

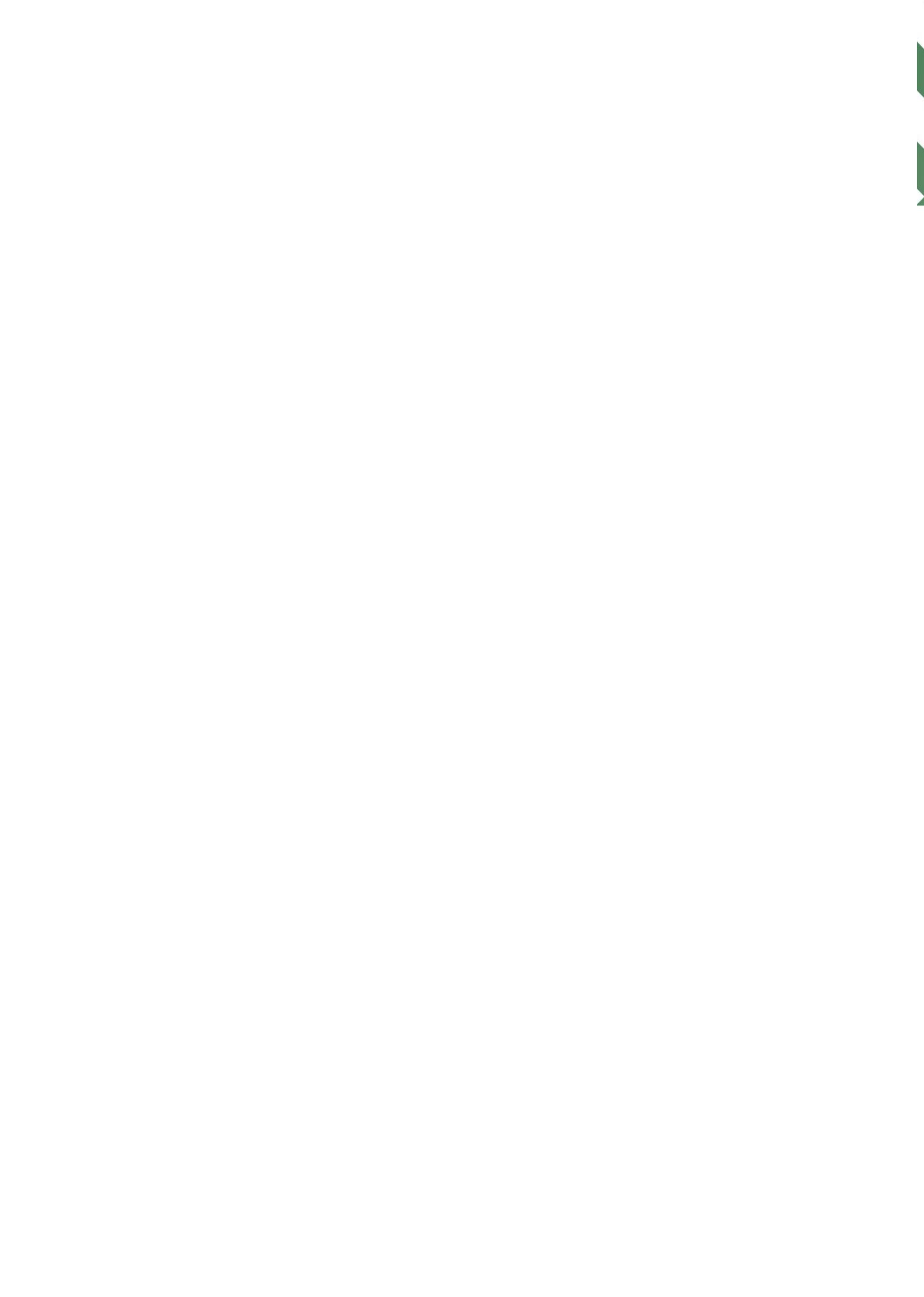
Towards the professionalisation of TVET lecturers

Jane Hofmeyr and Zaahedah Vally



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





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Acronyms and abbreviations

BIBB	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
ACDEVEG	Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group
APP	Annual Performance Plan
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AVETPA	Australian Vocational Education and Training Professionals Association
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CEART	Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CoS	Centres of Specialisation
CPD	continuing professional development
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DESE	Department of Education, Skills and Employment
DfE	Department for Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoL	Department of Labour
ERRP	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
ETDP SETA	Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FE	further education
FET	further education and training
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
ICT	information and communications technology
ILD	initial lecturer development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRC	industry reference committee
IVET	initial vocational education and training
JET	JET Education Services
JOVACET	<i>Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training</i>
KATTI	Kenya Association of Technical Training Institutions
KRIVET	Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training
KUPPET	Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers
LST	learning and skills teacher
MBOT	Malaysia Board of Technologists
MECR	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Authority
NAPTOSA	National Association of Professional Teacher Organisations of South Africa
NCEE	National Center on Education and the Economy
NCV	National Certificate Vocational
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NDS	National Dual Training System

NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NEHAWU	National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union
NOSS	National Occupational Skills Standard
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFO	Organising Framework of Occupations
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PPQLTVET	Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET
PRONATEC	Programme for Access to Technical Education and Employment
PSCK	Public Service Commission Kenya
PSET	post-school education and training
PTS	Professional Teaching Standards
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills
RTO	registered training organisation
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAIVCET	South African Institute for Vocational Continuing Education and Training
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SEA-VET	TVET Platform for Southeast Asia
SET	Society for Education and Training
SETA	sector education and training authority
SETEC/MEC	Secretariat of Professional and Technological Education of the Ministry of Education
SME	small and medium enterprise
SSO	skills service organisation
TAE	Training Assessment and Education
TAFE	technical and further education
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
TVETA	TVET Authority
UMALUSI	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO-UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training of UNESCO
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VET	vocational education and training
WBL	work-based learning
WIL	work-integrated learning
WSP	workplace skills plan





1. Introduction

This report on the professionalisation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) lecturers is the result of research undertaken by JET Education Services (JET) in 2021 and 2022 as part of a five-year TVET programme. In 2019, JET was appointed as part of a consortium of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) involved in the five-year TVET programme commissioned by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the National Skills Fund (NSF).

JET has undertaken previous research on continuing professional development (CPD) for TVET lecturers in South Africa. In 2018/2019, JET undertook research for the DHET and the Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA), overseen by the Institute for Post-School Studies at UWC. Two reports were produced. The first, *Towards a Continuing Professional Development Framework for TVET Lecturers* (JET, 2018), included a review of local and international literature on CPD for TVET lecturers and

relevant South African government documents, policy and initiatives, as well as stakeholder interviews. The countries that were reviewed included Australia, England, Germany, Malaysia, Nigeria and South Korea. The second report was produced in 2019: *A Continuing Professional Development Framework for TVET Lecturers* (DHET, 2019). The research sought to advance understanding of the need for a national policy for CPD for TVET lecturers, the range of development activities it should encompass, the components it might contain and the key principles that should guide it.

