preparation and presentation. They studied formal

professional and subject specialization qualifications to obtain a professional status and meet the needs of their diverse students. Above the professional status, one out of the three lecturers took up a qualification in research. The individual ways of dealing with challenges made lecturers to manage to use their personal experiences [student-based projects, motivation and workplace networks] to deal with teaching challenges in TVET colleges.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *Reflections and emerging insights*

#### **7.1 Introduction**

I started this study wanting to find out about the educational pathways of those who choose to teach in TVET colleges.

Lecturers who choose to teach in TVET colleges have diverse knowledge and experiences (Buthelezi, 2018) and most are recruited from industry with mostly a disciplinary qualification (Wedekind & Watson, 2016). In conducting this study, I was able to explore daily lived experiences of individuals who chose to work in TVET colleges. Queen, Aya, Khuse and Joshua, who work in different TVET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal. Three of the four participants started working without a relevant TVET teaching qualification.

Coming from a background of different knowledge and experience, three of the lectures joined TVET colleges in 2010 when the new National Certificate Vocational (NCV) curriculum was already introduced. They had to grapple with the FET to TVET college shift which took place in 2013. The data suggests that all four took up formal and informal opportunities to negotiate the various shifts (curriculum and college focus). These shifts meant that they had to acquire the necessary teaching qualifications so that they could improve their TVET knowledge of being able to teach vocational education. While the formal studies they took were not specific for TVET teaching, they used the knowledge and skills gained from there to facilitate and develop in teaching the various vocational subjects. This study also made available the non-formal opportunities of learning they engaged in, to improve and develop their subject knowledge and the ability to teach their specific subjects.

While other studies show that lecturers had to find various ways to cope with various institutional focus and curriculum shifts (Wedekind & Watson, 2016; Buthelezi, 2018), the data emerging from this study suggests that lecturers choose to negotiate the changes in their new context because of their varied knowledge and experience. They found ways to improve themselves and try to 'close-up' the knowledge gaps. Their identities were constructed and reconstructed (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) over time which was because of their various personal and professional experiences. Therefore, their

identity helped them to respond to their professional needs in the classroom (Clarke, 2009). Thus, who they are (beliefs and experience) has shaped and continues to shape the positions they take up in their daily lives.

## **7.2 Methodological reflections**

In using narrative inquiry, I have been able to generate lecturers' stories that have opened and deepened my understanding of how personal and professional lives shape and continue to shape the everyday lived experiences of those who choose to teach in TVET colleges. The methodology allowed me to use stories to understand who TVET lecturers are and how they make sense of the world around them in relation to their past-present lives (Clandinin, 2006). Much of what, and how I taught as a TVET lecturer was informed by my personal experiential work because I had no mentor nor a TVET teaching qualification. As lecturers told their stories I found a link between their personal and professional selves because some of what they do professionally is shaped by their personal experiences.

This research study was conducted within the interpretivist paradigm which allowed me to gain an understanding and perceptions of TVET lecturers' real-life experiences (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The purpose of this study was to look at both the professional and personal selves of these lecturers. Given that the personal and the professional are intertwined, and one cannot speak about one without the other.

Previous studies conducted on TVET lecturers have mainly focused on professional experiences of TVET lecturers and their work (Papier, 2010; Grollmann, 2009; Buthelezi 2018). The main emphasis was on the effects, the various shifts in TVET curriculum and focus from technical to FET to TVET colleges had on lecturers. Some scholars noted that these shifts made the lack of professional qualification a central need for lecturers (Wedekind & Watson, 2016) Thus at a policy and institutional level, the professional-self became the focal point instead of also considering the person within the profession.

While this focus on the professional life has been ongoing in response to the curriculum and focus shifts. In the same way, it has been the stories of others that made me realise how past experiences have a bearing in our present lives. The nature of narrative inquiry is such that the stories of peoples' world view are told and

