



Research Article

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An Analysis of How TVET is Playing a Significant Role in Fostering Students' Skills and Competencies in South Africa

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Abstract

It is generally acceptable that the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a vital role in all aspects of the economy and the society at large in that it is a viable transformative tertiary educational institution for promoting and realising the South African government's developmental strategy and agenda. Essentially, it seeks to ensure that learners who failed to secure admission to the university still have the opportunity to go to tertiary institutions where they will learn and acquire skills and competency that will make them employable, be self-employed and become employers by creating jobs. Also, this paper shows that in the quest for economic growth and development, TVET has moved to the forefront of political changes aimed at eliminating poverty, unemployment, and inequality. More importantly, TVET positioned itself to address the government's developmental challenges and difficulties through the provision of high-quality education to students to skill and empower them. Against this backdrop, TVET continues to be a reliable institution to train and educate young people to build the ideal of a democratic developmental state.

Keywords: TVET institutions, Skill and competency, Poverty alleviation, Employment opportunity, Development, South Africa

1. Introduction

Essentially, the TVET institution is positioned as a vehicle for the realisation and fulfillment of the South African government's developmental strategy and agenda. Many young people prefer to enroll and obtain degrees from the university, this is possible where after matric the student scores required grade marks for admission to the university (Khambule, 2019). This notwithstanding, even if the student scored marks below the requirements for admission to the university, the student still could attend a higher institution to acquire skills and competency for employability and TVET provides such an opportunity (Olowoyo et al., 2020). Notably, many young people in the country do not complete secondary school or meet the requirements for university education, they enter the job market with poor employability and lack of skills to meet the workplace demands. Whereas the TVET colleges offer more vocational education at the tertiary level where those who were unable to be admitted at the university can apply and get admitted (Sebola, 2022). This will increase the

enrolment at the post-secondary school and reduce high dropout rates across the board. These policies are founded on the assumption that education and training can help to alleviate social unfairness, unemployment, and poverty. Simultaneously, TVET education will help to promote social justice by expanding participation in programs that help underprivileged people find work (Moodie et al., 2019). The objective of TVET is contextualized in the 'Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training' (2012) (PSET) as an institution positioned to provide a contemporary, well-articulated post-school education and training system to the students. According to the policy framework, this system of training would make the trainees to be properly trained and receive the competency needed to unlock opportunities in the employment sector. Akoojee (2016) asserted that "education and Training in South Africa is important to the building of the ideals of a democratic developmental state." Therefore, a strong engagement with the system that ensures widespread access to high-quality TVET education for sustainable livelihoods and productive work will foster the South African government's developmental program and agenda (Odell et al., 2020). In this sense, an effective democratic developmental state requires the formation of a robust, responsive and effective TVET institution. It also entails that TVET education responds to national development by addressing crucial post-apartheid societal challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and inequities (Ngcwangu, 2019).

2. Methodology

This research utilised a literature review research approach, hugely premised on critical analysis of germane literature pertinent to TVET education, development, skill and employment by making use of contemporary scholarly works (Powell and McGrath, 2019). And more importantly, this research heavily relies on documents that are in the public domain. Information retrieved from them was utilised to address the concerns raised in this paper (Zungu, 2016).

3. Literature Review

South Africa faces a slew of developmental issues, all of which have ramifications for the TVET college education sector. These issues are closely linked and cannot be described separately (Taylor and van der Bijl, 2018). To some extent, pundits viewed the TVET as merely a discriminatory tertiary institution that reinforced gender, class, racial, and other inequities concerning access to educational opportunities and success (Plance, 2020). Whereas the TVET should be the go-between in ensuring the delivery of quality education and fostering development and growth (Mutebi and Kiplagat, 2022). The process of industrialization and economic development is inextricably related to TVET college education (Sooklal, 2006). The role of TVET education in relation to economic and human development is the foundation for the growth of TVET college sector education (Ngcwangu, 2019). Rasool and Mahembe (2014) further emphasize that TVET should play an important role within a democratic state by ensuring that the competency received by the trainees should be deployed and used to enhance national social and economic goals. Foster economic growth and development and ensure poverty reduction through employment creation. Also, bridges the unequal income distribution gap and ensures sustainable livelihoods (Juu et al., 2020). The national policy ideas in South Africa have reaffirmed the critical importance of TVET in economic development and provided the required reason for radical change, but the reality of putting the proposals into practice requires some rethinking (Rosenberg et al., 2019). The creation of the 'National Development Plan' (NDP) and the 'White Paper on Post-School Education and Training' are current policy processes (DHET, 2013). This marked the start of a new policy of centralization that built on the efforts of 'South Africa's Human Resource Development Council' (SHRDC). Bhorat et al. (2016) indicate that TVET college graduates mostly seek jobs as not skilled people but as secondary school dropouts. Despite the significant tasks allocated to TVET in attaining the South African government's developmental goal, its performance is likely to be limited unless it is linked to economic empowerment conditions that