The research for this report has built on the findings of the 2018 and 2019 JET reports on CPD as they provide a firm foundation for investigating recent TVET trends and developments, both globally and locally. However, the purpose of the research was shifted to focus specifically on TVET lecturer professionalisation in a range of countries, including South Africa. The literature review in this report covers the countries listed above, as well as Brazil and Moldova. Instead of Nigeria, however, we chose to look at Kenya as an African country where recent significant TVET initiatives seemed to be relevant to the professionalisation of TVET lecturers.

The review of TVET in these countries was undertaken to determine the extent of progress in the professionalisation of their lecturer corps in order to identify insights and lessons that could inform South Africa along its path of professionalisation.

To that end, this research report begins with a conceptual framework that explores the meanings of profession, professionalism and professionalisation as contested terms and key concepts embedded in – and linked to – these terms. The following sections include:

- An overview of broad global trends and challenges in TVET, particularly with regard to TVET lecturers;
- A literature review of the progress towards – and the key factors involved in – the professionalisation of TVET lecturers in the eight countries mentioned above; and
- Desktop research on recent developments in the TVET sector in South Africa in terms of the contextual factors, policies and initiatives affecting lecturer development.

A second report will include:

- A synthesis of South African stakeholders' perspectives on TVET lecturer professionalisation and how it might be achieved (through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a TVET conference in the second half of 2022); and
- A summary of the main findings of all the research above and the implications for a South African drive towards the professionalisation of TVET lecturers.

The overview of the findings will then be used in a third paper to inform the crafting of an appropriate draft framework for the successful professionalisation of TVET lecturers in South Africa.

It should be noted, however, as was found in the research for the 2018 JET report on CPD for TVET lecturers, that it is very difficult to find international and local sources focused on the professionalisation of TVET lecturers, especially in recent literature. Although most countries cite professionalisation as a goal, there is little evidence about what that comprises, and how far they are along the path towards the goal. Consequently, from the conceptual analysis that the JET team undertook, certain 'markers' were identified as key elements of professionalisation, and these were used to determine the extent they existed in each country, as well as the nature and training of its corps of lecturers/teachers/instructors.





2. Conceptual framework

The research project for this report was tasked with exploring the nature of a profession, professionalism and professionalisation. This is no small task as all these terms and the concepts they embody have been contested vigorously in the literature for many decades. In addition to educationists, scholars from a range of disciplines have weighed in, bringing new perspectives.

Moreover, new debates have arisen amid the ever-changing national and global contexts. Challenges within the education systems of countries, structural changes and forces brought about by globalisation, the digital revolution, the changing nature of work and the COVID-19 pandemic have caused re-examination and contestation of the concepts.

Most recent studies by Spours and Grainger (2018) argue for vocational and educational training (VET) to be conceptualised and developed as connecting living, working and learning. Similarly, Powell and McGrath (2019) argue that in talking about skills for work and life, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has focused on three lenses for thinking about VET: economic productivity and growth; equity; and environmental sustainability. In a similar vein, UNESCO (2017:8) sees one of its goals as strengthening TVET systems ‘to equip youth and adults with the skills required for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship’.

In the literature, the concepts of status, quality, autonomy, agency, identity and accountability, as well as two integrally linked terms – professional development and vocational pedagogy – are inherent in the notions of profession, professional and professionalisation. These key concepts have attracted considerable attention and debate and will also be examined.

There is a limited but growing literature that specifically discusses TVET lecturing as a profession and TVET lecturers in terms of their professionalism and professionalisation. In South Africa, only a small number of TVET sources explore these terms. There are numerous sources that explore the nature of professions in general and a large body of literature that addresses the concepts in terms of schoolteachers and educators. As TVET lecturers are also teachers in a generic sense, these sources are relevant to the issue of professionalisation. However, because TVET lecturers also must be occupational specialists, other sources were consulted to examine the nature of their work, their dual identity and the implications for vocational pedagogy. The perspectives offered in all these sources have informed the discussion that follows.

Definitions

It is important in any research about TVET to start with a definition. UNESCO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) use the following definition that has been adopted to describe TVET in South Africa:

Technical and vocational education is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. (UNESCO, 1999, cited in Blom, 2016:5)

It should be noted that in the literature TVET and VET are used interchangeably and carry the same meaning.

Different terms are used to refer to TVET practitioners in the various countries we researched and few, if any, clear distinctions are made between them. The most common terms in the literature are ‘lecturer’, ‘teacher’, ‘trainer’ and ‘instructor’, and all of these are used in this report. In some jurisdictions, the terms ‘facilitator’, ‘mentor’ and ‘coach’ are also used.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) differentiates between teachers and trainers in the following way:

Vocational trainers are those, whether in VET institutions or workplaces, who are primarily responsible for imparting practical vocational skills, and vocational teachers are those who are primarily responsible for vocational theory. In addition, many VET institutions also contain general teachers who are responsible for general subjects such as mathematics, or second languages. In practice the divisions between different types of teacher and trainer will work very differently in different countries and the boundaries are often blurred. (OECD, 2009:107)

By global agreements, TVET institutions should use internationally standardised occupational codes such as the ILO’s International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). South Africa has its own system, the Organising Framework of Occupations (OFO). However, the problem is that a lecturer could be categorised

as a Post School Educator (OFO Code 232130) or, as a result as her occupational training, could be classified as a Mechanical Engineering Technologist (OFO Code 214402). It is recognised that the coding needs to be standardised across the system.

Another challenge is that the occupational categories do not address how TVET staff are categorised in the national system nor the specific roles that they may fulfil in their college department, unit or system.

Categories of TVET staff in South Africa

Staff category	No. of staff
Lecturing staff	10,842
Management staff	423
Support staff	7,131
Total	18,396

Source: DHET (2019) cited in ETDP SETA (2021:21)

To cater for practical, workshop and work-integrated learning modes, the terms ‘instructor’, ‘teacher’, ‘coach’, ‘mentor’ and ‘lecturer’ are used, but these designations are not yet applied across the TVET system on a systematic basis.

