CHALLENGES CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS POOR PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR NCV PROGRAMMES IN VHEMBE FET COLLEGE

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **TSHISIKULE AZWIANEWI SHADRACK**, hereby declare that the dissertation for the degree of Master in Public Management at University of Venda hereby submitted by me, has not been submitted previously for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

..... 30/08/2016.....

TSHISIKULE AZWIANEWI SHADRACK **DATE**

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- I would like to thank my children, Mulalo, Phindulo and Tshedza You were there for me all the way;

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DEDICATION

On a personal note, I dedicate this project to my parents, my mother the late Mrs Tshisikule Tshimangadzo Meliah and my father Mr Tshisikule Hanedzani Ellias

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ABSTRACT

The study was investigating the Challenges contributing towards poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. FET colleges in South Africa have been the target of intensive policy reform in the last 10 years since 1998 when the first FET Act was passed. Since 2006 FET colleges have been recapitalized through massive government investment in order to improve infrastructure, introduce a more relevant curriculum, re-train staff and assist college learners financially to access learning programmes. In particular a new curriculum was introduced with the rollout of 11 programmes under the National Certificate: Vocational, first at Level 2 in 2007, at Level 3 in 2008, and in 2009 at Level 4. In terms of the South African National Qualifications Framework, NCV levels 2-4 equate roughly to Grades 10, 11 and 12 in the schooling sector.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collection and analysis. Quantitative and qualitative techniques were mostly used in that they provided the researcher with an understanding of experiences and Challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. Purposive and simple random samplings were used for selection of sample for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used for analysis in this study. Secondary data were obtained from government publication, research publication, and report. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires and interview.

Major Findings of this study are the following:

- The study found that 45 respondents constituting 56.9% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 school leavers as originally intended,

- The study also found that 62 respondents constituting 78.5% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV student,

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Major recommendations to address the findings these included the point that:

- Attendance can also be improved by the quality of teaching offered by the lecturers. Students seldom stay away from lessons whose lecturer do thorough preparation which adds value to school attendance. A positive measure of improving attendance could be in the form of a reward of some type to students who exhibit disciplined character. The reward could be in the form of an award given to a particular pupil on a monthly basis.
- The researcher recommends that the FET, through Campus Managers should motivate lecturers. An educator who has a history of performing well in his subject must be rewarded and promoted to high position. Promotional posts should be occupied by qualified skilled lecturers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DOE:	Department of Education
EC:	Educators are not committed
IQMS:	Integrated Quality Management System
LC:	learners are not committed
MEC:	Member of Executive Council
MSD:	Monitoring and Support is not strengthened by the Department
NCV:	National Certificate Vocational
OSD:	Occupational Specific Dispensation for Education
RCL:	Representative Council of Learners
RSA:	Republic of South Africa
SACE:	South African Council of Educators
SASA:	South African Schools' Act
SGB:	School Governing Bodies
SIB:	School Improvement Plan
TWS:	Teamwork is not strengthen

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study the researcher introduces the motivation behind, as well as the purpose of, the study. It begins with background information on some of the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. This is then followed by a brief statement of the aim and, lastly, objectives of the study.

The Technical Colleges were declared Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges during 2003 (Provincial Gazette 5829, 2002). Subsequent to that, during 2007, the National Certificate (Vocational), also known as the NCV, was introduced as the new funded mandate for FET colleges nationally (DoE, 2006:9; National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:9). On the other hand, the Department of Labour (DoL) had introduced the Learnership system which was touted as a high quality occupational programme set to replace the apprenticeship system (Mc Kop, 2003:551). The shared responsibility between the two ministries in producing artisans for the country was clearly threatened since each ministry had implemented its own artisanship programme and the former programmes, (NATED courses) at colleges were being phased out (DoE, 2006:9).

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The rationale for introducing the NCV programme was in direct response to the shortage of occupational skills within the country, of which artisanship was central. The then Department of Education (DoE) launched a series of interventions including the huge Recapitalisation funding regime to capacitate college infrastructure and personnel in order to ensure effective delivery of the NCV programme (DoE, 2006:5). The DoE would for the first time spearhead a skills development mandate previously located under the Department of Labour. The aim was to address the skills shortages within the country as depicted within the government strategies, Accelerated and shared growth strategy of South Africa (DoE, 2006:5). To this end, the two government departments were involved in separate strategies towards

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satisfying the deep deficit of skills shortages and unemployment within the country. This resulted in incoherent duplication. However, the lack of synergy between these departments became a major constraint to skills and economic development. Training that took place under the Department of Education (DoE) lacked the much needed experiential and employer based training components. The Minister of Labour soon thereafter retracted his plan to recall the apprenticeship system and announced that it would remain an option for artisanship (Mdladlana, 2005:112). While the DoE proceeded to address skills development through the NCV programme, DoL rolled out skills development through the learnership system. The termination of the NATED courses hindered the delivery of apprenticeships. It became clear to stakeholders that the benefits of the former synergy were lost.

The NCV programme comprises fourteen categories which focus on priority economic sectors within the SA economy. Each programme consists of seven subjects comprising three compulsory subjects: Language (first additional), Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Skills along with four vocational subjects (NCV Subject Guideline, 2007:6). Furthermore, the NCV programme has three levels commencing at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 2 for the first year, followed by levels 3 and 4 respectively. The entrance requirement for learners to enter the programme is a completed Grade 9. Each level is taught over a period of one year therefore the entire course concludes with a Matric equivalent qualification at NQF level 4 (NCV Subject Guideline, 2007:3). The programme is taught in accordance with the outcomes based methodology and comprises a rigorous assessment regime (Papier, 2009:5). Although the NCV programme targets the priority skills shortages of the country, the delivery of the course was largely theoretical. The outcomes of the learning content were not geared occupationally.

The DoE has injected R1.9 billion into the FET Colleges over a period of three years which commenced from 2006. This infrastructure and capacity revamp was incurred in preparation for the NCV programme which was launched at the beginning of 2007 (UMALUSI Report, 2008:x; National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:11; DoE, 2006:5). Given the programme's ambitious aims, much was expected. The alarming poor performance of learners and colleges sent shock waves throughout the various news media. The gross underperformance beckoned an enquiry into the reasons that

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caused the poor performance. The Limpopo Education Department (LED) took up the responsibility of recruiting the FET Institute headed up by Dr Joy Papier to undertake a research intervention that would produce findings and recommendations to address the poor performance attributed to the NCV programme. The FET institute consisted of a group of education specialists whom have been involved within the FET Colleges sector for a number of years. Papier and her staff were instrumental in building the capacity of colleges educators in order to satisfy the requirements of the SAQA principles and guidelines during the early months of 2000.

The NCV programme was launched in 2007 where learners who passed Grade 9 at school level were given unhindered access to the course (National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:11). The DoE issued huge enrolment targets for each college to achieve (Papier, 2009:31). Learners were given access indiscriminately so that national targets could be realised and the associated funding secured (DoE, 2006:5; Papier, 2009:42). The course commenced with a country-wide shortage of text books and many educators were not adequately prepared for the new content and methodology. For many of them OBE was unfamiliar terrain and facilitated learning to fifteen year olds was equally new (Papier, 2009:29). Schools saw the NCV programme as an opportunity to divert their ill-disciplined learners to colleges. Parents from low income households also took the opportunity because of the elaborate bursary scheme offered to learners on the programme (DoE, 2006:5; National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:8). The year proved challenging for college educators, managers and for the learners.

Within the Limpopo province, focus group sessions involving subject matter experts revealed that numerous structural issues existed regarding the NCV curriculum. Some of these issues referred to the content being pitched too high for learners exiting Grade 9 (Papier, 2009:38). Secondly, the level descriptors and range statements of the subjects were vague (Papier, 2009:39). These were meant to guide educators in terms of the scope and depth of the content. The NCV curriculum forums which involved subject experts claimed that learning content was not pitched appropriately to the course level. Newspaper articles pertaining to the weaknesses of the course arose from all corners of the country and evoked a national rethink regarding the programme (Businessday, 2010). More recently at a summit on skills

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development, the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) questioned the relevance of the NCV programme, stating that the programme presented an obstacle to learners and to the country (Nzimande, 2010a). The FET Round Table and Summit (2010:1) emphasised that the NVC programme distracted colleges from its broader mandate of skills development and occupational training. Furthermore concluded that the programme was de-linked from the world of skills development and occupational training therefore posed a cul-de-sac for learners hoping to progress into higher education.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

These colleges had a certain mandate under the Technical Colleges Act (Act No. 104 of 1981), which directed colleges to facilitate the theoretical, and where applicable, structured practical training within the apprenticeship training. South African Schools Act of 1996, Section 34 (1) indicates that the state "must ensure access of learners to education and the redress of past educational inequalities among sections of our people who have suffered particular disadvantages". The past injustices in education are to be redressed through provision of an education of progressively high quality for all learners. As such, it is proper to take stock of the achievements regarding the envisaged aims of the South African Schools Act of 1996.

Despite the provision of legislation Vhembe FET College is still facing the challenges of poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes. The implementation of the FET Act no.16 of 2006 came up with new curriculum which was accompanied by a shift to outcomes based teaching and learning approaches. It also came with rigorous assessment and moderation regime and a national summative examination set by the National Department of Examinations and programme certification conducted by Umalusi. The results of Examination for students who has registered for National Certificate in Vocational Training in 2011, 2012 and 2013 were disappointing at Vhembe FET college Makwarela campus. This research wants to find the root cause of the poor performance of students registered for National Certificate in Vocational training (NCV).

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1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of the study is to investigate Challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College

1.7 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To determine causes of poor performance by students registered for NCV.
- To identify challenges encountered by Vhembe FET College students and Staff.
- To determine strategies that can be used to minimize poor performance in Vhembe FET college

1.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are causes of poor performance by students registered for NCV?
- What are challenges encountered by Vhembe FET College students and Staff?
- What are strategies that can be used to minimize poor performance in Vhembe FET College?