sustain its provisioning (Akoojee, 2009). Furthermore, if it is to be responsive to developmental aspirations, the relevance of skills for establishing sustainable livelihoods must be highlighted. As a result, the TVET college education sector must move away from traditional concepts of growth while also including or redefining the sector's purpose and function (Gewe, 2016). This will ensure that the institutional setting is more effective in achieving the developmental objectives. In terms of the objectives, the link between TVET and the economy must be stressed and its significant impact on human development (Padi et al., 2022). The TVET college sector's education must adapt to the changing economic realities that it now faces. This can be accomplished by redefining responsiveness and rearranging the interactions between the provisioning and the opportunity to use acquired skills for development and growth. The specific role in development has been given to the objective of 'the TVET. One of the drivers of development in a state is quality education and as such the TVET plays a prominent role in this regard (Mutebi and Kiplagat, 2022). To reflect this changing reality, the mission of TVET colleges must be restructured. As a result, TVET must respond to the new order that is associated with youth unemployment and exclusion. Regardless of the many policies proposed in response to the challenge, the formation of democratic policies is the common solution to the developmental state. This permits the government to intervene to help individuals, particularly the poor, benefit from progress (Ngqebe, 2017). This will help to establish a long-term national consensus to overcome the current issues. To address various developmental challenges one of which is lack of skill, the NDP identified training and skills development intervention and to realize South Africa's developmental objective, the following must be accomplished:

- We must increase employment by accelerating economic growth;
- We must improve education, skills development, and innovation; and
- We must strengthen the state's ability to play a developmental transforming role."

By placing skills and education on the national agenda, the prospects for TVET college transformation will demand more attention (Allais and Wedekind, 2020). This provides a chance for TVET college sector education to respond to its neglect. Importantly, establishing TVET institutions and strengthening the concept of a capable state will enable the capacity to achieve human development that is required to ensure equity, sustainability and peace in the country (Kanwar et al., 2019). Both a capable state and a developmental state play major roles in society as they seek to ensure that ideology produces social economic development where there is a focus on ensuring that steps are being taken to redress unemployment, inequality, and poverty (Mathebula, 2016).

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 TVET role in the labour market

The TVET Colleges are a crucial component of mid-level post-school skills supply created to react to the formal economy's skills needs (Akoojee, 2016). But not fully utilised by the government to address the skill shortages (Allais and Wedekind, 2020). Education, training, and skill gaps have long been considered vital to the establishment of a democratic state. In 2009, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) created a new ministry of post-secondary education and training, which gave the TVET college sector additional attention (Odora and Naong, 2014). This signaled a chance to re-establish egalitarian values entrenched in a form of democratic development state in a new democratic dispensation. As a new political system, this signaled an opportunity to re-establish equitable values embedded in a form of democratic development state. At a point in time, the TVET was neglected, when the problems of skills shortages confronted the country, the DHET saw it as an opportunity to promptly respond by using TVET colleges to address the skills shortages whereby the youths were encouraged to enroll massively at TVET colleges as opposed to the skewed enrolment pattern of higher university enrolment (Akoojee, 2016). Undoubtedly, TVET continues to face various challenges that are impeding its progress hence failing to deliver as mandated, the funds used in