Our research has revealed that in the case of Australia, Brazil, England, Germany and South Korea, the most common term is ‘teacher’. ‘Instructor’ is used mainly in Kenya and Malaysia, while in South Africa and Moldova, ‘lecturer’ is the common term. The terms, ‘facilitator’, ‘coach’ and ‘mentor’ are also used in some countries, including in South Africa to some extent, as will be discussed in its case study. Neat distinctions between the terms are not clear from the literature nor is their ranking in terms of the level of qualifications needed, the scope and responsibilities of their roles, and their work environment. South Korea is an example of a country that has begun to develop classification: teachers are expected to have industry and pedagogical knowledge, while trainers must have a technical qualification and some work experience.

Afeti (2022:3) raises a key point very relevant to African countries:

Although not widespread in South Africa, informal TVET is the dominant skills development approach (accounting for 80-90% of all skills acquisition) in the countries of East and West Africa. In conducting

further research, it may be necessary to take a holistic look at TVET systems embracing different learning pathways. Could master trainers in informal settings have a space in the professionalisation dialogue?

This issue is beyond the remit of this research project, but it raises a very important question for future research. If informal TVET trainers exist without a clear path to formal recognition, they could weaken the public image of TVET just when professionalisation of TVET practitioners is the goal (Afeti, 2022).

The matter of designations has bearing on how TVET practitioners would be classified for professional status and membership of a TVET lecturer professional council (Afeti, 2022). Afeti (2022:1) argues that for membership of a TVET lecturer professional body

a basic academic qualification (in a technical discipline), work experience (industrial and pedagogical), and success at a licensure examination may be required. Depending on the lecturer's professional and pedagogical experience, the membership progression route may stretch from Associate or Affiliate rank to Member and Fellow.

In this report, TVET 'lecturer' is the term most used, but in certain instances, depending on the context and issue being addressed, 'teacher' is also used (occasionally 'educator'), with the same meaning. In addition, TVET 'practitioner' is also used when an omnibus term is needed.

Profession

'Profession' is the root concept of 'professional', 'professionalism' and 'professionalisation'. A general definition of a profession is provided by the Australian Council of Professions (2003):

A profession is a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others.

Callaghan (2014:2) elaborates on this:

Professions are 'institutionally autonomous' self-regulating entities, responsible for developing and enforcing their own codes of practice and standards of behaviour. Self-regulation is achieved through the oversight of professional bodies, entities responsible for establishing and enforcing professional standards. These standards are enshrined in professional codes of conduct and regulations around ethical practice.

The definitions above aptly describe the nature of the classic professions – historically, divinity, law and medicine and later, engineering and accounting, for instance. These professions embody all the characteristics of the definitions above. However, there are newer and emerging professions that are struggling to achieve the status of profession amid a vigorous debate about what constitutes a profession and professionalism.

There are many schools of thought about the meaning of 'profession', and leading researchers have offered different analyses and categorisations. Taylor (2014) posits that, broadly, there are two traditions in the debate: endogenous and exogenous. In the *endogenous* school of thought, knowledge takes pride of place. Taylor (2014), amongst many other researchers, (e.g. Abbott, 1988; Darling-Hammond, 2002; Freidson, 1994; Young and Muller, 2014), takes the position that specialised knowledge is at the core of what distinguishes professions from other occupations. Taylor (2014:172) argues that

society accords professional autonomy over the standards which regulate the procedures and ethics of practice to a defined group of practitioners because the group possesses a knowledge base which is a more reliable guide to practice than any contending formulations.

In his view, the classic professions derive their protocols of practice from 'their respective bodies of theoretical and empirical knowledge which are developed, maintained and elaborated by members of the profession' (Taylor, 2014:172). Freidson (1994:36) supports this point of view, insisting that 'the authority of knowledge is central to professionalism'. Hoyle and John (1995) agree about the importance of knowledge, but add that knowledge, autonomy and responsibility/accountability form 'the three key dimensions of professionalism and central elements in educational practice' (cited in Bukhatir, 2018:5).

Taylor (2014) uses mathematics education as an example of the type of knowledge required of a mathematics teacher. He explains that mathematics education derives its authority from ‘knowledge of the school subject (disciplinary knowledge), knowledge about how best to teach the subject (subject knowledge for teaching) and knowledge about classroom practice (pedagogical knowledge)’ (2014:174).

This echoes the work of Shulman (1986, cited in Gess-Newsome, 1999:3), who argued that

the study of ‘teachers’ cognitive understanding of subject matter content and the relationships between such understanding and the instruction teachers provide for ‘students’ (1986a, p. 25) may be the ‘missing program’ in educational research. He went on to differentiate and call for the study of three types of content understandings and their impact on classroom practice: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and curricular knowledge. Later model refinements renamed the constructs as subject matter knowledge, curricular knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge.

In the same school of thought as Taylor, Muller (2009) sees disciplinary robustness as a key variable in characterising differences between professions. He sees ‘professions like teaching, clinical psychology and social work as being in the process of developing their knowledge bases, aspiring to the stability and autonomy of the established professions, but with a way to go still in terms of their disciplinary robustness’ (Muller, 2009, cited in Taylor, 2014:174).

As Taylor (2014) points out, a profession with a well-defined knowledge base, a respected professional identity and a body that regulates its own members is in a strong position to define and apply its effective practices against government policies that could counter quality practice. A profession without these essential characteristics tends to be regulated by the bureaucracy. Taylor (2014) cites teaching as a case in point, where governments tend to use strict dictates about what teachers should do in the classroom and continually assess them, often resulting in a conflictual relationship. He argues that teaching in many countries, including South Africa and the United States of America, is in this situation.¹

Young and Muller (2014) warn that if professions are to have a future in the increasingly uncertain and ever-changing global and national contexts, then specialised knowledge is going to be more important than ever before. They point out that:

The privileged status of professions in most countries, together with their claims to autonomy and access to specialised knowledge, is being increasingly challenged both by market pressures and by new instruments of accountability and regulation. Established and emerging professions are increasingly seen as either the solution, or as sources of conservatism and resistance to change in western economies. (Young and Muller, 2014:abstract)

Young and Muller (2014:abstract) are concerned about developments in professional education that draw on a competence model that emphasises what newly qualified members of a profession ‘can do’ rather than what ‘they know’. They argue against blurring or collapsing the skill/knowledge distinction.

In the *exogenous* tradition, Taylor (2014) points to those authors who advocate that teaching should not follow the other professions in developing a scientific knowledge base. For instance, Apple (2000) links the moves to place teaching on a scientific basis to the rise of an instrumentalist discourse that ‘in turn has been used as a tool to stifle diversity and deskill teachers’ (Apple, 2000, cited in Taylor, 2014:174). Similarly, Ball (2008, cited in Taylor, 2014:173) warns of

an all-powerful state driving teachers into continuous self-improvement in the name of greater economy through the technology of performativity, a process that sets what Ball calls the ‘tyranny of metrics’ against professional judgement.