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of the research will be disseminated to various stakeholders within the Department of Education. Those stakeholders would among others, include the participants and the relevant authorities in the Department of Education. It is therefore anticipated that the study may contribute towards addressing Challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. Subsequently, it could constitute a basis upon which some interventions can be made in order to address the identified challenges. This study will also serve as a basis for other related research that may poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College.

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1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research will be conducted at Vhembe FET College Makwarela Campus. Vhembe FET College is composed of four campuses i.e. Makwarela, Tshisimani, Mavhoi, Mashamba campus including our Central Office. They are three schools i.e. Report 191 Engineering, Report 191 Business studies and National Certificate in Vocational training (NCV). The NCV program start from level 2 to level 4 and conducting study in one campus can give the true reflection of what is really happening at the whole College. The research will focus on the NCV program level 2 to level 4 from 2011 to 2013.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Lack of funds: Funds can also limit the research, cost that can be incurred when making copies of questionnaires, handling, packaging and delivery to sample group. There are also some few technicalities like consultation fees to be paid when assisted to analyse data. Printing and binding of the research can be a serious challenge. Sensitivity of questions: People are scared to be victimised therefore some questions will not be answered correctly. They will be assured that the research is for study purpose and their personal information will not be disclosed or requested anywhere in the research. They will also be allowed to see the final analysis.

1.12 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

It is necessary to clarify the following terms that were used frequently in the study:

School related factors: For the purpose of this research, school related factors are defined as all the attitudes and behaviors of teachers, students, Headteachers and other stakeholders in education that either promote or inhibit the academic performance of students.

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Out of school factors: These may include all other factors outside the school environment, for example, the home and pressures from peers outside school, among others.

Monitoring: Management of teachers and learners to enable teaching and learning take place effectively and efficiently.

Basic Education Certificate Examination: It refers to the Basic Education Certificate Examination taken by all students after completing a nine years basic school education programme.

Middle School Era: This was the era when the basic school system comprised six (6) years primary education and four (4) years middle school education now the Junior High School (JHS). The then basic education was therefore of ten (10) years duration instead of the current nine (9) years. It ended with the introduction of the Junior Secondary School now the Junior High School

Academic performance: It refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. It is also said to be the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate your knowledge verbally or down on paper.

Poor Performance: Poor performance as used in the study refers to the situation where performance is not up to expectation, that is, where students' performance is above aggregate 30 per subject in the Basic Education Certificate Education.

1.13 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

In Chapter 1 the background to the study was introduced and the problem was stated. The aims with this research, research questions, research hypothesis, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and brief

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summary of literature review were discussed briefly, and the concept clarification of some words was done.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 deals with the literature review and the necessary information about the topic is given in details. Different authors and writers are quoted expressing their views and opinions on the subject under discussion. In Chapter 2: Literature Review, Curriculum change in the context of library and information resources in NCV is discussed. And also discusses the Challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 is spent on how the researcher decided to conduct his research, how he chose the method of research, and detailed information on the gathering of data is provided in this chapter. The researcher is fortunately in the position to collect data by means of interviews and observation.

CHAPTER 4: DATA INTERPRETATION, PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In Chapter 4 the researcher is analyzing and interpreting the collected data. In doing so, the researcher is ensuring that any evidence and facts provided become the solution of the problem at hand. The data and evidence will hopefully provide answers to the research question in order to support the purpose of the research.

CHAPTER 5: FINDING, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Chapter 5 is the final step wherein the researcher summarizes important issues, draws conclusions and provides sound recommendations.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review determined that within previous research undertaken within the field, remedial intervention was recommended (Umalusi, 2009:39). In addition to this the FET Institute posited that there were inadequate placement processes which were due to the learner targets set by the National Education Department (Papier, 2009:44). Learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance statistics presented within this report.

2.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In South Africa, public FET College lecturers have faced a barrage of policy changes in the 15 years since 1994. The FET Act of 1998, which „set out broad and long-term national framework for transformation of curricula, learning and teaching, qualifications, funding, quality assurance and new institutional arrangements (DoE, 1998), the Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006 to support the vision of a modern, vibrant FET college system and the National Plan for Further Education and Training Colleges in South Africa in 2008, are amongst others policy changes that were implemented in public FET Colleges. All these policies and plans were intended to transform and build the public FET college sector to provide capacity for further education and training for unemployed youth and those who want to further their studies having completed the general education and training phase. Based on these policy documents, the majority of lecturing staff needed to improve and update their academic and vocational knowledge and experience.

2.2.1 The Constitution

The final constitution of Republic of South Africa 1996 emphasised that education was required to be transformed and democratized in accordance with the value of human dignity, human right and freedom, non-racism and non-sexism. The Constitution also guarantees access to basic education for all with the provision that everyone has the right basic education, including adult basic education.

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2.2.2 National Policy and legislation

The following policy and legislative initiatives have been made to assist in the education transformation process. The fundamental policy framework of the Ministry of Education is stated in its White paper: Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa: First Steps to Develop a New System (February, 1995). This document adopted as its point of departure the 1994 education policy framework of the African National Congress. After extensive consultation, negotiations and revision, it was approved by Cabinet and has served as a fundamental reference to subsequent policy and legislative development. Some of the key points presented by the White paper on Education and Training (WPET) include (i) the restructuring of education within the context of transforming the apartheid legacy based on the principles and values enshrined in the Interim Constitution, and (ii) seeking to build to a single non-racial education system (DoE, 1995a:21)

The South Africa Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) 1995 makes provision for the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which forms the framework for a national learning system that integrates education and training at all levels. The NQF is an essential expression and guarantor of a national system where education and training are of equal importance as complementing facets of human competence.

The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) 1996 was designed to make explicit in law the policies and legislative a monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of education, and to formalize relations between national and provincial authorities. T provided the foundation for the establishment of the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) as well as the Head of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM), as intergovernmental forums to work together in developing a new education system. Furthermore the provision was made for formulation of national policies with respect to curriculum, assessment, language policy, as well as quality assurance. NEPA embodies the principle of co-operative governance, elaborated upon in chapter three of the 1996 Constitution.

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The further Education and Training Act (1998), Education white Paper 4 on Further educatio0n and Training (1998) and the National Strategy for further Education and Training (1999-2001) provide the basis for the development of a nationally co-coordinated further education and training system, comprising of the senior secondary component of schooling and technical colleges. It requires further education and training institutions, established in terms of the new legislation, to develop institution al plans, while making provision for programmes-based funding and a national curriculum for learning and teaching.

2.3 NCV ASSESSMENT IN FET COLLEGE

The systemic inefficiencies within the assessment infrastructure should be treated as an extenuating variable that militates against the morale of both, lecturers and learners. The Umalusi report (2009:40) states, that there was no system in place for setting common tasks for the Internal Continuous Assessment (ICASS). The report further purports that lecturers were not sure about the relationship between the various assessments instruments namely, the Integrated Summative Assessment (ISAT) and the ICASS (Umalusi, 2009:40). This is quite alarming because these assessments are directly associated with the performance of learners. It is incumbent on an assessor to be fully acquainted with the assessment mechanisms of the institution since it is the assessor who judges the performance of the learner and encodes the performance accordingly. Umalusi (2009:40) on the other hand recommends the review of these assessment instruments.

2.4 THE NCV CURRICULUM IN LIMPOPO FET COLLEGE

The NCV curriculum has been under a cloud since its introduction. The NCV was introduced as an alternative route to a level 4 "matric". However, the NCV policy also stipulated that the NCV at level 4 "enables students to acquire the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required for employment in a particular occupation or trade, or class of occupations or trades, or entrance into higher education." Therefore, the implication was that the NCV graduate would be ready for access to enter into a job. The NCV was introduced to provide a general-vocational post-school qualification that could be delivered to a

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large mass of young people. It is constructed around the delivery of theory and practical components within a college environment. The general feedback from industry is that the NCV provides a general grounding which must then be further developed in the workplace in order to develop the necessary occupation or trade skills.

Furthermore, there is a concern that the content of the NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned. As a result, in response to a persistent skills supply crisis, five of the largest companies in the construction sector financed the rewriting of the NCV Civil Engineering and Construction curriculum. Companies engaged in the Technical Business Skills Partnership have acknowledged that similar work needs to be done on the engineering curriculum.

The curriculum seeks to ensure equivalence between the language and mathematics subjects in the NCV and those at Grade 10–12 in schools. As such, the suggestion is that post-Grade 12 learners should not need to repeat these subjects as they should have successfully completed them at school. Therefore, there is a call to streamline the NCV for post-matriculates and allow exemption for these subjects. Once these issues are addressed, the NCV should gain credibility amongst industry and, as long as the NCV produces sufficient numbers of graduates each year, employers are likely to work with colleges and recruit these graduates.

NCV is a consequence of weaknesses in the basic education system, and the fundamentals of numeracy and literacy in particular. It must be assumed that the NCV in its current form will be required for as long as the basic education system is not producing school leavers who do not have an adequate skills base to enter occupational learning programmes. These aspects of the current programme should not be a permanent feature of the post-school education and training system, but may be necessary for the next 10 years. This was acknowledged in the Medium Term Budget Statement, 2009. One of the two key commitments of government for FET colleges is 'to address the gap in the capabilities of school leavers to successfully pursue further education and skills training while improvements are introduced to the basic education system'.

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2.5 CHALLENGES CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS TO POOR PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR NCV PROGRAMMES

According to Castejon, Perez and Gilar (2006:30), it is a convenient scapegoat to pass the blame and responsibility for the low academic performance to factors such as socio-economic status, family, culture and the learner being less intelligent than the others. Research conducted at high schools in South Dakota has shown that all learners are educate able, and that the way in which the school is managed, is the most critical factor in determining the quality of education for its learners.

Researchers at the Ohio State University attribute the academic failure to the economic and social conditions while administrators and lecturers have also developed this mindset. The study was undertaken at a FET college on the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota. This argument can be disputed based on the status quo of most rural FET in South Africa. However learners can perform well in chemistry, life science, and physical science without the necessary facilities (laboratory) and chemicals that are necessary for them to perform experiments (Burmaster, 2005:63).