uplifting and upgrading have yet to yield the desired outcomes hence imparting severely on the image and output of the sector (Akoojee, 2008). The TVET sector is also inundated with vices such as “poor financial management, teacher ineffectiveness, poor administration and governance, inadequate infrastructure, poor labor market outcomes, and inadequate response to student requirements” (Akoojee, 2008). On the other hand, the recognition of TVET institutions as a significant component of post-secondary education and training is worthy of special praise and admiration. Accordingly, the ‘White Paper on TVET college education is “critical to the provision of post-secondary education and training.” As a result, for transformative reasons, it is an undeniably vital part of the future post-school education and training environment (Mirabel et al., 2022). TVET college sector education, as a major weapon for change, must aid the government in achieving its developmental goals. Several significant aims for the post-school system are mentioned in the white paper. This policy, which highlights the importance of post-secondary education, reflects the government’s strong commitment to the interplay between education and the employment market. This perspective urges us to consider education and training as offering more than simply the information and skills that the labor market demands. Individuals who are capable of functioning as competent, creative, and ethical members of a democratic society must benefit from the policy. The policy goal of expanding the college system’s responsibilities is to create a requisite learning environment that would foster creativity and a thinking citizenry that will appreciate and embrace democratic, ethical and participative civic responsibility in society (Kioupi and Voulvoulis, 2019). The basic objective of TVET in responding to the formal economy is crucial in that it prepares students for employability to be self-employed (Gamede and Uleanya, 2019). This is critical for the development and maintenance of tight working partnerships between TVET and employers. Partnerships will produce numerous possibilities on their own, as seen by the robust engagement between TVET colleges and employers. According to the DHET (2013), after students have been trained at the TVET colleges, they should be assisted in finding, discovering and accessing various possibilities for work-integrated learning in order to help them position themselves in a suitable working environment after they have completed their studies. The TVET college system responds meaningfully to the various challenges and difficulties faced by many nations and in particular developing countries which entail that very few young people and adults can develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are needed today in the changing world of work environment. Essentially, institutions are required to increase access by exclusively giving chances to post-school youth, both in terms of context and content. This access should be viewed in terms of quantity, quality, and content. It’s vital to understand that South Africa is currently dealing with three big issues which are the persistent increase in unemployment, entrenched inequality and broad poverty.

4.2 *The purpose of TVET from a human capital perspective*

Significantly, when it comes to the issue of the human capital approach, the foundation of this is in the Industrial Revolution and the ideology of productivism (Anderson, 2009). Notably, the TVET colleges are the ample key tool for providing the human capital that industry requires because they produce the skills required for development, employability and preparing graduates more directly to realize the South African government’s developmental agenda (Tickly, 2013). UNESCO (2012) asserts that human capital TVET providing should be defined “as demand-driven, and its curriculum must be competency-based.” More importantly, competency-based training seeks “to pay greater attention to learners and their capacity to master practical activities and acquire competencies than to the level or kind of certification, or the length of training, and it continues to be produced in accordance with stated occupational skills demands” (Msibi, 2021). Rasool and Mahembe (2014) place much emphasis on the need to tailor TVET college sector education towards the skills demands of the economy and society at large and ensure that concrete and significant partnerships and collaborations with sectoral organizations, and business groups should be formed and be made sustainable.

4.3 The impact of TVET on education and skill development

TVET refers to a specialized form of education that is primarily designed to equip individuals with practical skills, knowledge, and competencies related to specific industries, occupations, or vocations (McGrath, 2005). TVET programs are typically structured to prepare students for entry into the workforce, and they are often distinguished by their hands-on and application-oriented approach (Powell, 2014). TVET education encompasses a diverse range of fields, including but not limited to technology, engineering, healthcare, and the trades (Stephen, 2020). It provides students with a structured curriculum that combines theoretical knowledge with practical training. The aim is to ensure that graduates are not only well-versed in the underlying principles of their chosen field but also capable of applying those principles in real-world settings. TVET is often subject to specific legal frameworks and regulations established by governments to govern its operation (Gyimah, 2020). These laws define the establishment, accreditation, and oversight of TVET institutions and programs. They may specify requirements for licensing instructors, safety standards, and curriculum content. Legal provisions also exist to protect the rights of TVET students, ensuring they receive quality education and fair treatment.

TVET programs are typically designed in collaboration with industry stakeholders to ensure that graduates meet industry-specific standards and requirements (Adams, 2019). This alignment with industry standards enhances the employability of TVET graduates and fosters a strong connection between education and the workforce. TVET institutions must adhere to legal and regulatory frameworks established by government authorities (Sithole et al., 2022). These regulations often govern aspects such as program accreditation, licensing of instructors, safety standards, and the protection of students' rights. Compliance with these laws is critical to ensuring the quality and legitimacy of TVET education.