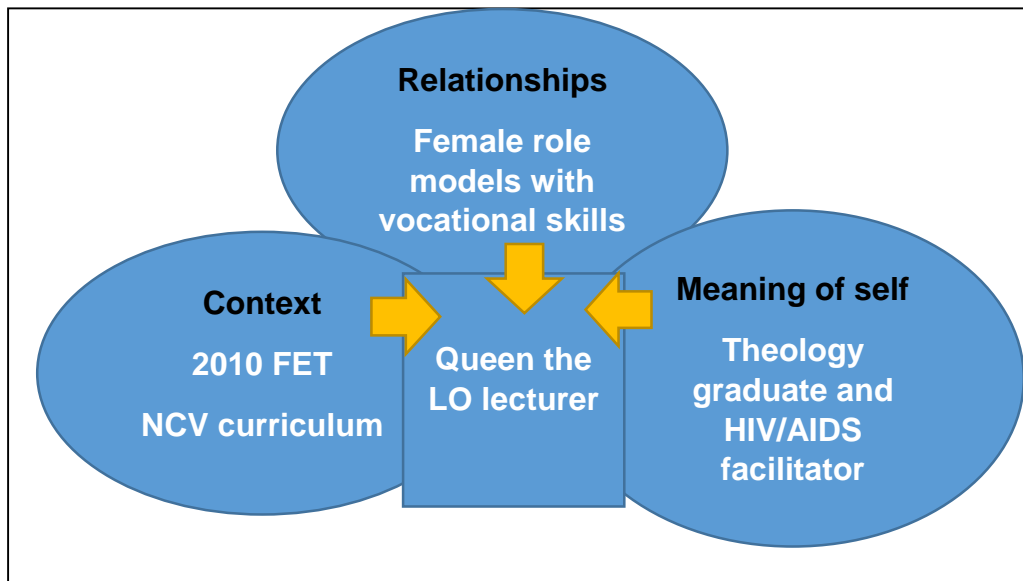
interpreted (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). By using the collage and artefact retrieval, TVET lecturers were able to remember memories, thoughts and feelings which might have been forgotten thus sharing their experiences which shape their new vocational teaching roles.

### **7.3 Lecturers' choice of teaching in TVET colleges**

I developed a deeper understanding about who lecturers (Queen, Aya, Khuse and Joshua) are and how their personal and professional experiences shaped and continue to shape their choice as teachers in TVET colleges. I adapted Rodgers and Scott's (2008) Social Identity theory as a lens to uncover the nuances of TVET lecturers understanding of self and how that has shaped their professional choices. The research question "*What personal and professional experiences shape lecturers' choice of teaching in TVET colleges*?" has been instrumental in clarifying how personal experiences (significant relationships and career choices) established certain beliefs and values about who they are and how that shaped their professional decisions. All participants narrated stories that showed that experience is not gained from a single incident (identity shifts), but it is based on a series of events (Rodgers & Scott's, 2008). One out of the three without a vocational qualification had a vocational career which allowed her access to teach in a TVET college. The other two had relational qualifications (school teacher and theology).

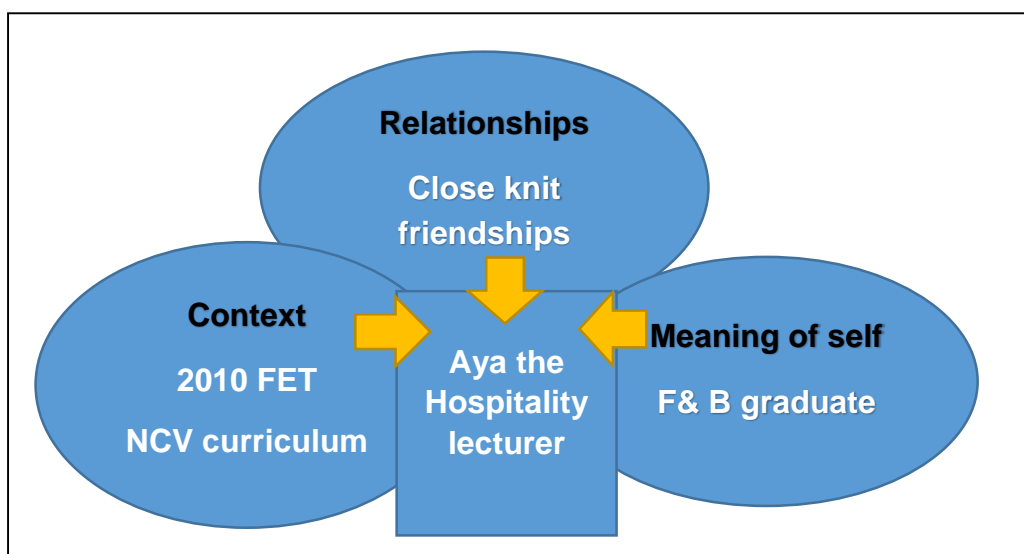
The following diagrams of each participant are my interpretation of personal and professional experiences that shapes their identity as TVET lecturers