2.51 Student profiles

The performance of students should be investigated in line with their opportunity-to-learn indicators (learner-profiles). Indicators such as attendance of classes would highlight anomalies regarding their attendance, whether it is regular or irregular. Such indicators are early signs that might determine whether learners will perform well academically or not and remedial measures could be implemented before it is too late. Student-profiles also indicate the positive effects of participation of students in extra-curricular activities. In Wisconsin learners who were involved in extra-curricular activities tended to improve in their performance unlike those who were not participating (Engelbrecht, 2011:72).

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2.5.2 Motivation to learn

A study in England noted many factors that influence both the rate and enjoyment of learning. Once an individual has experienced something, and has stored that experience, he is able to refer to and use it at a later stage. As such, learning and memory are inextricably linked. The reward and punishment leveled at learners in the past would affect their motivation and attitude towards learning in the present. The expectations of others and the climate which surrounds learners will determine their readiness to learn, which in turn will result in learners performing poorly academically (Mullins, 2005:39). According to Karande, and Kulkarni, (2005:113) maintenance of high motivation influences psychological and social functioning and facilitates academic performance as well as positive FET college perceptions.

2.5.3 Attitude towards learning

Attitudes are learned throughout life and are embodied within our socialization process. All of us observe others and assess attitudes on the basis of communication style (verbal and nonverbal) and behavior. This is an example of an informal approach, which is spontaneous and based on our understanding of social cues. We may be wrong in our judgment of learners who turn up late for classes and do not ask questions, but they may still hold very positive attitudes towards the subject that was being presented at that time. The negative attitude towards learning could result in learners performing poorly preventing them from obtaining required results for NATED entrance (Saiduddin, 2008:59).

2.5.4 Substance abuse

Weeks, (2013:80) found that 94% of high school learners at Pine Ridge Reservation have used alcohol. He indicated that drinking among this age group is considered 'normal' where males are twice as likely as females to drink daily, which disturbs their concentration and their level of performance at school. In South Africa, the problem of learners abusing alcohol is also an issue that needs serious attention as most rural schools are near liquor outlets. Marijuana and cigarettes are easily accessible to learners these days; it becomes even more difficult for educators to

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control learners who use such substances. The abuse of such substances impairs the learner's ability to learn and respond to questions relating to the learned information. In most cases of crimes committed at schools, substance abuse is involved (Weeks, 2013:208).

2.6 MONITORING MECHANISMS THAT EXIST IN SCHOOLS THAT CAN HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Monitoring in schools has been of tremendous help in improving academic performance. According to the World Bank report (1996), Inadequacies in the supervision of schools, both by district level officers and Head teachers, and the limitations of disciplinary processes are seriously undermining effective teaching and had had adverse effects on the academic performance of students. Eagles and Evans (2009:41) cited in Etsey (2005:98) were also of the view that effective supervision of instruction can improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Supervision is the process of bringing about improvement in an institution by working with people who work with students. It is a process of stimulating growth, and a means of helping teachers and students to help them.

Etsey (2005:75), reports that, effective supervision is necessary for efficient work. It provides a climate in which people have a sense of working for themselves. In government schools in Ghana, internal supervision is normally done by the heads of institutions or their assistants while external supervision is done by supervisors or inspectors from the Ghana Education Service. Etsey, Amedahe and Edjah (2004:112) in a study of 60 schools in Ghana (29 from urban and 31 from rural areas) found that academic performance was better in private schools than public schools because of more effective supervision of work. Of particular concern are the quality and impact of school inspections and the degree of professional independence of the inspectors and circuit supervisors.

The absence of an appropriate performance management framework which sets out clear and relevant accountabilities for monitoring purposes simply compounds the problem. Etsey (2005) is of the view that, supervision and regular visits to the schools would motivate teachers to be more regular and punctual at school. Also,

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when students realize that supervisors are regular in visiting the schools and teachers are always present, they would be challenged to change their attitudes towards school. This would in turn reflect positively on their academic performance.

In the Vhembe District education directorate, certain monitoring mechanisms have been put in place to help improve academic performance at the Basic Examination Certificate Examination (BECE). Some of these mechanisms are performance monitoring tests (PMT), School Report Card (SRC) and District Mock Examination (conducted partly by the District Assembly and the Vhembe Education Office). Due to lack of funds, some schools in the Municipality conduct about two internal mock examinations before students are made to write the final BECE. All these are aimed at improving pupils' performance in the BECE yet there is more to be done.

Agbadey (2002:66) in a survey research conducted in the then Vhembe District on job satisfaction of teachers in terms of supervision revealed that, teachers are frustrated by their superior officers. This could be due to the superiors' nature of supervision and this can affect the performance of teachers in the district. This indicates that teachers attach importance to their superiors' supervision and this could therefore be an important determinant of better academic performance.

2.6.1. Capacity of NCV Lecturers

The Umalusi report alluded to the scarcity of skilled professionals within the various sectors as being challenges for the colleges since the pool of possible applicants for placement was extremely small-employers compete for these industry experts as well (Umalusi, 2009:39). This has resulted in a serious educator capacity deficit. This lack of capacity has affected the effectiveness of the mediation and delivery of the curriculum and thus compromised the objective of successful learning. A recommendation of formal training in didactics, pedagogics and content depth was muted in the report (Umalusi, 2009:39). Although these elements are of particular relevance and importance, the report has also alluded to adjacent issues (e.g. monitoring; funding; logistics and strategic issues) which might distract the current construct under scrutiny. It is for this reason that aspects have not been detailed beyond this point of the report. Capacity building to staff members can be very useful

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and can assist to improve performance of students. Most of the lecturers according to literatures do not have training in didactics, pedagogic and they do not have Industrial exposure. Most of the lecturers with experience are lured by industries or they are retired. I support Gavin Adams theory of capacitating the lecturers.

According to JET bulletin dated 23 August 2015 they spoke to Gerda Magnus Chief Director Programmes and Curriculum innovation at the DHET, about the impact of projects, lesson learnt and how these may be taken forward. The CIP was a significant intervention in the TVET sector in size, scope and complexity. It was a multi-dimensional project which responded to challenges on many fronts. The DHET has embarked on a process of stakeholder engagement and a review of the National Plan. This signals a strong focus on stakeholder involvement, and particularly industry involvement in defining the mission and purpose of colleges. This bodes well for achieving greater coherence and articulation.

2.6.2. Key recommendations include:

- Putting in place the systems required for monitoring and evaluation in order to better understand performance in the system and the factors that contribute to this.
- Addressing the quality of teaching and learning through a systematic analysis of educator capacity and the development of a framework and strategy for upgrading the current cohort of educators and developing a new cohort of well-trained educators.
- Reviewing the funding norms with the aim of providing targeted funding for differentiated programme provision and development of weaker institutions.
- Working in collaboration with industry to address weaknesses and inaccuracies in the NCV curriculum and continuously review and improve the curriculum in the future.
- Address the management and governance weaknesses in the colleges to support increased efficiencies and effectiveness, including drawing in industry expertise to support this. Improving quality and expanding

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the further education and training college system to meet the need for an inclusive growth path

2.7 CHALLENGES FACED BY STAFF AND STUDENTS LEADING TO POOR PERFORMANCE.

In Gavin Adams' research when he was researching on 'An impact study of Competency and Placement (CAP) test intervention at Further Education Training (FET) college'. He came up with challenges that this NCV programme is facing since its launching 2007. The NCV programme was launched in 2007 where learners who passed Grade 9 at school level were given unhindered access to the course (National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:11). The DoE issued huge enrolment targets for each college to achieve (Papier, 2009:31).

Learners were given access indiscriminately so that national targets could be realised and the associated funding secured (DoE, 2006:5; Papier, 2009:42). The course commenced with a country-wide shortage of text books and many educators were not adequately prepared for the new content and methodology. For many of them OBE was unfamiliar terrain and facilitated learning to fifteen year olds was equally new (Papier, 2009:29). Schools saw the NCV programme as an opportunity to divert their ill-disciplined learners to colleges. Parents from low income households also took the opportunity because of the elaborate bursary scheme offered to learners on the programme (DoE, 2006:5; National Plan for FET Colleges, 2009:8).

The year proved challenging for college educators, managers and for the learners. Within the Limpopo Province, focus group sessions involving subject matter experts revealed that numerous structural issues existed regarding the NCV curriculum. Some of these issues referred to the content being pitched too high for learners exiting Grade 9 (Papier, 2009:38). Secondly, the level descriptors and range statements of the subjects were vague (Papier, 2009:39). These were meant to guide educators in terms of the scope and depth of the content. The NCV curriculum forums which involved subject experts claimed that learning content was not pitched appropriately to the course level. Newspaper articles pertaining to the weaknesses of

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the course arose from all corners of the country and evoked a national rethink regarding the programme (Business day, 2010). More recently at a summit on skills development, the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) questioned the relevance of the NCV programme, stating that the programme presented an obstacle to learners and to the country (Nzimande, 2010a). The FET Round Table and Summit (2010:1) emphasised that the NVC programme distracted colleges from its broader mandate of skills development and occupational training. Furthermore concluded that the programme was de-linked from the world of skills development and occupational training therefore posed a cul-de-sac for learners hoping to progress into higher education.

During 2007 the NCV course commenced with a requisite pass percentage of 70% for vocational subjects; however before the sitting for the final exam it became clear to the DoE that the majority of learners would not attain this high pass requirement. Therefore the percentage for these subjects was lowered to 50%. It also became evident that DoE had experienced logistical challenges in managing the exams. Umalusi (2009: 38) reported that there was a lack of clarity on policies regarding the NCV delivery. This exacerbated the situation causing an outcry from parents through various media channels. Due to the glaring systems failure, learners were promoted and allowed to carry a maximum of three subjects to NCV level 3. This resulted in students carrying too many subjects (FET Round Table and Summit, 2010:3). The problem snowballed during the following year with learners unable to cope with the insurmountable burden.