Governments play a vital role in regulating TVET education to safeguard the interests of students and employers. They establish accreditation bodies and standards that TVET institutions must meet to offer recognized programs. Accreditation ensures that education providers maintain quality and adhere to legal requirements. The legal recognition of TVET credentials is a critical aspect of its impact on education. Laws and regulations typically govern the certification and credentialing process, ensuring that TVET graduates receive legally recognized certificates, diplomas, or degrees. This legal recognition is crucial for graduates seeking employment, as it validates their qualifications and allows them to practice their chosen professions legally (Powell, 2014).

Legal principles related to education access and equity are essential in the context of TVET. Laws often require that TVET programs are accessible to a diverse range of individuals, irrespective of their background or characteristics (Raby et al., 2023). Anti-discrimination laws and policies ensure that opportunities in TVET are provided on an equal basis, regardless of gender, race, disability, or other protected attributes (Nkosi, 2023). TVET is often viewed as a vital component of a nation's workforce development strategy. Legal frameworks may incentivize TVET programs through financial support, tax incentives, or other mechanisms. These legal provisions aim to promote economic growth and development by ensuring that the workforce is equipped with relevant skills and knowledge. Legal mechanisms often establish bodies responsible for accrediting and monitoring the quality of TVET institutions and programs. Accreditation ensures that TVET education meets established standards and maintains program quality. Legal provisions may require regular evaluations and compliance with specific educational benchmarks.

Laws and regulations related to consumer protection extend to TVET education. Legal frameworks may require transparency in program offerings, accurate representation of outcomes, and provisions for addressing grievances and disputes. These legal safeguards protect TVET students' rights as consumers of educational services. The impact of TVET on education is strongly influenced by the legal context within which it operates. Legal frameworks govern various aspects of TVET, including its accessibility, quality, recognition, and alignment with workforce and economic development goals (Mutebi and Ferej, 2023). These legal provisions are essential for ensuring that

TVET effectively contributes to education and skill development while safeguarding the rights and interests of students and the broader society.

In legal terms, the assertion that TVET is in harmony with international legal instruments and agreements related to education, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), entails that education must be relevant to the needs of society (Masombuka, 2022). The UDHR is a foundational international legal document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. It sets forth a comprehensive framework of fundamental human rights and freedoms that should be universally protected and respected.

Article 26 of the UDHR explicitly recognizes the right to education as a fundamental human right. It states, "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available, and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." TVET is in harmony with international legal instruments and agreements related to education. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognizes the right to education (Article 26), which encompasses access to TVET as a means of ensuring education is relevant to the needs of society. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4, emphasize the importance of quality education and lifelong learning, highlighting TVET as a critical component to meet these global targets. Many countries have established laws and regulations governing TVET within their education systems. These legal frameworks define the objectives, organization, and quality standards for TVET programs. These national laws also address issues like accreditation, certification, and the recognition of TVET qualifications. Legal recognition ensures that individuals who complete TVET programs have their skills acknowledged and can use them in the job market or for further education.

TVET contributes to expanded access to education by providing alternative pathways for individuals who may not excel in traditional academic settings. Legal provisions often promote inclusivity by ensuring that TVET is accessible to a diverse range of learners, including those with disabilities or from marginalized communities. TVET programs are designed to meet the demands of the labor market. Legal frameworks mandate that TVET institutions adapt to changing industry needs and technological advancements, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for the workforce (Pitso, 2018).

The key legal point in this context is the inclusion of "TVET" within the UDHR's provisions. This recognizes the importance of TVET as a component of education that is essential to fulfilling the right to education for all individuals. The UDHR's reference to technical and professional education as part of the right to education underscores the notion that education should be relevant to the needs of society (Edeji, 2020). This means that education, including TVET, should not only be accessible but also practical and geared toward preparing individuals for the workforce and societal demands.

By emphasizing the availability of technical and professional education, the UDHR aligns with broader global educational goals, such as those articulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 4 of the SDGs specifically aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities, which encompasses the provision of TVET. Recognizing TVET within the UDHR confers legal recognition and protection to this form of education. It signifies that governments and international bodies are obliged to ensure the availability and quality of technical and professional education to fulfill the right to education.