Authors from another group argue for teaching as a craft, not a profession. Sockett (1987, cited in Taylor, 2014:173) posits that a scientific knowledge base for teaching would ‘deny the craft and artistry of the profession’, along with the ‘the contextual, emotional, reflexive and iterative elements that are so integral to teaching done well’. Pratte and Rury (1991, cited in Taylor, 2014:174) characterise teaching as a ‘craft-profession’, where competence comprises various skills and practices based on learning by doing and experience, and not a formal codified body of knowledge.

¹ De Clercq (2013), in her analysis of a conflictual relationship between teacher unions and the departments of education in South Africa, supports Taylor.

Hiebert, Gallimore and Stigler (2002, cited in Taylor, 2014:174) take a middle path: they want to codify knowledge for teaching but recognise the value of craft knowledge, and ask

whether it is possible to build this personal craft knowledge into a trustworthy knowledge base that can be accessed and shared widely in the profession ... we propose that professional knowledge must be public, it must be represented in a form that enables it to be accumulated and shared with other members of the profession, and it must be continually verified and confirmed.

Pachler (2007, cited in Taylor, 2014:174) sees professional knowledge as more about 'collaborative, enquiry-based' processes and less about a set of theoretical propositions and protocols of practice. For Hargreaves (2003:50), the sharing of professional knowledge is more effectively done through practice-based forms of 'innovation transfer', and less through a codified body amenable to transmission through training.

This debate about what professional knowledge is, and how it is acquired, is particularly germane to TVET lecturers. The rapidly changing nature of work, dramatic technological advances, the challenges posed by the global economy and interdisciplinary approaches regarding a profession have opened the concept to a much broader discussion.

Hoyle (2001:15472) has identified a 'trend in sociological theory and research from a focus on teaching as a profession to a focus on the nature of teachers, 'work' '. For example, Evans (2015) argues against restricting the notion of a profession to the classic professions in favour of a neutral, more democratic definition that corresponds with the realities of working life.

She and others like Etzioni (1969) and Evetts (2013) point out that the debate about the meaning of a profession has changed since the days when the debate was about 'whether teachers and nurses, falling short of meriting "classic" professional status, should be called semi-professions' (Etzioni, 1969, cited in Evans, 2015:3). Evetts (2013, cited in Evans, 2015:3) regards a precise definition as a 'time-wasting diversion' because 'to most researchers in the field it no longer seems important to draw a hard and fast line between professions and occupations but, instead, to regard both as similar social forms which share many common characteristics'.

A key issue for this research is whether TVET teachers are seen as being part of a profession. This is discussed in a recent paper by Canrinus, Dalehefte and Myhre (2019) where they observe that the status of VET,

relative to other forms of education or professions, is still ambiguous, and there is still a lack of social recognition of VET as a profession. Dymock and Tyler (2018, cited in Canrinus et al., 2019) state that even though policy and researchers have recognised that VET teachers are professionals, this is still debated. Their assertion that policy and researchers recognise VET teachers is also a matter for debate.

Professionalism

Queen's University (n.d.) in Canada provides two definitions of professionalism for its module on Ethical Principles and Professionalism in University Teaching:

The skill, good judgment, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well' and 'an individual's adherence to a set of standards, code of conduct or collection of qualities that characterise accepted practice within a particular area of activity.

Professionalism is not the same as professionalisation. In simple terms, professionalism is concerned with 'a profession's *internal quality*, authority, values and autonomous practices' (Hargreaves, 2000, cited in de Clercq, 2013:2, emphasis added). Professionalisation can be seen as 'a *process* whereby occupations have become, or seek to become, publicly recognized as professions' according to certain criteria (Hoyle, 2001:15472, emphasis added).

In the academic world, as we saw in the discussion of a 'profession', there is no universally accepted definition of professionalism or professionalisation – they are interpreted and classified in many ways. In the case of professionalism, de Clercq (2013) posits that there are two main positions that characterise the debate: a *descriptive/normative*, or a *socially constructed*, dynamic definition. 'The descriptive definition refers to notions of professional expertise, autonomy and responsibility (or self-regulation), as demonstrated in work practices' (Hoyle and John, 1995, cited in de Clercq, 2013:3). The second definition 'stands against essentialist definitions of professionalism and recognises competing versions whose meanings and delineations are sources of conflicts and change over time' (Whitty, 2008, cited in de Clercq, 2013:3). Indeed, Stevenson, Carter and Passy (2007, cited in de Clercq 2013:3) define teacher professionalism as 'an ideological concept that is neither static nor universal but located in a particular socio-historical context and fashioned to represent and mobilise particular interests'.

Sachs (2001, cited in de Clercq, 2013:3) picks up on the idea of an ideological struggle between 'managerial professionalism' of the state intended to control teachers

and their practices and ‘democratic professionalism’, initiated inside the profession or by teacher unions as an occupational strategy. Hargreaves (2003) and Hyslop-Margison and Sears (2010) see managerial professionalism as the cause of the de-professionalisation of teachers. These authors are strongly opposed to neo-liberal and market-based regulatory reforms that ‘erode teachers’ autonomy of judgment and conditions of work’ and threaten their role in education administration and curricular and instructional design by ‘accountability measures such as instrumental objectives, standardized testing, and evidence-based practice’ (Hyslop-Margison and Sears, 2010, cited in Taylor, 2014:172). The same views are also held by South African scholars of TVET, such as Allais and Marock (2020) and McGrath et al. (2020).

From a socio-political approach, Hargreaves (2000, cited in de Clercq, 2013:5) has argued that:

Teacher expertise and autonomy became increasingly circumscribed to fall in line with the centralist agendas of the 1990s and the forces of globalisation. Teacher responsibility was redefined to include new regimes of performance-based accountability, which placed high demands on teachers, often without corresponding support and resources to meet their needs and their changing classrooms. Ozga (1995) argues that such performance-based reforms de-professionalised teachers, by reducing their professional status, discretion and judgment.

Given the recent dramatic politico-economic, social and technological changes in global and national contexts, Evans (2015) and other analysts argue that professionalism is no longer something that only a few occupations could claim. Evans (2015:10) decries the notion that it has only one interpretation: ‘no one has emerged as the clear 21st century guru on what it now means ... and the discourse remains as fluid as the concept itself’.

Consequently, leading academics are presenting new understandings of professionalism that accord with the realities of working life and societies in the 21st century. As Evetts (2013) indicates, there is a need to re-examine the theories and concepts used to explain and interpret professionalism (cited in Evans, 2015).