**Fig 7.1 Queen the business minded lecturer**



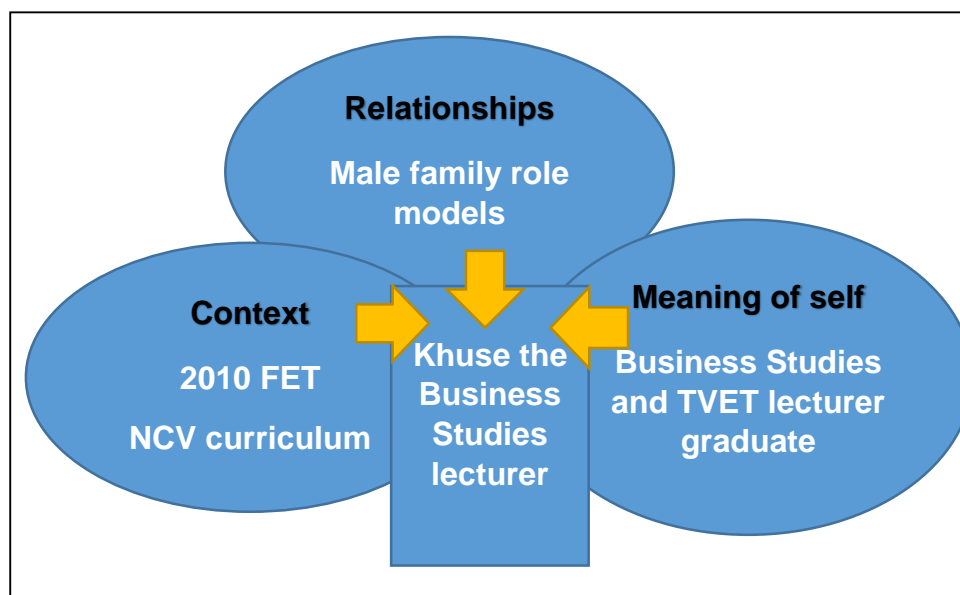
Queen was taught vocational and business skills by her mother who was also her role model. Her vocational skill was formalised through schooling and within the schooling context she met another role model who introduced her to spirituality. Her deep value for spirituality and education shaped her choice of a university degree. Her university degree together with the career she had prior choosing to teach at Orkney college, provided her with the necessary skills needed for her to take up employment as a Life Orientation (LO) lecturer after the new NCV curriculum was introduced and before FET were renamed to TVET colleges.

**Fig 7.2 Aya the young motivational lecturer**



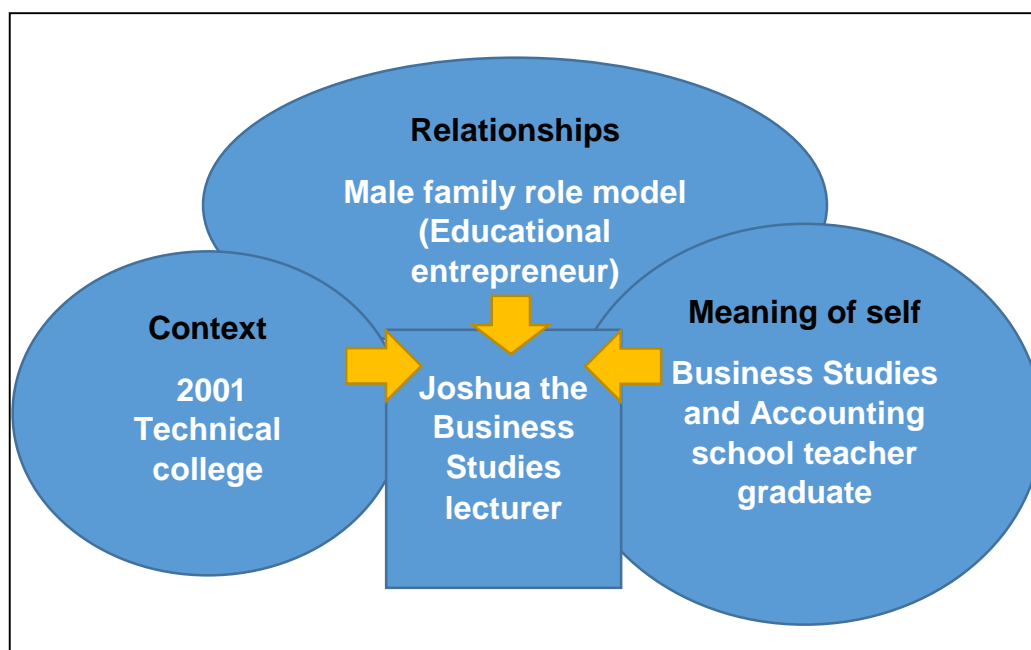
Aya's relationship with her grandmother was significant as it helped her learn a skill that helped her to be sociable. Yet in choosing a career, she was influenced by her parents to choose a vocational career. A relationship she initiated at university and her vocational qualification was key in being employed as a Hospitality lecturer. Just like Queen, she too joined Grand college when the new curriculum was already in place and TVET colleges were still FET Colleges.