In essence, from a legal perspective, when it is stated that TVET is in harmony with international legal instruments like the UDHR, it means that TVET is not only consistent with the principles and rights enshrined in such instruments but is also explicitly recognized as a component of the right to education, with a particular focus on its relevance to the practical needs of society and the workforce (Terblanche, 2017). This legal recognition underscores the significance of TVET in ensuring that education serves the broader goals of human development and societal progress.

Rasool and Mahembe (2014) contend that there is a consensus within the field of TVET that the

TVET College sector is failing to adequately meet the educational and societal requirements. This suggests that it is necessary to conceptualize the purpose or objective of TVET college sector education and such conceptualization should encompass an understanding of the historical background and theoretical foundations of TVET education. Rasool and Mahembe further contend that the progress of industrialization and economic development is closely interlinked with TVET college education. This implies that the quality and effectiveness of TVET education have a direct impact on a country's economic growth and development.

Rasool and Mahembe underline the foundational role of TVET education in the context of economic and human development. This means that the growth and success of the TVET college sector are fundamental to advancing economic and social well-being. Furthermore, they emphasize the need to expand the role of TVET college sector education in a democratic developmental state (Naong, 2016). They argue that it should not only focus on traditional educational goals but also address broader national social and economic objectives. These objectives include economic growth, poverty alleviation, job creation, reducing income inequality, promoting sustainable livelihoods, fostering youth development, encouraging innovation, and advancing industrial progress. This expanded role is to be achieved by offering high-quality educational and training programs.

In legal terms, Rasool and Mahembe's statements underscore the critical role of TVET college sector education in driving economic and social development. They advocate for a holistic approach to TVET education, one that recognizes its historical and theoretical foundations and aligns its goals with broader national interests, particularly in the context of a democratic developmental state (Needham, 2019). This perspective highlights the legal and policy implications associated with TVET education's contribution to societal advancement and underscores the importance of quality education and training programs in achieving these goals.

The 2013 White Paper on Post-School Education and Training places a strong emphasis on the pivotal role of public TVET colleges. The central objective outlined in this policy document is the "strengthening of relationships between these colleges and the workplace." This strategic alignment is aimed at enhancing the opportunities for learners to acquire practical training experience and to improve their prospects of securing stable and sustainable employment.

Papier et al., (2016) underscore the critical role of employability for college graduates, viewing it as a significant milestone in the journey toward economic advancement. Employability, in this context, encompasses the readiness and ability of college graduates to secure gainful employment in their chosen fields. Papier et al. further advocated for research that not only assesses the readiness of artisans but also evaluates the needs and expectations of employers. The ultimate objective of such research endeavors is to facilitate a meaningful connection between employers and TVET colleges. This connection serves the purpose of offering students viable and practical employment options upon completing their education and training (Makole et al., 2023).

4.4 Addressing skill gaps through high-quality training

The development of curricula and the provision of high-quality training in South African TVET colleges are critical components of the country's efforts to address skills gaps, reduce unemployment, and promote economic development. In accordance with the assertions made by Papier et al, it is posited that a requisite condition for the establishment of robust curricula within the context of apprenticeship programs is the provision of high-quality apprenticeships. Such curricula, in keeping with this standard, ought to be extrapolated from the professional work responsibilities vested upon the apprentices, characterized by their developmental nature, and serving as the fundamental framework underpinning both the vocational learning processes conducted within the enterprise and the vocational school. The fundamental rationale behind the proposition that employers should spearhead the creation of curricula is predicated on the premise that employers possess an intimate familiarity with the exigencies of their respective fields.

This paradigm shift towards allowing employers to assume a leading role in the genesis of

curricular frameworks manifests in multifaceted ways, encompassing not only the curriculum's inception but extending to the domains of apprentice recruitment, qualification criteria, and the evaluative processes. Following the findings elucidated by McGrath (2011), a noteworthy implication of this employer-centric approach is that employers may, inadvertently or otherwise, underestimate the importance of generic proficiencies that are indispensable for professional mobility within the apprenticeship context.