Checking his findings one can understand the causes of poor performance by NCV students. Even though his research was more based on the placement of students on the right course, but with the views are put on the table one can agree that poor performance one could expect due to the whole set up. Issues discussed are the main factors that are leading to poor performance by NCV students. Some text books were cut and paste from report 191 books. The throughput rate is very low due to bottle-neck that is happening. Department is putting pressure to FET colleges to enrol more students without checking the infrastructure, and this lead to overcrowding. This leads to failure to classroom management.

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2.8 IMPACT PREDICTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

There are three factors predicting academic performance discussed below.

2.8.1 Self-efficacy as a predictor of achievement goals, study strategies and academic performance

In Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory, the concept 'perceived self-efficacy' is defined as people's judgement of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required attaining designated types of performances. These capabilities are determinants of academic motivation, choice and performance. For example, earlier research has shown that self-efficacy has a positive influence on mastery of goals (Bong, 2001). High self-efficacy will encourage someone to pursue challenging personal goals and spend much effort to realise them, and show high academic performance, and low self-efficacy will result in pursuing a less high level of performance (Bong, 2001). It is asserted that self-efficacy has a positive influence on performance avoidance goals and work avoidance (Fenollar, Roma'n & Cuestas, 2007:99).

Students who believe they are able and that can and will do well are much more likely to be motivated in terms of effort, persistence and behaviour than those who believe they are less able and do not expect to succeed (Bong, 2001:81). There is also evidence to suggest that these confident students will also be more cognitively engaged in learning and thinking than those who doubt their capabilities to do well. Findings from Greene (2004:119) reveal how important self-efficacy is for successful learning. In this context, research has reliably shown that self-efficacy is positively correlated with measures of meaningful (deep) cognitive strategy use. According to Bandura (1986), students who are not confident or perceive themselves incapable may avoid behaviours that are seen as challenging or difficult.

Based on the aforementioned empirical findings and Bandura's theorising, we expect self-efficacy to have a positive influence on deep processing and effort, and a negative influence on surface processing. It has been argued that self-efficacy is an antecedent to outcome expectations and earlier research has shown empirical

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evidence for such proposition (Greene, 2004:121). Apparently, self-efficacy perceptions consistently come out as a strong predictor of academic performance.

2.8.2 Study strategies as predictors of academic performance

The study conducted by Fenollar, Roma'n and Cuestas (2007:212) shows a positive influence of deep processing on academic performance. However, empirical evidence is mixed regarding the relationship between surface processing and performance. For example, Watkins (2001) meta-analysed 55 correlations and found a statistically analytical negative correlation of 2.11 between surface processing and performance. Yet 27 of these correlations (49%of them) were not statistically significant.

Interestingly, according to Lizzio, Wilson and Simons's (2009:81 study cited by Fenollar, Roma'n and Cuestas (2007:91), when compared with science students, commerce students showed a clear positive relationship (35) between a reported surface approach and a higher grade point average (GPA). A plausible explanation is that memorisation and rote rehearsal seem well-suited for some types of material and some types of exam formats. In the light of inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between surface processing and performance, it is expected that surface processing is unrelated to academic performance. Finally, prior research has consistently documented a positive influence of effort on academic performance (Fenollar, Roma'n & Cuestas, and 2007:12).

2.8.3 Class size as predictor of effort and academic performance

Small classes in the elementary grades have been found to boost students' academic performance. For instance, Finn, Pannozzo and Achilles (2003:12) argue that smaller classes have a positive impact on students' learning behaviour such as attentiveness, participation in learning activities and taking initiative in the classroom. They further indicated that children in large classes are more distracted from work and more often off the task. In smaller classes at the university level, interactive discussions may be used more than lectures, facilitating better 'delayed recall' learning and critical thinking. A smaller class allows for more personalised instruction

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by which students are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how to achieve such goals (Fenollar, Roma'n & Cuestas, 2007:31). It is expected that students' effort to achieve such academic performance will be greater in larger classes. The negative effect of a large class size on student performance has been supported in previous research. Large classes are presumed to reduce the likelihood that lecturers can adapt their instructional style to individual students. Students may feel lost in a crowd or may lose interest in the class because of the number of classmates within a particular course (Finn, Pannozzo & Achilles, 2003:73). Then, we expect class size to have a negative influence on students' academic performance.

2.9 THE FOUNDATION OF THE NVC IN FET COLLEGE

The NCV programme comprises three academic levels namely, NQF level 2, NQF level 3 and NQF level 4. Since first-time entry to the course may only occur at NQF level 2, the CAP test is administered only for this level. As is the case within the schooling system, learners who pass NQF level 1 are automatically accepted to the next level within the programme. Therefore it is important to note that the CAP test only tests competencies in Mathematical literacy and English (first additional language) at NQF level 1. It is for this reason that the report has only evaluated performance within the aforementioned subjects. Also important to note is that these subjects are those that learners have engaged with during their secondary schooling. Except for Life Skills, the remaining subjects within the NCV programme are purely vocational and therefore, new to learners. Testing these would prove unreliable in terms of the construct validity since CAP cannot test, nor support the vocational subjects.

In an interview with Vollenhoven (2010:45), deputy chief education specialist of the Limpopo Education Department (LED), he revealed that the NCV programmes were too theoretical with minimal practical activities. Examiners on the other hand assessed learner according to practical competencies which proved problematic because the learners rarely had opportunities to attain practical competence. Vollenhoven (2010:77) therefore asserted that the NCV programmes should conform to the true sense of an OBE philosophy. In addition to this, the programmes

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comprised a complex assessment regime which includes a combination of theory and practical assessments totalling seven, per subject per year. Each learner took seven subjects, therefore it involved forty-nine assessments for each year. The course was meant to promote real employability to learners who complete the NCV level 4 (Matric level) therefore it was incumbent on the educators to be experts in their respective fields. Furthermore, OBE in essence required of an educator to be competent in the outcomes that were being facilitated.

The DoE required educators to base their facilitation on practical methodology so that learners result in being competent and more importantly, employable. Infrastructure and human resource capacity challenges (nationally and locally) made it difficult for successful learning to take place within this programme. National examiners were recruited from within the pool of FET College educators therefore the capacity challenges were being. To this end, the peripheral challenges are alarming since they are indicative of significant institutional and organisational failure which was bound to affect learner performance at colleges.

It is important to note that FET College educators were confronted for the first time with OBE in 2007 with the launch of the NCV programmes, therefore one could reasonably conclude that the foundation of the methodology was in all probability, not established. It is therefore clear that in at least some cases the expectations of learners and parents were compromised by the lack of capacity within the college sector to deliver the NCV programme as required. It is therefore crucial that the findings within this report serve as a scientific basis for addressing the performance within the NCV programme.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The literature review has informed questions concerning the findings of the research conducted by Papier (2007:12) (under the auspices of the FET Institute) during 2009 where the report implicates the learners as being the cause for the poor performance within the NCV programme designed by DoE. The aforementioned report therefore recommends stringent learner placement processes to be installed so as to ensure successful indulgence of the programmes by the learners. Although the systemic

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issues were alluded to only as extenuating factors, learner incapacity was at the heart of the findings within the report (Papier, 2009:44). The Umalusi report (2009:38-41) on the other hand had a broader perspective on the problem therefore alluded to broad systemic issues that existed both locally and nationally. The report, however also recommended remedial interventions for learners (Umalusi, 2009:39).

Quality is at the heart of the phenomenon under scrutiny. It is for this reason that the research problem and the hypothesis have taken cognisance of the fact that South Africa as a developing nation has a very young education system. FET Colleges therefore form part of this system. In addition to this, the country has not fully established its performance and quality mechanisms within the various governmental departments. It is therefore crucial that evaluative research be executed in order to escalate the momentum of development within the country.

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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. This section presents the research methodology, research design, area of study, population, sampling methods, purposive sampling method, research sample, data collection procedures, data collection instruments, interviews schedule, questionnaires and ethical considerations.

3.2 THE STUDY AREA

The research will be conducted at Vhembe FET College Makwarela Campus which is located at Vhembe district Municipality. Vhembe FET College is composed of four campuses and Central Office. Campuses are Makwarela, Tshisimani, Mavhoi and Mashamba and they are arranged according to size of enrolment. The research will be conducted at Makwarela campus and it will be our study area. Makwarela campus is in Sibasa Makwarela at Thulamela Municipality region.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Creswell (2007:462), a research design is a plan or structured framework of how you intend to conduct the research process in order to solve a problem. There are two paradigms that determine the direction of a research project from its commencement to the last step of writing the research report. These paradigms are qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The researcher used the qualitative approach due to its suitability in social research, which can be done in the subjects' natural setting (De Vos, 2010:312).

Qualitative research is a type of primary research in which the researcher collects first-hand information obtained directly from participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 10).The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods during the data

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collection process. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the analysis and interpretation of data. Self-administered interview and questionnaires was used as a means of collecting data. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the participants and were physically collected by the researcher on the dates specified on the questionnaire. In this study, data was collected from learners, educators, principals, and parents of sampled learners in the targeted schools rather than information from books. The research investigated factors that contributed to the poor performance at the schools under study.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Leedy & Ormrod, (2007:22) research methodology is the creation and development of techniques and strategies to collect data, the development of methods to investigate and improve the psychometric properties such as reliability and validity of the data obtained by means of these techniques and the analysis of such data. In this study, research methodology involves a selection of appropriate research approaches, research methods, sampling procedures, respondents and instruments for collecting and analyzing data. This is therefore, informed by both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Philosophically, its arguments are underlined by the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College

3.4.1 Quantitative research methodology

Quantitative research will include the implementation of statistics to measure data. Statistics, according to Leedy, and Ormrod, (2007:244), are a very simple matter but are a powerful tool in the hands of the researcher who is able to view their nature and interrelationships more understandably. Through statistics, therefore the researcher is able to conceptualize what otherwise might be incomprehensible (Leedy, and Ormrod, 2007:183), hence the advantages of this study. The facts gathered from questionnaires were translated into tabular form. This was done so that the facts (statistics) could be interpreted more clearly

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Quantification was implemented in this study. The number of occurrences in each theme or category identified was counted. The categories with high frequency occurrences were regarded as fairly significant to the problem investigated and reflected the factors contributing towards the poor academic performance of Vhembe FET College.