Evans’ research focuses on the nature of professionalism as an occupational category. She argues that professionalism is merely ‘a term used to denote people’s being in any work context’ (Evans, 2015:1). In her 2008 paper, Evans sees professionalism as something that is ‘enacted’ (and ‘not something that *ought* to be’) (2008:7). She maintains that ‘to be real, professionalism has to be something that people – professionals – actually “do”, not simply something that the government or any other agency *wants* them to do, or mistakenly imagines they are doing’ (Evans, 2008:14). For her, to be meaningful, the concept of professionalism must reflect the *reality* of daily practices (2008). In her 2011 article, she expands on these ideas:

what teachers do, how and why they do it; what they know and understand; where and how they acquire their knowledge and understanding; what attitudes they hold; what codes of behaviour they follow; what their function is; what purposes they perform; what quality of service they provide; and the level of consistency incorporated into the above. (Evans, 2011:855)

Evans (2015:10) categorises these professional practices into three main components – intellectual, behavioural and attitudinal. As Figure 1 below shows, she goes on to explain that the intellectual, behavioural and attitudinal components incorporate 11 more specific dimensions: the perceptual, procedural, processual, motivational, epistemological, productive, (e)valuative, comprehensive, rationalistic, analytical and competential dimensions (Evans, 2015).²

² In her 2015 paper, Evans explains what she means:

What I label the behavioural component of professionalism relates to what practitioners physically do at work. I identify as its sub-components: the processual, procedural, productive, and competential dimensions of professionalism, which relate respectively to: processes that people apply to their work; procedures that they apply to their work; output, productivity and achievement (how much people ‘do’ and what they achieve); and their skills and competences. The attitudinal component of professionalism relates to attitudes held. I identify as its sub-components: the perceptual, evaluative, and motivational dimensions of professionalism, which relate respectively to: perceptions, beliefs and views held, (including those relating to oneself, hence, self-perception and identity); people’s values (not necessarily just grand values, like social justice and equality, but also values in the sense of what matters and is important to people – including what they like and dislike within the minutiae of their daily lives); and people’s motivation, job satisfaction and morale. The intellectual component of professionalism relates to practitioners’ knowledge and understanding and their knowledge structures. I identify as its sub-components: the epistemological, rationalistic, comprehensive, and analytical dimensions of professionalism, which relate respectively to: the bases of people’s knowledge; the nature and degree of reasoning that they apply to their practice; what they know and understand; and the nature and degree of their analyticism.

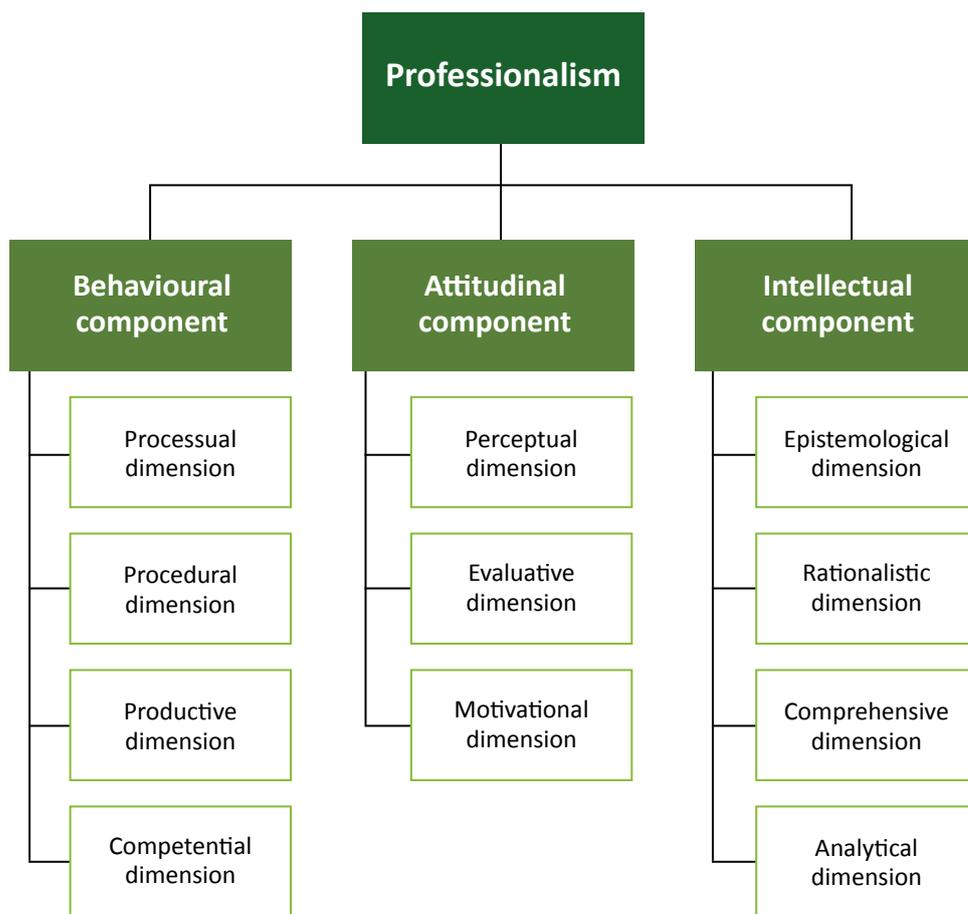


Figure 1: The componential structure of professionalism (Evans, 2015:8)

Johnston (2015:299) observes that ‘in some contexts “professionalism” is used as a euphemism for quality and reform’. She argues that a causal link has not been established between education reform, teacher professionalism and improved quality in terms of student outcomes. Hence, Johnston (2015:313) criticises the reductionism in the discourse about professionalism:

When reducing the complex issues concerning teacher accountability, more focussed professional learning, enhanced and quality teaching and improved student learning to a simple ‘professionalism’ or ‘professionalising’ the teaching workforce, many essential components are rendered inconsequential.

Clearly, professionalism is a very contested concept, and so Gewirtz, Mahony and Hextall (2009:3) argue for the ‘need to work with plural conceptions’ of it. How that is done in practice is not clear.

Professionalisation

The common definition given to ‘professionalisation’ is ‘the process through which a particular occupational category attains the status of a profession as opposed to a job or occupation’ (Freidson, 1970, cited in Callaghan, 2014:1). Levine (2001) defines professionalisation as

involving the development of skills, identities, norms, and values associated with becoming part of a professional group. Through this process, recruits to the social and behavioral sciences acquire both substantive and methodological knowledge and develop understandings of their roles that permit them to function as professionals in these fields.