In accordance with the insights advanced by Papier et al, it is discerned that the bedrock upon which commendable apprenticeship programs are constructed unequivocally rests on the edifice of quality training. Such apprenticeship endeavors must be meticulously crafted with the overarching aim of nurturing apprentices possessing not only high-caliber competencies but also the capacity for adaptability and self-sufficiency, whilst simultaneously adhering to the imperatives of cost-efficiency and temporal expediency.

The fulfillment of this imperative mandate necessitates, among other things, the proficient certification of vocational educators, trainers, and assessors who are charged with the responsibility of imparting training in South Africa. Consequently, apprenticeship programs should judiciously prescribe that apprentices, on recurrent occasions, partake in off-the-job learning experiences, thereby availing themselves of the pedagogical resources and facilities furnished by publicly funded vocational institutions (Ball et al., 2005).

In consonance with the pronouncements articulated by McGrath (2011), it is imperative to underscore the criticality of exercising meticulous quality control mechanisms in the domain of apprentice training. These measures are indispensable to ensure that employers, who are integrally implicated in the training process, faithfully discharge their training obligations. It is incumbent upon the custodians of apprenticeship programs to tread judiciously in this regard, eschewing the imposition of overly burdensome quality requirements that might conceivably discourage employer participation.

In the realm of apprenticeship systems, a salient objective resides in facilitating the mobility of trainees and in furnishing them with opportunities that engender novel career prospects. This aspiration is anchored in the suppositions advanced by MacGrath et al, wherein it is posited that the acquisition of foundational knowledge and the inculcation of workplace-oriented curricula collectively constitute indispensable scaffolds underpinning the comprehensive development of apprentices. Moreover, apprenticeship paradigms should encompass multifaceted dimensions that embrace the provision of avenues for active engagement, pedagogical facilitation, and erudition (Alam and Mohanty, 2023).

Concomitantly, the outcomes stemming from the certification process must be meticulously calibrated to align with their designated purposes, characterized by their endorsement by higher education institutions and professional bodies, and intrinsically tethered to the routes leading to professional qualifications. This alignment is pivotal in rendering the certifications universally acknowledged and germane to the advancement of apprentices along their career trajectories within their respective industries.

Furthermore, the selection of personnel within industries who shoulder the onus of overseeing apprenticeship progression should be judiciously executed, with due consideration afforded to the delineation of career pathways and avenues for career advancement. This strategic personnel selection underscores the vital role played by mentors and supervisors in shaping the development and growth of apprentices as they traverse their vocational journeys.

In accordance with the observations presented by Papier et al, it is evident that engineering firms operating within the industry impose a compelling mandate necessitating the evaluation of prospective employees or new entrants based on a multifaceted spectrum of competencies encompassing practical aptitude, academic acumen, and attitudinal attributes, all of which are deemed indispensable for employability within the sector. In this regard, the formal college syllabus assumes a pivotal role in striving to encompass the essential elements of both academic and practical training requisite for meeting the industry's exacting employment standards.

However, a particular area of concern emerges concerning the National Certificate (Vocational) or NCV program, which, according to industry stakeholders, may fall short of providing students with a sufficiently robust practical foundation (Mabunda, 2019). This deficiency becomes manifest in the context of internal examinations administered by businesses during the employment interview process, wherein a notable proportion of students reportedly encounter challenges and experience suboptimal performance. Such observations extend to students holding NATED theoretical qualifications, even if some of these individuals possess workshop-based competencies. This disjuncture underscores a disconnect between the academic preparation provided by formal education institutions and the practical expectations delineated by the industry.

Conversely, the confluence between industries and TVET institutions appears to beget enhanced employability prospects, as industries potentially encounter a diminished necessity to bridge pronounced gaps in practical proficiencies (Chanda, 2023). The consensus among a majority of industries underscores the imperatives of employees' ability to proficiently undertake essential administrative functions, including the effective issuance of invoices and the performance of rudimentary administrative duties inherent to organizational operations.

It is noteworthy, however, that certain industries have expressed a vociferous call for the cultivation of cross-cutting competencies that extend beyond the purview of the conventional curriculum. This resonates with a recognition that, in addition to core academic and practical proficiencies, there exists an exigency for the inculcation of versatile skills that can traverse conventional disciplinary boundaries, thereby engendering a more versatile and adaptable workforce.