3.4.2 Qualitative research methodology

According to Neumann (2006:196) the qualitative methods advocate an approach to examining the empirical world, which requires the researcher to interpret the real world from the perspective of the subject of this investigation. Qualitative methods seek to understand phenomena in their entirety in order to develop a complete understanding of a person, programme or situation. Creswell (2007:162) states that qualitative research occurs in natural settings where human behavior and events normally occur.

Neumann (2006:12) states that it is clear that in qualitative research one gets closer to the people, talks to them and tries to get into their subjective feelings to understand the reasons why they do what they do. Reality is, therefore, subjective and one seeks to understand phenomena. Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs and categories. The research design is therefore flexible. Inductive logic is employed in the quest to derive meaning from subjects. These are meanings people attach to everyday life. Applied qualitative methodologies allow the researcher to know people personally and to see them as they are, to experience their daily struggles when confronted with real situations. Using a qualitative research methodology, the researcher interprets and describes the actions of people when confronted with life situations.

Based on the qualitative research methodology, the researcher designed and compiled semi-structured interview questions in order to collect information from principals, RCL and HODs. In this regard information was collected through the use of questionnaires. The qualitative research methodology was used because it provides a framework for a subject to speak freely out in his or her own terms about a case which the researcher brings to the interaction.

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3.5 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Neumann, (2006:221), defined population as the group upon which the researcher is interested in making inferences. Population is defined as a set of entities in which all the measurements of interests to the practitioner or researcher are presented (Creswell 1994:162). The population will include 5 schools and study will comprise of school principals, HODs, Circuit manager, Grade 12 learners, Educators, and parent's component of School Governing Bodies (SGBs). The researcher considered that those selected were directly involved in the allusion of the academic performance of student in FET College. From this population a sample was drawn. The total number of the target population comprised of 615

3.6 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Mouton mentions that the aim of sampling is to produce representative's selection of population elements. With regards to presentation, Wimmer and Dominick (1983:58) mention that a sample that is not representative of population, regardless of its size, is inadequate for testing purposes. In general, sampling makes it possible to estimate characteristics of a large group by examining the characteristics of smaller groups. The larger group is referred to as a population. The smaller group drawn from the population is called sample. The results cannot be generalised for the population. This study was sample the School Manager, curriculum advisor's, student registering NCV and lecturer in Vhembe FET College.

3.6.1 Sampling method

The researcher was used simple random sampling for quantitative approach. In simple random sampling, every member of the all school has an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling was done to the educators as well as the learners whereby selection of the sampling was done randomly in the form of questionnaire distribution in both schools SMT therefore total selection will 76 participant.

The researcher was used purposive sampling for qualitative approach. Purposive sampling gathers data on specific descriptors. A purposive sampling technique was

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employed in selection study participants of qualitative method. Purposeful sampling will be done to the circuit manager, principals, and SMT therefore total selection was 10 participant. The purposive sampling method was chosen because the researcher was concerned with the relevance of the sample in the sense that only those learners who performed poorly during the June/July examination were used.

3.6.2 Sample size

Leedy, &Ormrod (2007:217) stated that there is no fixed number or percentage of subjects that determine the size of an adequate sample. It may depend upon the nature and the population of interest or data gathered and analyzed.

TARGET	STUDY POPULATION	STUDY SAMPLE
HOD	25	20
NVC registered student	1500	40
Lecturer	50	19
Total	**1575**	**79**

3.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Leedy, & Ormrod, (2007:332) states that data collection is not just a process of data collection; it is also a process of creation of gathering information in unique ways related to the purpose of study. These methods were used to describe the findings and to confirm the credibility of the interpretations.

3.7.1 Questionnaire Survey

As already stated, questionnaire will used for the study. As the researcher desires to collect factual information on factors contributing to poor academic performance in the Mvudi circuit, a likert type questionnaire will be developed to collect data for the research questions stated. The questionnaire will made up of 11 close– ended items for the teachers and learners. Close-ended questions according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) are quick to compile and straight forward to code, and do not

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discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate the respondents are. The five likert-type scale ranged from "Strongly agree (SA), "Agree" (A), "Uncertain" (U), "Disagree" (D) to "Strongly Disagree" (SD). According to Neumann, (2006:44), the Likert scale is one of the most widely used techniques to measure attitudes. This was distributed personally to the teachers of the selected schools on appointed and accepted dates. The researcher will be discussed the questions with them and later distributed them to respondents to answer. This will be adopted by the researcher because it helps in determining values as well as views, attitudes and experiences of the respondents.

The items in the questionnaire were based on the three (3) research questions raised to guide the study. Research question one, which seeks to find out what challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. The second research question which looked at outside- School factors that influence academic performance of learners. The third research question, which looked at mechanisms that exist in monitoring students' performance in Vhembe FET, also had three items raised to solicit the views and opinions of respondents.

3.7.2 Interviews

Interviewing is one of the most common methods of data collection used by researchers to inform them about social life. Interviewing could thus be regarded as the universal mode of systemic enquiry (Neumann, 2006:114). The technique of individual face-to-face interviewing treats the interview as a pipeline for extracting and transmitting information from the interviewee to the interviewer (Creswell, 2007:221).

Individual face-to-face interviews were used thus to strengthen the clause of confidentiality. This assisted the researcher to understand the closed worlds of participants, the factors affecting learner's poor performance at home and at school, educators', principals' and FET managers' comments and opinions regarding learners' poor performances.

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Within this study, authenticity was achieved during the interviewing process by relaxing the inherent rigidity that came with highly controlled interventions. The structure of the interview schedule comprised four general themes for discussion which were introduced in the most appropriate order given the trend of each interview. The recording of data made provision for a blended approach so that the interviewer was easily able to code and jot down textual responses without interfering with the progress and flow of the interview. The fact that these interviews were telephonic strengthened its authenticity because the interviewees were not able to witness the recording process. In this manner the interviews were natural and avoided issues related to reactivity.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Leedy and Ormrod (2007:178) point out that the term analysis basically means the resolution of a complex whole into parts. It involves reducing to manageable proportions the wealth of data that one has collected or has available. Data analysis will be analysed systematically searching and arranging the interview transcription, field notes and other materials that are accumulated to increase the researcher's own understanding of them and to enable one to present what one has discovered. Regarding the qualitative data, a simple qualitative data analysis method was used.

The interview data was analyzed using content analysis which according to Creswell, (2007:394) is comparing of the words used in the answers of the respondents. Initially, the researcher studied the field notes, reduced the tapes into transcripts and carefully read through them. This was done to look for themes and similar ideas or responses to the questions posed to the respondents of which the respondent's information or speeches were translated into specific categories for the purposes of analysis. Steps on how to process and analyse qualitative data are documented by several authors who wrote on research methods. Firstly all the data must be transcribed. It must be read and re-read for the researcher to become familiar with the data, and notes must be made to capture recurring concepts, common themes, events and other patterns in the data. These are then labeled and referred to as open coding. Next the coded data must be sorted and categorized. Then the

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analyzed categories are ready to be written up in a report, or as in this case, a minor research project.

Quantitative studies emphasize the use of numerical measures to arrive at specific findings. The obtained information from questionnaires will first coded for each and every question and then entered in the Microsoft excel spreadsheet in words and number. Data from questionnaires was analyzed by means of using tables and figures. The percentage of the total sample responding to each question was given. The data was presented according to the responses and or the views of the respondents. Numerical scores were assigned to them to indicate possible relationship in responses of the respondents and then frequency lists were drawn. The two outside categories were combined in the analysis. For instance, the researcher combined "strongly agree" and "agree' and also "strongly disagree and disagree" to project a unique response

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Leedy and Ormrod (2007:64) say most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories which 'I' as the researcher will consider while conducting my research which are as follows:

3.9.1 Protection from harm

Researcher should not expose research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm. Participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment, or loss of self-esteem. In cases where the nature of study involves creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, participants should know this ahead of time, and any necessary debriefing or counseling should follow immediately after the participation (Leedy and Ormrod, 2007:78). Issues of ethical confidentiality and privacy of personal rights of learners, educators, principals, parents had to be protected. Not all the information was recorded to avoid adverse effects of disclosure.

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3.9.2 Informed consent

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2007:87) they say when people are intentionally recruited for participation in a research study, they should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and given the choice of either participating or not participating. Furthermore, they should be told that, if they agree to participate, they should have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. Not all the information will recorded to avoid adverse effects of disclosure.

3.9.3 Right to privacy

Leedy and Ormrod (2007:78) further say that any research study involving human beings should be respect participants' right to privacy. Under no circumstances should a researcher report, either oral or written, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a particular participant has responded or behaved. In generally, a researcher must keep the nature and quality of participants' performance strictly confidential. The objective of the study will be explained verbally and participants were assured that the information obtained during interviews would be kept confidential.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has covered all issues concerning overall research methodology adopted, population identification, sampling procedures and units of analysis, the means of access to study sites and methods for data collection and analysis. The issue of how data were collected and analysed were dealt with in this chapter. The next chapter deals with the interpretation and analysis of the collected data.

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CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four begins with an explanation of how the ordinal data in the survey was displayed and analysed. The "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" number of responses for each question was added together; likewise with the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" sub-continuum. The total average of all the responses in the survey for the disagree and agree number of responses were calculated. The resulting averages were then taken as a standard response, against which, all the survey responses (for all question responses and sub-category averages) are displayed for comparison purposes.

The interpretation and discussion of results was supported by tables, which clearly display the survey data that was being analysed within each sub-category. Specific explanations with regards to the validity test. For analysis purposes, all questionnaire responses were found to be reliable. The chapter concludes with a summary of all the discussions regarding retention issues in tabular form, indicating which of the responses reflected are below. Analysis of data obtained from individual interviews was done through identifying common themes from the respondent's description of their experiences. Irrelevant information was separated from relevant information in the interviews.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRES

This section will provide the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaires.

4.2.1 BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

One of the questions articulated in the questionnaire was to determine the demographic profile of the respondents; this was presented in a manner in which the percentages of males could be compared to the percentages of females. In doing so,

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the gender in the majority could easily be identified, as well as generally determining the sum total of the whole population.