Hargreaves (2000) draws a distinction between professionalisation and professionalism: the former refers to the nature of teachers’ work, working conditions,

status and power in society, while professionalism speaks to the profession's internal quality, authority, values and autonomous practices. De Clercq (2013) observes that while professionalisation is a sociological project that centres on the work and status of teaching as a profession, teacher professionalism is a pedagogical project centred on the internal quality of teaching as a profession, with its relative control in making autonomous decisions over teaching practices.

Wilensky (1964) and Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1944) suggest that professionalisation occurs when an occupation 'acquires the characteristics of a profession: an ethical code, a set of established educational practices, a defined set of specialist skills, a professional body (or bodies), and a process of self-regulation' (cited in Callaghan, 2014:1).

Additionally, Freidson (1986, cited in Callaghan, 2014:1–2) argues that 'professionalisation is about more than a process of self-definition as a profession. It also requires that the occupation is recognised as a profession by the public at large. ... Society has to recognise a profession's practices as worthwhile and socially acceptable.' This means that the professionalisation process must be understood within a broader social and political context where the profession is challenged to win the public's trust. Macpherson (2009, cited in Bukhatir, 2018:8) defines the process of professionalisation as

mastering a specialist, validated and reliable knowledge base, demonstrably acquiring the practical skills of the field, being socialised into the culture of the body of people engaged in the calling, and adhering to the principles and ethics of best practice in that profession.

It appears that among the various authors above, there is considerable agreement on what constitutes professionalisation – with teaching as the reference point. What might this mean for the professionalisation of TVET lecturers? As we have seen in earlier sections of this paper, the jury is still out as to whether teaching is a profession or not, and the arguments above and referred to later suggest that TVET is less well regarded by the public and has a longer path to walk to achieve professionalisation of TVET lecturers.

As we will show in the country case studies, many governments' best intentions to reform and strengthen their TVET systems in line with the knowledge and skills demanded by the global economy, and achieve the professionalisation of TVET lecturers, remain idealistic goals, without the requisite policies, implementation and change on the ground. In general, TVET lacks many of the key components that would enable lecturers

to achieve a professional status, with the necessary standards, processes and components in place for their professionalisation to meaningfully advance.

Embedded concepts

Any consideration of the nature of a profession, professionalism and professionalisation reveals several integrally linked key concepts that lie at the heart of the many debates outlined above. Each of these will be discussed below.

Status

The literature indicates that internationally the status of TVET is generally low. Rawkins (2018:1) makes the point very clearly: 'almost universally, TVET remains the "poor relative" of education systems both in terms of perception and attention'. Subrahmanyam (2013:18) explains the reasons for this:

Negative perceptions of TVET are related to quality issues. Many young people and parents are not attracted to TVET because they associate vocational track programmes with low academic performance, poor quality provision and blocked future pathways.

This has serious implications for professionalising VET teachers. Muwaniki and Wedekind (2018) warn that as long as the status of TVET remains poor, the professionalisation of lecturers will remain a significant challenge. The lower the status of TVET, the more difficult it will be to professionalise the sector. Grollmann (2009) sees the qualification and competence of teachers as a lever for improving the status and image of TVET.

Its low image is a concern in most of the literature, but at the same time, TVET is recognised as playing a crucial role in the economic development of any nation. In most countries, traditional academic routes and related qualifications and credentials are far preferred to TVET, and as such, societal support for developing the sector into a 'well-regarded profession' is lacking (Grollmann, 2009:1185). The International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO-UNEVOC) lists a range of factors that contribute to the low image of TVET, including 'poor quality, weak linkages with stakeholders particularly the industries, social stigma, cultural barriers, and a lack of qualified and competent teachers' (2018d:3).

Quality

Classic definitions of professionalism embody the notion of quality and high standards as key characteristics of

how professionals do their work. For instance, according to Nilsson (n.d.), ‘professionalization is a social process by which any trade or occupation transforms itself into a true profession of the highest integrity and competence’. A profession of the ‘highest integrity and competence’ must have members who are properly and appropriately qualified and observe professional standards. Standards describe what teachers should know and be able to do, including the description of a desirable level of performance (Ingvarson, 2002).

In most countries of the world, TVET teachers do not meet high standards of qualification and competence, and this highlights the need for quality and relevance in both their initial education and training and their ongoing professional development. For TVET lecturers to fulfil all that is expected of them to deliver high-quality education is a tall order in today’s world. Blom et al. (2022:303) observe that TVET lecturers are expected to possess multiple skills and knowledge sets in the 21st century:

They should have industry knowledge and experience, education knowledge and pedagogical skills, 21st century skills, and identify as teachers, facilitators, agents of social justice, as communicators and as industry/occupational specialists (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2014). Moreover, they are expected to keep up to date with the latest technologies and be skilled in appropriate pedagogies in varied contexts. Additional minimum expectations include an understanding of the diverse challenges experienced by learners in the system (such as barriers to learning) as well as knowledgeability regarding curriculum differentiation and adaptation. Lecturers are also expected to demonstrate an awareness of the TVET context and the role of the sector in achieving social and economic targets.³

Our research shows that it is important to distinguish between occupational and professional standards. Most of the countries we surveyed have national occupational standards. According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (n.d.), ‘National Occupational Standards (NOS) define the competences which apply to job roles or occupations in the form of statements of performance, knowledge and the evidence required to confirm competence.’

Lester (2014:276) explains that ‘occupational standards follow a broadly common approach which assumes that all work can be expressed in terms of roles and functions and that these can be specified in more-or-less finite terms’. In distinguishing between occupational and professional standards, Lester (2014:276) indicates that:

While there is a certain amount of overlap between the two types of standard, recent research points to a distinct professional, as opposed to occupational, perspective on work competence. This can be characterised as focusing on ethics, professionalism and key standards rather than the detail of roles and functions; being universally applicable rather than having a core-and-options structure; and being designed to provide confidence in practitioners’ abilities to act as a member of the profession rather than in a bounded occupational role.

However, Lester (2014:284) points out that there are no hard-and-fast rules about what each type of standard should comprise:

In practice the approach taken by any profession to describing work competence will need to reflect its particular make-up, operating context and expectations. ... any given area of work, viewed from any of several perspectives, is likely to have a mix of professional and occupational characteristics. This suggests that the kind of competence model that is appropriate will range from the archetypally professional to the pragmatically occupational, with various mixed models in between.

In contrast to the preceding definitions, Evans (2015) offers a radical interpretation of quality in relation to professionalism. As opposed to how the man or woman on the street sees it, her interpretation ‘is not merit-laden but neutral’ (2015:6). ‘By this I mean that it does not relate to how well people are considered to do their work. ... Thus there is no such thing as unprofessional behaviour, within my conceptualisation, the term is redundant’ (2015:7).