High-quality TVET curricula should be closely aligned with the skills and competencies demanded by industries. This alignment ensures that graduates are job-ready and can directly contribute to the workforce. Regular consultation with industry stakeholders and labor market analysis help identify the specific skills required in various sectors. The process of curriculum development in TVET colleges involves designing programs and courses that reflect current industry standards and technological advancements. This process should be dynamic, with frequent updates to stay in sync with evolving industry needs. Collaboration with industry experts, professional bodies, and employers is essential in curriculum design.

TVET colleges should prioritize practical and hands-on training. Many technical and vocational skills require direct experience, and students should have access to well-equipped workshops, laboratories, and simulation tools (Schnobel, 2019). Practical training helps students apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. High-quality training relies on skilled and experienced instructors. TVET colleges should have a recruitment and retention strategy that attracts and retains qualified educators. Continuous professional development for instructors is also crucial to ensure they stay current with industry trends and teaching methodologies.

Rigorous quality assurance mechanisms are essential to maintain high standards in TVET colleges. External evaluations, accreditation processes, and regular audits help identify areas for improvement and ensure that training meets national and international quality benchmarks. To stay relevant, TVET colleges must integrate innovative teaching methods and the latest technologies into their training programs. This includes using modern equipment and software relevant to the industries they serve (Jafar et al., 2020).

Many TVET programs benefit from work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities, such as internships, apprenticeships, or cooperative education. These experiences provide students with real-world exposure and a smoother transition to the workforce. TVET colleges can contribute to economic development by engaging in applied research and development projects. Research can lead to innovations, improved practices, and the development of new technologies, all of which can have a positive impact on industries and economic growth.

TVET colleges should be flexible and responsive to changing industry needs. This includes offering short courses or upskilling programs to meet emerging skill requirements (Grech and Camilleri, 2020). The ability to adapt to evolving demands is crucial for long-term relevance. High-quality training should be accessible to all segments of the population, regardless of socioeconomic

background. Special efforts should be made to address historical disparities and ensure that historically disadvantaged communities have equal access to TVET opportunities (Raby, 2023). Collaboration between TVET colleges and industry partners is vital. Industry can provide input on curriculum development, offer resources and equipment, and provide opportunities for practical training. These partnerships enhance the relevance of TVET training and improve graduates' employability.

5. Conclusions

The perspectives on the role of TVET colleges in development and growth encompass a multifaceted landscape influenced by historical legacies, policy reforms, and economic ideologies. The evolution of these perspectives reflects the intricate interplay between educational institutions, the state, and the private sector in shaping human capital development and economic progress.

Historical legacies, as exemplified by the apartheid era in South Africa, have left a profound imprint on the TVET sector, marked by historical injustices, discrimination, and disparities in access to education and training. The recognition of these historical injustices has catalyzed policy reforms aimed at rectifying imbalances and promoting inclusivity, particularly in post-apartheid South Africa.

The role of TVET colleges in development and growth has been subject to diverse policy approaches, including both endogenous and exogenous privatization models. These models reflect the tension between the state's responsibility to provide education as a public good and the engagement of private entities in delivering educational services. The privatization debate highlights the need for legal and policy frameworks that balance market-driven initiatives with broader societal and economic objectives.

The concept of employability has emerged as a pivotal milestone in assessing the effectiveness of TVET colleges. Aligning TVET programs with the demands of the labor market is considered essential for economic progress. However, this alignment must also consider the broader developmental goals of reducing inequality, alleviating poverty, and fostering sustainable livelihoods.

The shift from education as a public good to a private good, as highlighted by Ball and Youdell, raises critical legal and policy questions about access, equity, and accountability within the TVET sector. The tension between decentralized and centralized models of education governance adds complexity to the debate and underscores the importance of legal frameworks that navigate this terrain effectively.

In light of these perspectives, it is evident that the role of TVET colleges in development and growth is a dynamic and evolving subject. It requires ongoing legal and policy deliberations to strike a balance between market-driven approaches, inclusivity, and the overarching goal of fostering equitable and sustainable socioeconomic development.

In summary, the perspectives on the role of TVET colleges in development and growth reflect the complexities of balancing historical legacies, policy reforms, and economic ideologies. Legal and policy frameworks play a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of TVET education, ensuring that it effectively contributes to broader developmental objectives while addressing the evolving needs of the labor market and society at large.

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