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by gender

SEX	Frequency	Percentage
Male	36	46.2
Female	43	53.8
Total	**79**	**100%**

Table 4.1 reflects that out of the 79 questionnaires which were distributed. The table shows that (53.8%) were females while (46.2%) were males; hence the majority of respondents were females. This shows that females were more responsive to meetings than males. Females show concern to the future of their children than males. Again it shows that men are less concerned about education due to the security which they have in their families and at their work places. The results indicated that majority of respondents were female who are students registered for NCV programmes.

Table 4.2: The frequencies and percentage of respondents by education level

	Frequency	Percentages
University	9	11
College	5	6.7
Secondary school	30	37.9
Primary school	26	33.8
Do not go to school	9	11
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.2 shows the frequencies and percentage of respondents by education level. Almost half of their parents had their education up to secondary level, which was 37.9 percent followed by primary school with 33.8 percent. While, 11% had their parents' did not attend school, 6.7 percent (5 respondents) and 1.1 % had their parent' education level at colleges and universities. And therefore table 4.2 revealed that 9 respondent which constituting 11 percent of the total sample were having university qualification and they are principals and sampled educators. Table 4.2

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reveals that the majority of participant interviewed have education levels above grade 12.

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution of subjects by age groups

	Frequency	percentage
15-25	3	3.8
26-35	24	30.4
26-45	20	25.3
46 and above	32	40.5
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.3 indicated that 3.8 percent of the total samples are within 15-25 years range. Most respondents in the study sample fell within 46 and above year's age range. They made 40.5% of the sample. Only 30.4 percent of the sample was between 26-35 years of age. Respondents of various ages were well distributed in the final study sample.

Table 4.4: Language used by the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
English	15	19
Tsonga	20	25
Tshivenda	30	38
Other	14	18
Total	**79**	**100**

The 30 respondents which constitute 38 percent of total sample spoke Tshivenda their mother tongue while 25 percent of the total sample spoke Tsonga and used the same language as medium of communication in meetings (See table 4.2).

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4.2.2 Challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes

The table below were discussed the data interpretation collected during questionnaire with the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes. The study used the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze quantitative data from the questionnaires

Table 4.5: N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NCV programmes

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	29	36.7
Agreed	37	46.8
Neutral	6	7.6
Disagreed	5	6.3
Strongly disagreed	2	2.5
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.5 indicates that 6 respondents which constituting 7.6 percent of the total sampled did not answer the question it is Neutral. The respondent may not have seen this question, been uncomfortable answering the question or be unsure N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NCV programmes. Nearly 85 percent of the total sample thought that it was strongly agree with the statement that N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NCV programmes while just over 8.8 percent thought this disagreed with the statement. This means that 7 participants are not aware that N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NC(V) programmes which again, given the educational demographic of the sample is quite worrying.

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Table 4.6: NCVs are full-time three year programmes at year-long NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	22	27.8
Agreed	29	36.7
Neutral	9	11.4
Disagreed	14	17.7
Strongly disagreed	5	6.3
Total	**79**	**100**

NCVs are full-time three year programmes at year-long NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4. Table 4.6 also support this idea as 51 respondents constituting 63.8% of the total sample is strongly agree with the statement that NCVs are full-time three year programmes at year-long NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4. This idea is not supported by all as 19 respondents constituting 24% of the total sample disagreed with the statement while 9 respondents constituting 11.4% were neutral the statement due to the lack of the information. And therefore majority of the respondents (63.8%) agreed with the statement that NCVs are full-time three year programmes at year-long NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4..

Table 4.7: NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	28	35.4
Agreed	26	32.9
Neutral	10	12.7
Disagreed	11	13.9
Strongly disagreed	4	5.1
Total	**79**	**100**

NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high and this represented on Table 4.7. Table 4.7 also indicate that 54 respondents constituting 68.3 % of the total sample

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agreed with the statement that NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high may occur while only 10 respondents constituting 12.7% were neutral with the statement due to the lack of the information. And again 15 respondents constituting 19% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high may occur and it was a clear demonstration of lack of information of how to go NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high.

Table 4.8: NCV training did not make the learners eligible for a trade test

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	23	29.1
Agreed	23	29.1
Neutral	2	2.5
Disagreed	10	12.7
Strongly disagreed	21	26.6
Total	**79**	**100**

As pointed previously in a NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high. Table 4.8 also support this idea as 46 respondents constituting 58.2 % of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the NCV training did not make the learners eligible for a trade test while 2 respondents constituting 2.5% of the total sample were neutral. And again this idea is not supported by all as 31 respondents constituting 39.3% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that NCV training did not make the learners eligible for a trade test

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Table 4.9: Educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	21	26.6
Agreed	40	50.6
Neutral	4	5.1
Disagreed	10	12.7
Strongly disagreed	4	5.1
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.9 shows that 61 respondents constituting 77.2% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV constituting 5.1% were neutral it was a clear demonstration of lack of information of how educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV. Only 14 respondents constituting 17.8% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV. And therefore majority of respondents (77.2%) was agreed with educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV.

Table 4.10: NCV programme was necessary in order to establish an FET college programme that would promote skills development

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	18	22.8
Agreed	38	48.1
Neutral	8	10.1
Disagreed	9	11.4
Strongly disagreed	6	7.6
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.10 also support this idea as 56 respondents constituting 70.9% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that NCV programme was necessary in order to establish an FET college programme that would promote skills development

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while 8 respondents constituting 10.1% were neutral the statement due to the lack of the information. Contrary to that 15 respondents constituting 19% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that NCV programme was necessary in order to establish an FET college programme that would promote skills development and this is a clear indication of the lack of knowledge by a certain group of people.

Table 4.11: Poor performance of learners within the NCV in very high

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	28	35.4
Agreed	21	26.6
Neutral	11	13.9
Disagreed	8	10.1
Strongly disagreed	11	13.9
Total	**79**	**100**

As pointed FET college programme that would promote skills development and this is a clear indication of the lack of knowledge by a certain group of people Table 4.11 also support this idea as 54 respondents constituting 62% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that Poor performance of learners within the NCV in very high while 11 respondents constituting 13.9% were neutral due to the lack of the information. And again this idea is not supported by all as 18 respondents constituting 24% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that Poor performance of learners within the NCV in very high.

Table 4.12: Learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	11	13.9
Agreed	26	32.9
Neutral	16	20.3
Disagreed	19	24.1
Strongly disagreed	7	8.9
Total	**79**	**100**

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As it was indicated previously, poor performance of learners within the NCV in very high. Tables 4.12 also support this idea as 37 respondents constituting 46.8% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance. This idea is not supported by all as 26 respondents constituting 33% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that Learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance while 16 respondents constituting 20.3% were neutral and it is therefore due to lack of information of learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance

Table 4.13: Since declining college capacity might have been the cause for poor learner performance within the NCV programme

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	22	27.8
Agreed	28	35.4
Neutral	13	16.5
Disagreed	13	16.5
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.13 also supports this idea as 50 respondents constituting 63.2% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that since declining college capacity might have been the cause for poor learner performance within the NCV programme. This idea is not support by all as 16 respondents constituting 33% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that since declining college capacity might have been the cause for poor learner performance within the NCV programme while the neutrality demonstrated by 13 respondents who constituted 16.5 % of the total sample reveals confusion by the respondents who were in the minority.

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Table 4.14: Learners also had access to a NCV bursary scheme

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	13	16.5
Agreed	29	36.7
Neutral	10	12.7
Disagreed	16	20.3
Strongly disagreed	11	13.9
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.14 also supports this idea as 42 respondents constituting 53.2% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that Learners also had access to a NCV bursary scheme. This idea is not support by all as 27 respondents constituting 34.2% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that learners also had access to a NCV bursary scheme while 10 respondents constituting 12.7% were neutral and this could be necessitated by lack of knowledge and misconception by a group of people in the study population.

Table 4.15: Poor performance of NCV learners is caused by lack of textbook

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	17	21.5
Agreed	39	49.4
Neutral	13	16.5
Disagreed	9	11.4
Strongly disagreed	1	1.3
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.15 also supports this idea as 56 respondents constituting 70.9% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that poor performance of NCV learners is caused by lack of textbook. This idea is not support by all as 10 respondents constituting 12.7% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that poor performance of NCV learners is caused by lack of textbook while 13 respondents constituting 16.5% were neutral this could be necessitated by lack of knowledge in the study population.

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Table 4.16: Content overload, syllabus too long is a major factor of poor performance of NCV learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	22	27.8
Agreed	34	43.0
Neutral	8	10.1
Disagreed	12	15.2
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.16 also support this idea as 56 respondents constituting 70.8% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that content overload, syllabus too long is a major factor of poor performance of NCV learners while 8 respondents constituting 10.1% were neutral. This idea is not supported by all as 15 respondents constituting 19% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that the content overload, syllabus too long is a major factor of poor performance of NCV learners and this is a clear indication of the lack of knowledge by a certain group of participants in the study sample.

Table 4.17: Overcrowding in class is another factor of poor performance of NCV learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	31	39.2
Agreed	35	44.3
Neutral	7	8.9
Disagreed	3	3.8
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.17 also support this idea as 66 respondents constituting 83.5% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that Overcrowding in class is another factor of poor performance of NCV learners year while 7 respondents constituting 8.9% were neutral due to lack of information. And again this idea is not supported by

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all as 6 respondents constituting 7.6% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the Overcrowding in class is another factor of poor performance of NCV learners.

Table 4.18: NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 School leavers as originally intended

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	20	25.3
Agreed	25	31.6
Neutral	11	13.9
Disagreed	14	17.7
Strongly disagreed	9	11.4
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.18 also support this idea as 45 respondents constituting 56.9% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 School leavers as originally intended. This idea is not support by all as 23 respondents constituting 29.1% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that while 11 respondents constituting 13.9% were neutral something which could have been influenced by lack of knowledge with regard to what the NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 school leavers as originally intended.