**Fig 7.3 Khuse the researching lecturer**



Khuse's career choice as a Business Studies lecturer at Grand college was influenced by his uncles who were teachers. He chose the profession of being a teacher because of the societal status it had. Khuse left Zimbabwe because of the political unrests and had been teaching at a TVET college for several years. Just like Queen and Aya, he joined Grand college in South Africa after the curriculum change and before FET Colleges were renamed to TVET colleges.

**Fig 4.4 Joshua the entrepreneurial lecturer**



Joshua's career choice was shaped by his father who became his role model because of being the first person in their hometown to initiate an entrepreneurial project. His career choice of being a school teacher, was based on the career success he saw his father experience. He started teaching at Orkney TVET college when it was still a Technical college and thus experienced both the curriculum and focus changes.

Though only Khuse started teaching with a TVET qualification, Queen, Aya and Joshua's qualifications had some elements of that gave them access to teach in TVET colleges. All four participants had personal relationships which played a role in them choosing a vocational teaching career.

#### **7.4 TVET college lecturers enacted practices**

In response to the third research question of *"how do TVET lecturers' understanding of VE help them negotiate their everyday practice?"* I found that when each lecturer started teaching, they did not have the relevant and necessary knowledges (subject knowledge, ability to teach the subject and workplace experience) needed to teach in TVET colleges. Yet they took up employment as Life orientation, Hospitality and Business Studies lecturers. Only one from Zimbabwe professionally qualified as a Business Studies lecturer because of having a TVET teaching qualification.

Being inadequately qualified and being in a different context, meant that they faced personal, site-based and systemic limitations, frustrations, constraints and challenges. Each one found themselves adapting and adopting different strategies by acquiring professional status, establishing relationships through social spaces and through ongoing professional development.

### **Acquiring professional status**

To deal with these limitations, frustrations, constraints and challenges, the three lecturers who did not have TVET teaching qualification took up formal studies. Two studied school-based teaching qualification to gain professional statuses and the one studied a qualification to learn about teaching adults.

### **Relationships through social spaces**

To meet his contextual constraints, Khuse established relationships with his colleagues so he could broaden his knowledge about the culture and students within the South African context. Three of the four lecturers use sports, friendship, recreational activities to understand the contextual realities and the workplace requirements. This being in line with the focus of vocational education.

### **Ongoing professional development**

Two out of the four have furthered their studies in order to continue learning about their chosen roles as VE lecturers. This is because of the absence of a TVET specific qualification. In learning to teach in TVET colleges, these four lecturers initiated their own learning when they struggled and had little and/or no support in what and how they taught. They did not only rely on site-based training, but instead they used various strategies to develop agency in their daily practice to enhance what they taught (subject knowledge) and how they taught (knowledge of how to teach the subject). Their personal experiences shaped and is shaping how they respond to their professional limitations, frustrations, constraints and challenges. The development that the lecturers went through was because of their intrinsic motivation and being aware of the knowledge gaps they had in fulfilling the needs of the new role as lecturers in TVET contexts.

## **7.5 Theoretical conclusions**

I used Rodgers and Scott's (2008) Social Identity Theory and Bell and Gilbert (1994) Model of Professional Development Theory to analyse the participants lived experiences. These theories helped me to understand that personal-professional identities of TVET lecturers are ongoing, constructed and reconstructed against internal (self-motivation, self-initiated learning) and external (relationships, socio-political, religious and cultural) forces. It is these forces that shaped and continue to shape lecturers' identities. Lecturers pathways of learning to teach in TVET colleges enabled them to develop a range of networks and relationships both socially and professionally. Engaging in varied forms of formal (university courses), non-formal (collage based-initiatives) and informal (organized social interactions) spaces of learning, they widened and deepened their understanding of what (content) they were teaching, who (diverse students) they were teaching and where (context) they were teaching.