Evans (2015) emphasises that her approach is a conceptual one and separate from everyday practice. She recognises

3 Moreover, in South Africa, it is expected that all lecturers will be competent in the Language of Learning and Teaching and will be able to achieve basic communicative competence in at least one official African language.

that there is unacceptable practice in the workplace that very often falls short of what managers or customers would want, but she maintains that with her particular conceptions of professional and professionalism, she does not see such practice as unprofessional. She holds that professionalism simply equates to each of the 11 dimensions of the intellectual, behavioural and attitudinal components she has advanced (2015). As seen above, she has defined each of the 11 dimensions and, as a group, they constitute a formidable set of attributes/competencies for any professional to exhibit. Despite what Evans says about her neutral conception, if a practitioner could exhibit all those capabilities, then her practice would be of the highest quality.

Autonomy

Darling-Hammond (1989) posits that professional autonomy is linked to a profession's control of its knowledge base and the quality assurance of members. Taylor (2014) points to two main views of how a profession achieves this autonomy, by using his categorisation of exogenous and endogenous positions.

There are those researchers who adopt an exogenous view that the development of a professional approach is dependent on the conferral of autonomous status to teachers by the public in general and the state in particular: without this space teachers are reduced to implementers of a curriculum designed elsewhere, and hampered in the task of elaborating their own vision of good professional practice. (Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996, cited in Taylor, 2014:172)

Frostenson (2015) observes that the de-professionalisation of teachers and the loss of professional autonomy is a recurring theme in the literature on the teaching profession. Most teacher unions support this view. For example, on 18 April 2019, Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, gave a speech in which she claimed that teachers' poor working conditions were contributing to teachers no longer being seen as professionals. She said that teachers 'are micromanaged, forced to focus on standardized tests, and unable to teach as they see fit. ... This de-professionalization is killing the soul of teaching. Teachers need the freedom to teach' (Will, 2019).

In line with Taylor's (2014) main argument, Frostenson (2015:20) observes:

The loss of professional autonomy is commonly seen as the hallmark of de-professionalisation, a process wherein professional actors lose the ability to

influence and the power to define the contents and forms of their own work, and fail to maintain the boundaries of their professional domains vis-à-vis other professionals, the authorities, market forces, or others.

Johnston (2015:313) points to 'the paradox that is evident when teachers are increasingly called to account for their students' learning outcomes, so that key elements of professionalism in the form of autonomy and agency have diminished'.

By contrast, the endogenous view of autonomy is seen as developed from within the teaching fraternity: 'society accords professional autonomy over the standards that regulate the procedures and ethics of practice to a defined group of practitioners because the group possesses a knowledge base that is a more reliable guide to practice than any contending formulations' (Taylor, 2014:2). This results in public trust. Gamble (2010:13) concurs: 'the notion of autonomy is indelibly linked to control of the knowledge base on which a profession's claim to autonomy rests'.

From his analysis, Taylor (2014:178–179) indicates that there are two elements on which exogenous and endogenous traditions agree: a 'fully-fledged teaching profession' would have 'a systematic understanding of teaching' as its 'central axis' and adopt 'a collegial form of organisation as the critical point of reference for both practice and the maintenance of autonomy'.

Afeti (2022:2) emphasises that a TVET professional association would need to have 'a constitutive body or TVET Council recognised in law and clothed with authority to stipulate and enforce conditions for membership and regulate the practice of TVET'.

Agency

Autonomy that develops from inside the teacher fraternity is closely linked to the concept of 'agency'. De Clercq (2013) refers to Sachs (2001), who characterises two types of teachers. In the first group, there are those 'who are passively compliant, overdependent on the state's understanding of teaching and respond to the state as workers with little authority, power or interest in controlling their work'. Sachs regards this stance as leading to 'a narrow form of self-serving teacher professionalism, which is more concerned about teachers' working conditions than recognising their social agency' (2001, cited in de Clercq, 2013:4).

The second group are the teachers who recognise their social agency and engage with the state as independent proactive professionals:

With an activist identity, teachers engage both inside and outside their workplace for better education quality and equity. This is the ingredient of a broad form of democratic professionalism which, through a genuine dialogue with other responsible stakeholders, builds a common vision and strategy about school improvement. (De Clercq, 2013:4)

The voice of TVET lecturers must be heard. Wedekind (2016b:2) highlights the consequences if genuine dialogue between stakeholders does not happen:

Unless the agency of the range of actors in a system is understood and forms part of the policy process, there is a chance that good policies can founder as the people who are expected to implement them make their own sense of what the policies mean and how they should be implemented.

Wedekind (2022:3) points out that institutional structures also significantly affect TVET lecturer quality and that

varying degrees of autonomy and agency can enable or constrain a TVET lecturer's ability and capacity to understand and manage... the three domains that a 'quality' TVET lecturer needs to navigate: TVET knowledge, holistic competencies and mediation within the skills ecosystem.

Teacher agency is also strongly influenced by external societal and global forces. As de Clercq states: 'Teacher professionalism is the complex outcome of contradictory forces or factors – which are both external and internal to the profession, whether this involves discourses or pressures' (2013:4).

The issue of contradictory forces is taken up by Hargreaves (2000:153), who sees the post-modern age as

a struggle between forces and groups intent on de-professionalising the work of teaching, and other forces and groups who are seeking to re-define teacher professionalism and professional learning in more positive and principled modern ways that are flexible, wide-ranging and inclusive in nature.

Identity

De Clercq (2013) observes that the subjective components of professionalism – such as teachers' identities, attitudes and engagement with their work, employers, learners and colleagues – are an important topic of research. Increasingly, researchers are investigating professional identity, as can be seen from the examples below.

Callaghan (2014:1) underlines the importance of this research: 'In defining "the professional", particularly from a psychological point of view, it is necessary to look a little beyond the mere credentials of the professional, to consider a further element – the notion of the professional identity.'

Carrim (2001, cited in de Clercq, 2013:4) argues that teachers have

multiple identities which are negotiated through various constitutive identity-formation processes, which have to be investigated empirically in a given context. These processes can be personal (the product of history, capacity, knowledge, beliefs, and values), social (the product of socio-cultural structures and state policies) and/or situated (the result of teacher collective interaction/negotiation).

Taylor (2014) also addresses the issue of a professional identity. He argues for the primacy of a specialised knowledge base for a profession, and hence he believes that improving the professional behaviour of teachers lies in strengthening the subject identities of beginning teachers. Furthermore, he sees a professional association as playing a key role in moulding a professional identity.