Table 4.19: Lecturers also complained about lack of resources for NCV programme and lack of motivation to learn from learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	18	22.8
Agreed	35	44.3
Neutral	11	13.9
Disagreed	12	15.2
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

As pointed previously the NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 School leavers as originally intended. Table 4.19 also supports this idea as 53 respondents

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constituting 67.1% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that lecturers also complained about lack of resources for NCV programme and lack of motivation to learn from learners. This idea is not supported by all as 15 respondents constituting 19% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that lecturers also complained about lack of resources for NCV programme and lack of motivation to learn from learners while 11 respondents constituting 13.9% were neutral and it is a clear demonstration of lack of information the lack of knowledge by a certain group of participants on the study population.

Table 4.20: The main task of academic development is improvement of individual educator's performance

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	28	35.4
Agreed	30	38.0
Neutral	10	12.7
Disagreed	8	10.1
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.20 also support this idea as 58 respondents constituting 73.4% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the main task of academic development is improvement of individual educator's performance while 10 respondents constituting 12.7% were neutral. This idea is not supported by all as 11 respondents constituting 13.9% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that the main task of academic development is improvement of individual educator's performance and it is a clear demonstration of lack of knowledge by a group of population in the study sampled.

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Table 4.21: Classroom performance is one of the biggest problems facing public FET College

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	19	24.1
Agreed	45	57.0
Neutral	4	5.1
Disagreed	10	12.7
Strongly disagreed	1	1.3
Total	**79**	**100**

Tables 4.21 indicate that 64 respondents constituting 81.1% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that classroom performance is one of the biggest problems facing public FET College. Due to lack of knowledge by a group of people in a community this idea is not supported by all as 11 respondents constituting 15% of the total sample strongly disagreed with statement that classroom performance is one of the biggest problems facing public FET College while 4 respondents constituting 5.1% were neutral.

Table 4.22: Poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	23	29.1
Agreed	39	49.4
Neutral	5	6.3
Disagreed	8	10.1
Strongly disagreed	4	5.1
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.22 also supports this idea as 62 respondents constituting 78.5% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV learners. This idea is not supported by all as 12 respondents constituting 15.2% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV

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learners while 5 respondents constituting 6.3% were neutral and this could be necessitated by lack of knowledge and misconception by a group of people in the study sampled.

Table 4.23: Student performances on NCV programmes continue to be poor

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	29	36.7
Agreed	33	41.8
Neutral	6	7.6
Disagreed	7	8.9
Strongly disagreed	4	5.1
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.23 also supports this idea as 62 respondents constituting 78.5% of the total sample strongly agreed that student performances on NCV programmes continue to be poor while 6 respondents constituting 7.6% were neutral. And again this idea is not supported by all as 11 respondents constituting 14% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement student performances on NCV programmes continue to be poor r and this a clear indication of the lack of knowledge by a certain group of people.

Table 4.24: NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	27	34.2
Agreed	30	38.0
Neutral	11	13.9
Disagreed	8	10.1
Strongly disagreed	3	3.8
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.24 also support this idea as 57 respondents constituting 72.2% of the total sample agreed that NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the

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industries concerned while 11 respondents constituting 13.9% were neutral due to the lack of the information. Contrary 11 respondents constituting 13.9% of the total sample disagreed with the statement that the NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned and this could have its basis on the lack of information about the extent of financial management

.

Table 4.25: The NCV was introduced as an alternative route to a level 4 'matric'

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	18	22.8
Agreed	30	38.0
Neutral	12	15.2
Disagreed	13	16.5
Strongly disagreed	6	7.6
Total	**79**	**100**

Table 4.26 also support this idea as 48 respondents constituting 60.8% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the NCV was introduced as an alternative route to a level 4 'matric' while 12 respondents constituting 15.2% were neutral. And again this idea is not support by all as 19 respondents constituting 24.1% of the total sample strongly disagreed with the statement that The NCV was introduced as an alternative route to a level 4 'matric' and this is a clear indication of the lack of knowledge by a certain group of study population.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEW

Interview data were collected from principals, Senior Lecturer, RCL and senior management members, as well as from learners in the respective schools.

4.3.1 Setting for the interviews

As indicated in Chapter 3, interviews were the source of data collection. Permission was obtained from the regional director to enter Vhembe FET College. Interviews were conducted at four schools which differ in their poverty index as well as their

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locations. Appointments were made through the principals of Vhembe FET College. All principals of the four sampled Vhembe FET colleges as well as their finance officers, two of whom are educators and the third an administration officer, were interviewed at their respective schools. The remaining respondents were interviewed at places of their choice. All respondents at school A and the treasurer at school B were interviewed in a combination of Tshivenda and English. The rest of the respondents in schools B and C were interviewed in English. The respondents were free to respond in their choice of these two languages. All respondents were made aware of their right to choose to participate or not. All respondents willingly chose to participate. All interviews were tape recorded and respondents had no problem with that arrangement.

Question 1: What are causes of poor performance by students registered for NCV?

During the interviewing process, the four topics were dealt with individually so as to promote a meaningful understanding of the perceived issues. Suffice to say that amongst all colleges there was compelling consensus about the state of poor learner performance within the NCV programme.

Respondent 1 revealed that the majority of working adults could no longer come and do Nated programmes after hours and were unlikely to do NCV programmes as they „cannot take 3 years of full time training.

The majority of learners travelled by *public transport* and reported being tired from all the travelling, waiting for taxis and buses and arriving home late, only to still have homework and projects to attend.

Respondents support staff shared valuable information on the issues faced by learners in the first two years of NCV implementation. For instance, they reported on *administrative problems related to bursaries due to ineffective systems, volumes of applications and unwieldy application processes.* Learner support staff were of the view that performance problems arose because: many students thought 'tec' was an easy option lecturers no longer had time to teach…too much energy had to be spent

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on disciplinary problems and huge amounts of time consuming paper work: attendance very poor especially on Mondays and Fridays, Staff were not adequately trained or equipped for implementing NCV type student and Class management problem due to lack of discipline from students

Lecturers and managers admitted that they had struggled with the curriculum and training before implementation had not been adequate. *However, lecturers mostly lamented the 'type' of learner who had enrolled for the programme, and attributed learners' poor performance in the first and second NCV intake to the following:* students not committed to the programme laziness, undisciplined, Poor recruitment – wrong learners in programmes, poor literacy and numeracy skill, absenteeism, Shortage of teaching staff/staff turnover, learners poor mathematics background, lack of motivation, self-esteem, couldn't cope with the pressure of assessment, age difference too big within one class and drug abuse.

A small cohort of learners who had dropped out of colleges could be traced through the records supplied by college administrations. Their motivation for attending college and their expectations of college/FET programmes were similar to those of poorly performing learners, particularly the desire for practical training and the idea that college would be easier than school. *Reasons they gave for dropping out included the following:*

- *I didn't qualify to for my finals due to not having 80% attendance for the year*
- *I was expelled from college for being disruptive*
- *I didn't expect to repeat Grade 12 subjects, thought that NCV was a level higher than Grade 12*
- *My accommodation made me unhappy, and*
- *I didn't pay the outstanding fees before the final exam*

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Question 2: What are challenges encountered by Vhembe FET College students and Staff?

The discrepancy reflected in column two and three suggests that CAP participating colleges have not recovered from the high dropout rate that existed in the two years prior to CAP implementation. Although a miniscule improvement is depicted in columns two and three, the difference between the two represents unsuccessful learners. These would be as a result of either dropping out of the programme or failing the exam.

These were indicative of a mal-aligned curriculum with vague level descriptors and learning outcomes. This was the cause of many educators being uncertain about the width and depth of the learning content. The interviews also reflected data that indicated that most of the technical subjects like engineering and electronics were pitched too high for the learners to master. Respondent 1 reportedly were often not sufficiently equipped to teach these subjects which exacerbated the issue of recruiting competent staff for the subject. Since the implementation of the NCV programme many lecturers left the teaching fraternity

Respondent 2 indicated that their institutions were adequately resourced. Amongst those who indicated that their infrastructure and equipment were in place, these also indicated that they were finding it difficult to attract and retain competent staff. In some cases institutions resorted to employing ex-students to teach NCV classes.

Respondents indicate that the NCV programmes were *positive and complimentary, but the comment was made that the course is 'too advanced for many students', and really depended on the learners' academic background which would allow them to cope with the course content or not.* In addition, *there was too much theory, as opposed to more skills,* which learners struggled with. As Science was an optional subject (in Engineering curricula), many colleges did not offer it, and the absence of this was felt to be a disadvantage to learners who might want to go on to higher education

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Respondent 4 indicates *that some of the reasons for learners dropping out were*: those who dropped out really wanted things to be easy they thought by leaving school they would get out of hard work

Respondent 5 also shows that most of student when they failed the course they don't come back and others have got money problems

Respondent 6 indicates that Most of them thought it was going to be easier than a school course with the hospitality course the students thought they would be cooking the entire time instead of learning the theory subjects

Question 3: What are strategies that can be used to minimize poor performance in Vhembe FET College?

Many of the responses here were related to the logistical difficulties stated above, hence learners wanted shorter periods, less periods in the day, reduce the amount of hours and suggestions in this vein.

There was an extensive litany of learner complaints about lecturers not giving learners sufficient support, and asking for a better teacher who can explain, teachers that teach better, more experienced lecturers, and maintaining that some teachers don't teach the way we want them to teachers come and go and so on. A learner said that I wanted the lecturer to understand students…the load that he has he must manage and he must not take his stress and give it to students

Here responses ranged from general problems that lecturers experienced with learners, to specific curriculum-related problems that learners had also raised. *A factor that emerged strongly from college responses was that of uneven or no placement testing of learners especially in 2007, resulting in learners without the necessary literacy and numeracy skills required for the NCV2 programmes, and being placed inappropriately in programmes.* The first cohort in 2007, performed dismally but were promoted to the next level carrying up to four subjects, which compounded their problems in Level 3 and subsequently in Level 4 if they had not dropped out along the way

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An overwhelming number of college respondents thought that learner support, both academic and counselling, was needed to improve learner success. There was also general agreement that lecturers had been under severe stress from all the policy change in their sector, and that they needed motivation and incentives in the form of better salaries, working conditions and training.