## **7.6 Policy imperatives**

From the study it can be noted that the none TVET specific qualification is deepening the lack in professional status of TVET lecturers. Furthermore, the policy requirements to professionalise TVET lecturers' knowledge and skill is not met by support at college level. TVET colleges lack proper systems in place to induct and mentor new lectures, continually develop and support all lecturers. This means TVET lecturers are expected to use their own practical and tacit knowledge of what they need to do and how they need to do it. They must draw from their experiential knowledge of vocational education (VE) and constantly negotiate from those experiences to interpret what is expected from them as TVET lecturers.

## **7.7 Practice imperatives**

The study examined how experiences (experiential and tacit knowledge) led lecturers to use and what they knew and seek for other ways of learning in various places. Shulman (1987) comments that it is imperative that one is adequately provided with necessary resources as well as presentation skills so that the individual would be well positioned to adequately transfer knowledge to students. This study highlighted that there is a need for formal development programmes alongside the planned,

unplanned, formal, non-formal and informal learnings TVET lecturers initiated to learn for the practice.

### **7.8 Contributions to educational research**

This study adds towards knowledge that can be useful in improving quality of teaching and learning in TVET colleges. There has been an outcry on the way TVET colleges operate and the quality and value of students who acquire TVET based qualifications (Buthelezi, 2018). The number one factor being an absence of VE specific qualification [no professionalization]. Various scholars have noted that this might be a contributor to the negative perception of TVET qualifications and the challenges this creates for teaching and learning for vocational education. Yet in this study I have been able to identify the various knowledge and skills these TVET lecturers have, which are not necessarily derived from their industry and school-based qualifications but evolved from personal life experiences.

### **7.9 Suggestions for further research**

The continuous emphasise on the role of TVET colleges' towards upskilling young people and contributing to the economic growth is still not adequately addressed through the development given to those who are meant to drive such courses [TVET lecturers]. The recent introduction of TVET specific qualifications needs to give allowance in developing the personal together with the professional. Thus, it would be interesting to find out whether these new qualifications are filling the knowledge, skills and personal anxiety and detachment felt by lecturers towards their practice.

### **7.10 Final Reflections**

In studying the lives of four TVET lecturers, I realise how the *person* is central in deciding on the type of personal and professional development each one has undertaken. Further insights emerging from this study suggest that lecturers bring with them different past and present experiences and embedded tacit knowledge that shape their identities and further affect their practice behaviours. It should not also be assumed that once a person is recruited to be a vocational education lecturer, s/he will be able to teach efficiently. The current absence of a vocational qualification

requires a good level of intrinsic motivation and self-knowledge over and above site-based development for TVET lecturers to continually grow and develop.

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## APPENDIX 1



14 November 2017

**Ms Tshepang Monica Mashiloane (216075161)**  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Mashiloane,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/1974/017M**

**Project title:** Stories of lecturers' lived educational experiences of vocational pedagogy in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges

### **Approval Notification – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received on 19 October 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

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

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Daisy Pillay  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

### **Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

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## APPENDIX 2

### *Collage Inquiry*

To generate data, I will use collage inquiry. The collage prompt question will be, **“Tell me what a day in a life of a TVET lecturer is like?”**

The participants will be provided with the following prompts when undertaking the collage:

- What are your feelings about this activity?
- What did this activity mean to you?
- Elaborate on your collage making.
- Do any of the pictures or words on the collage signify critical moments that may have occurred in your personal and professional life?
- Is there any picture or word that stands out from your collage? Why?

## **Appendix 3**

### ***Artefact Inquiry***

Participants will be asked to bring an artefact/s that 'exemplifies them as a TVET lecturer' and share its significance with the group. In doing their oral presentation, I will use the following prompt question:

**Tell me a story about this artefact**

## Appendix 4

### *Unstructured open-ended interview*

I will use the unstructured interview for the research question “how does TVET lecturers understanding of vocational pedagogy shape their practice?” This question will be used to elicit understanding of lecturers’ daily practice. I will use the following prompt question to answer the research question:

**What is your everyday experience as a lecturer working in a TVET college that focuses on vocational education?**

The following prompts will be used in probing the participants;

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Professional</b>
Interaction with colleagues	Role as TVET lecturer
Interaction with learners	Teaching experiences
Source of motivation	

## APPENDIX 5

### PERMISSION FROM THE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH

6 Tibet Road

Putfontein

1513

13 September 2017

The Principal/Rector

#### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

My name is Monica Mashiloane, I am currently doing Masters in Education (M Ed) in the collage of Humanities – School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am specializing in teacher development studies and I want to undertake a research study exploring the:

***“Stories of lecturers lived educational experience of vocational pedagogy in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges”***

TVET lecturers are major role players to prepare learners for the job market as potential employees or entrepreneurs. My study will focus on lecturers’ knowledge and understanding of their practice as industry and educator experts.