Respondent revealed that: In Office Administration *overlaps with Life Orientation were noted and suggested that these be eliminated to reduce learner overload and boredom.* Assessment was said to be exaggerated as it made the learners workload too heavy with excessive assignments required.

Dropped out learners had the following recommendations for making it easier to remain in the programmes:

- *A travel subsidy,*
- *I enjoyed the course but it was tough to do a full-time course for three years when one has a full time job. I would have liked to do a N course because they are quick. I would also like the students to have more computers at the college so they can study on their own;*
- *Improve the quality of lecturers,*
- *Make the curriculum easier, and*
- *The day is too long, starts too early and ends too late.*

When dropped out learners were asked what they were doing presently out of college, answers ranged from *'sitting at home' to 'I found a job (security guard)' and 'I am doing a six month IT course'.* A small number of learners who had dropped out of one college had *moved to another college and was currently studying there.*

4.4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Chapter was to interpret and analyse the findings of the research study based on the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students

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registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College. These perceptions were triangulated with the open-ended interviews by the academic managers at these public FET colleges so as to ensure the reliability and validity of the research study. Based from this research study the interpretation and analysis points that there are different perceptions between public FET college lecturers and academic managers about the impact of academic development programmes in the classroom teaching. Some of these differences can be attributed to lack of involvement of public FET college lecturers in the development of academic development programmes. This view is also supported by most of the academic managers who conceded that they do not participate in the development of academic development programmes for public FET College lecturers even if they are tasked with the responsibilities of ensuring that such academic development programmes take place. The next chapter deals with the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

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CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion and conclusion following the findings in the previous chapter (chapter 4). In this chapter the researcher begins with a general overview of the challenges contributing towards to poor performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College, which shows that the aims were achieved. The experiences of students and lecturer obtained from questionnaires conducted are described together with the recommendations for improving performance of students registered for NCV programmes in Vhembe FET College.

5.2 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The found that nearly 85 percent of the total sample thought that it was strongly agree with the statement that N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NC(V) programmes,

- The study found that 45 respondents constituting 56.9% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that the NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 school leavers as originally intended,

- The study also found that 62 respondents constituting 78.5% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV learners

- The study revealed that their institutions were adequately resourced. Amongst those who indicated that their infrastructure and equipment were in place, these also indicated that they were finding it difficult to attract and retain competent staff. In some cases institutions resorted to employing ex-students to teach NCV classes

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- The study repeatedly shows that 57 respondents constituting 72.2% of the total sample agreed that NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned

- The study also signposted that 64 respondents constituting 81.1% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that classroom performance is one of the biggest problems facing public FET College

- The study highly found that 53 respondents constituting 67.1% of the total sample strongly agreed with the statement that lecturers also complained about lack of resources for NCV programme

- The study found that the majority of working adults could no longer come and do Nated programmes after hours and were unlikely to do NCV programmes as they „cannot take 3 years of full time training

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The researcher recommends that the school must develop a code of conduct for learners which must be signed by both parents and learners. Attendance registers must be supervised daily by the teachers, weekly by the principals and quarterly by the Department of Education to remedy the problem while still early. Dedicated teachers must also check learners' attendance before teaching their lessons. Parents must also help the school by monitoring the movement of their learners occasionally. Working parents must agree with neighbours to take care of their children.

- Attendance can also be improved by the quality of teaching offered by the educators. Learners seldom stay away from lessons whose teacher do thorough preparation which adds value to school attendance. A positive measure of improving attendance could be in the form of a reward of some

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type to learners who exhibit disciplined character. The reward could be in the form of an award given to a particular pupil on a monthly basis.

- The researcher recommends that the FET, through District Senior Managers should motivate lecturers. An educator who has a history of performing well in his subject must be rewarded and promoted to high position. Promotional posts should be occupied by qualified skilled lecturers.

- The quality of NCV results is attributable to the level of teaching provided by the lectures. Lecturers' performance is in most probability equated to the level of training and qualifications offered. Most lecturers in rural FET are under qualified. It has become incumbent upon Higher Department of Education to provide intensive training to these under-qualified lecturers. FET lectures or experts in the various fields could be engaged to provide in-service training to the teachers who need further instruction in the subjects they offer.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE

The researcher also recommends that government officials should provide necessary support to all lecturers by responding to their queries. OSD should be so that teachers' salaries are increased. Government officials should promote performing lecturers to promotional posts and avoid nepotism in employment of such posts. They should engage relevant authorities on the implementation of certain mandates.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The NCV curriculum has come in for its fair share of critique, especially for its hasty implementation in spite of inter alia materials, equipment, infrastructure, teaching staff not being everywhere in place in 2007. Nonetheless these national curricula intended by the Department of Education to be FET college flagship programmes into the future, are widely regarded by college staff to be the „right programmes" which attracted the „wrong" learners. This was attributed by college staff to misguide

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though executed in good faith - marketing and recruitment. While structural adjustments of NCV curricula are urgently required as is inevitable with any new curriculum after a testing period of its delivery, there are many concerns articulated by learners that just as urgently need to be addressed institutionally.

It is clear from this report that extensive financial and human resources have been ploughed into building a new identity for FET colleges, to change them from „technical colleges" into new FET colleges capable of taking skills development to the scale required by our country. National and global economic challenges have induced a need for rapid educational change, however the extent of institutional change required to forge a new identity for colleges has been sorely underestimated. The data indicates that concerted efforts will be needed at national, provincial, institutional and individual levels, to effect a coherent new FET college identity. The current complex and diverse grouping of FET college learners reflects that the envisaged identity of FET colleges may be out of sync with actual learner expectations and needs at this stage. The report begs the questions of who FET colleges *should* serve, and *how* the wide-ranging needs of college communities are to be met. Further research should be focused on these issues.

The learners in this study, regarded by college staff as poorly prepared for the high cognitive and other demands of NCV programmes, have already been failed by systems in school and society, and have looked to the college for alternative opportunities. In addition to extensive early support and counseling for under-prepared learners, it is imperative that the collective efforts of all our colleges are brought to bear on *getting the right learners into the right programmes,* and on building the culture of learning, trust, accountability and hope that these young people so desperately need.

The report therefore concludes that there had been an inappropriate focus on learners as being the cause for the underperformance within the NCV programme at FET colleges. It was also established that culpability for the underperformance should largely rest with the broader educational system which includes the DoE and the FET colleges, since these institutions have been instrumental in subjecting Grade 9 learners to a programme that was poorly constructed and delivered. Given

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that systemic failure was at the heart of the performance problem at colleges, the introduction of an enrolment test (CAP) was found to be misguided. Furthermore, the CAP test was also found to be limited in its capability to enhance learner placement since the intervention was performance based and did not contain the essential critical cross-field features expected in the placement of teenagers.

Recommendations towards the improvement of the NCV Programme structure and the introduction of a strategic approach to placement, which begins with effective marketing, are crucial. In order to confront the systemic impediments within the sector the need for further research is recommended. The proposed research should be targeted at developing an effective QAF that would ensure high quality training within FET colleges.

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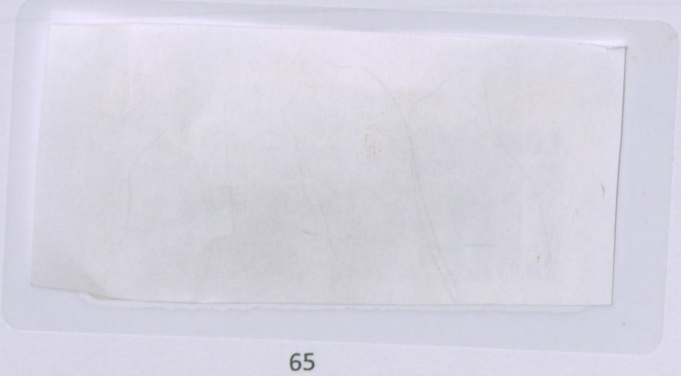
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APPENDIX A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents

Female	
Male	

Table 4.2 Marital status of the respondents

Married	
Unmarried	
Widow	
Widower	
Divorced	

Table 4.3 Respondents highest qualifications

No formal education	
Primary level	
Secondary level	
Passed std 10	
Tertiary level	

Table 4.4: Respondent Age

Under 30	
31-40	
41-50	
Over 50	

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APPENDIXE B: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Please complete all questions Mark with an "x" Mark from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree

	Strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
N-programmes perform, on average, better than students enrolled for NCV programmes					
NCVs are full-time three year programmes at year-long NCV Levels 2, 3 and 4					
NCV programmes experienced huge drop-out and failure rates for a variety of reasons which included the unexpectedly high					
NCV training did not make the learners eligible for a trade test					
Educators themselves lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the NCV					
NCV programme was necessary in order to establish an FET college programme that would promote skills development					
Poor performance of learners within the NCV in very high					
Learners were therefore ill-prepared for the NCV programme which resulted in the poor performance					
Since declining college capacity might have been the cause for poor learner performance within the NCV programme					
Learners also had access to a NCV bursary scheme					
Poor performance of NCV learners is caused by lack of textbook					
Content overload, syllabus too long is a major factor of					

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poor performance of NCV learners					
Overcrowding in class is another factor of poor performance of NCV learners					
NCV be targeted primarily at post Grade 9 school leavers as originally intended					
Lecturers also complained about lack of resources for NCV programme and lack of motivation to learn from learners					
The main task of academic development is improvement of individual educator's performance					
Classroom performance is one of the biggest problems facing public FET College					
Poor class attendance is a factor of poor performance of NCV learners					
Student performances on NCV programmes continue to be poor					
NCV does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned					
The NCV was introduced as an alternative route to a level 4 'matric'					

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APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Question 1: What are causes of poor performance by students registered for NCV?

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Question 2: What are challenges encountered by Vhembe FET College students and Staff?

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Question 3: What are strategies that can be used to minimize poor performance in Vhembe FET College?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTAKING

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