Your college has been identified as one of the locations in which particular lecturers will be selected to participate in the study. For this study, I am looking for lecturers 1) who have been teaching for 15 years or more, 2) between 10 and 15 years, 3) between 5 and 10 years and 4) 5 years or less. Participation in this study will require lecturers to engage in arts-based research methods, referring to artefact and collage inquiry followed by unstructured interviews. These activities will take place at a convenient time suitable to lecturers, outside of instructional time and will not disrupt their day-to-day functioning.

Please note that:

- Confidentiality of the college is guaranteed as I will not mention the college's name in my dissertation and pseudonyms will be used for participants. Participants' inputs will not be attributed to you in person or to the college.
- There are series of data collection activities that will take place. I will meet with participants for about 1-2 hours per day for approximately three days in two months upon commencement of the data collection process
- Any information obtained cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for the purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and will be destroyed after 5 years.
- The participants have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research and they will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your college's involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- The following equipment: audio recording, video recording will be used to validate collected data and participant's names and the school's name will not be used in any presentation or publication of this study that may enable anyone to identify who the participants and the college are.

I hereby request a letter of permission from you as a principal that permits me to conduct this study at your college.

My supervisor is Prof. Daisy Pillay who is an associate professor at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Edgewood campus, School of Education. She can be contacted on:

Email: [pillaygv@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:pillaygv@ukzn.ac.za),

Telephone: 031-2607598

Cell: 0827765751

For more details, you may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms Phumelele Ximba

Ethics office 031 260 3587

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Thanking you for your assistance.

Yours in Education,

Monica Mashiloane (Ms)

0630157891 or mtmash@gmail.com

APPENDIX 5

PRINCIPAL'S DECLARATION

**PRINCIPAL/ RECTORS' DECLARATION**

I..... (Full names of principal/rector) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I do give consent for the study to be conducted in my college.

I also understand and give permission for the use of the following recording devices during the group sessions and data production process.

	<b>Willing</b>	<b>Not willing</b>
Audio recording		
Photographic equipment		

**SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL**

**DATE**

.....

.....

## APPENDIX 7

### LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

6 Tibet Road

Putfontein

1513

September 2017

Dear Lecturer Participant

#### **REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY.**

My name is Monica Mashiloane. I am currently registered for a Master's degree in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am specializing in teacher development studies and my research study focuses on TVET lectures lived educational experience. My research topic is:

***“Stories of lecturers lived educational experience of vocational pedagogy in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges”***

You have been selected as one of the four lecturers in TVET colleges of KwaZulu-Natal to participate in this study. This study specifically looks at lecturers' experience, knowledge and understanding of working in TVET colleges. As a participant, you are invited to engage in the following activities as part of the data generation. The data generation methods will be arts-based making reference to artefact and collage inquiry followed by an individual unstructured interview. These sessions will take place at a time of convenient to you and

will not disrupt your day-to-day functioning at the college and will be conducted out of your instructional time.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- Each session may take up to one hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to participate, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether you will allow the group sessions to be recorded by the following equipment: audio recording and video recording.

I hereby request a letter of permission from you the participant to conduct this research

My supervisor is Prof. Daisy Pillay who is an associate professor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood campus, School of Education. She can be contacted on:

Email: [pillayqv@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:pillayqv@ukzn.ac.za),

Telephone: 031-2607598

Cell: 0827765751

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms Phumelele Ximba

Ethic's office 031 260 3587

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Thanking you for your assistance.

Yours in Education,

Monica Mashiloane (Ms)

Email: [mtmash@gmail.com](mailto:mtmash@gmail.com)

Cell: 0630157891

## APPENDIX 8

### PARTICIPANT DECLARATION

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

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

I also understand and give permission for the use of the following recording devices during the interview and data production process\_

	Willing	Not willing
Audio recording:		
Collage Inquiry and transcribed data		
Artefact Inquiry and transcribed data		
Interview and transcribed data		

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE**

.....

.....