However, Taylor (2014) is quick to point out that being a professional is not just about undergoing training in a knowledge field and belonging to an association. Like Beck and Young (2005), Taylor also points to the critical role that intensive socialisation into the values and standards of a professional community plays in 'the creation of a professional habitus' (Beck and Young, 2005, cited in Taylor, 2014:179).

If professionalisation is followed in a disciplined way, not only are 'certain habits of mind and codes of ethics acquired, but the initiate acquires a language and system of thought, an approach to the application of knowledge to the field of practice' (Taylor, 2014:179).

In the case of VET teachers, numerous researchers have investigated the question of their identity. Andersson and Köpsén (2019) researched their identity formation in Sweden. They see the VET teacher identity as 'dual, an occupational identity and a teacher identity, being shaped through participation in and boundary crossings

between different communities of practice: work in their initial occupational practice, teaching in the practice of VET, and learning through teacher training' (2019:537–551).

Canrinus et al. (2019:463) conducted research among 125 VET teachers in Norway and found that professional identity plays an important role in TVET teachers' motivation to participate in CPD:

Beliefs regarding collaboration and sharing knowledge significantly contribute to the intention to participate in CPD to strengthen general pedagogical competence and strengthening knowledge of the teachers' subject taught. The latter is also influenced by the extent to which the teachers perceive themselves more as a skilled worker than a teacher.

Blom (2016) states that strong linkages between colleges, business and industries facilitate the development of occupational identities and outlooks through the 'socialization of the individual into the culture of a particular occupation', which tend to

remake its members in its own image – the longer the individual stays in the same occupation the deeper the transformation. Thus, an individual's occupation can be a good indication, in broad terms, of the individual's likely social construction of reality, since a wide variety of attitudes, values and behaviour are correlated with a person's occupation. (McLean and Wilson, 2009, cited in Blom, 2016:2–3)

Accountability

Linda Darling-Hammond (1989) is internationally recognised as an authority on accountability in education. She argues that accountability lies at the heart of a profession that is responsible to clients, the public and fellow professionals for the quality of its service. She goes on to explain the difference between bureaucratic accountability and professional accountability, the most common forms of accountability that are used in the education sector. In the bureaucratic model:

Teachers are viewed as functionaries rather than as well-trained and highly skilled professionals. Little investment is made in teacher preparation, induction, or professional development. ... Little time is afforded for joint planning or collegial consultation about problems of practice.

Because practices are prescribed outside the school setting, there is no need and little use for professional knowledge and judgement. (Darling-Hammond, 1989:63–64)

By contrast, professional accountability depends on a commitment to three principles in the conduct and governance of an occupation:

1. *Knowledge is the basis for permission to practise and for decisions that are made with respect to the unique needs of clients;*
2. *The practitioner pledges his first concern to the welfare of the client; and*
3. *The profession assumes collective responsibility for the definition, transmittal, and enforcement of professional standards of practice and ethics. (Darling-Hammond, 1989:67)*

The differences between the two are summarised in Table 1.

In the case of professional accountability, Darling-Hammond (1989:67) highlights the bargain that all professions make with society: 'The profession guarantees the competence of members in exchange for the privilege of professional control over work structure and standards of practice ... Collective autonomy from external regulation is achieved by accepting collective responsibility.' She explains that:

The theory behind this equation is that professional control improves both the quality of individual service and the level of knowledge in the profession as a whole. This occurs because decision making by well trained professionals allows individual clients' needs to be met more precisely, and it promotes continual refinement and improvement in overall practice as effectiveness rather than bureaucratic compliance becomes the standard for judging competence. (Darling-Hammond, 1989:67)

Table 1: Types of accountability

Professional accountability	Bureaucratic accountability
Goal is effectiveness in meeting individual needs of children	Goal is uniformity and standardisation of instruction
Holds teachers accountable for the best interests of the learners	Holds teachers accountable for compliance with policies regulations and standard procedures
Teachers must acquire specialised knowledge, pass certification examinations and uphold professional standards of practice	Teacher accountability through reporting systems and inspections
Practitioners allowed to make their own decisions	Practitioners have limited discretion
Profession should be main developers and custodian of Teaching Professional Standards and ensure quality of practitioners	Government responsible for regulating teachers' conduct, meeting basic job responsibilities and ensuring compliance with regulations

Gallie and Keevy (2014:5) have added another dimension to the debate in discussing the difference between 'powerful' and 'powerless' accountability:

Powerful accountability means that teachers 'get on with it', 'find solutions', 'own it' and 'acknowledge reality', rather than a powerless accountability that is based on 'being unaware', 'blaming others', 'finding excuses', and 'waiting and hoping' that someone will solve some of the problems.

Essentially, powerful accountability is demonstrated by teachers committed to agency, and powerless accountability by those with a victim mentality.

Verger and Parcerisa (2017:31) make the key point: 'Ultimately, the primary debate is not about whether accountability in education is necessary or not, but about the type of accountability that should be in place.'

Linked concepts

Professional development

Just as different conceptualisations of a profession have developed, the same has happened to the concept of continuing professional development, also known as CPD or professional learning.

In-depth research on CPD for TVET lecturers is being undertaken by another JET research team, so here it suffices to illustrate some different approaches, beginning with CPD for the teaching force in general and then specifically the VET teacher.

In line with his position on what determines a profession, Taylor (2014) posits that the collegiate (or professional association) plays a key role in the CPD of members and is instrumental in setting and maintaining the standards of both training and practice.

Evans (2008:16) offers a broad and simple definition of professional development as 'the process whereby people's professionalism and/or professionalism may be considered to be enhanced'.

In a later work, Evans (2015:2) argues that both professionalism and professional development 'suffer from inadequate conceptualisation and definitional precision – in other words, far too few researchers clarify what they mean when they use these terms'. She sees professionalism as the basis of professional development: a change to one or more of the 11 dimensions that she conceived as constituting professional development.

Evans (2019:14) is opposed to the view that professional development is restricted to a formal activity:

I question what contribution towards our understanding of precisely how and why practitioners learn and develop is made by repeatedly revisiting the same ground: examining at what is often a rather superficial level the nature and merits of this or that professional development programme. Constituting the bulk of the field's output, such research seems to have secured the highest places on the research agenda in recent years.

She argues for a close investigation of how and why practitioners learn and develop, believing that there should be more research on the implicit and informal components of professional learning that teachers typically learn on the job: ‘If the professional learning and development field is to advance meaningfully, we need to re-order that agenda, placing informal and implicit processes in a much higher position than they have hitherto occupied’. She sees professional learning as ‘something that is part and parcel of day-to-day (working) life and that creeps up on people unawares and erodes away at their thinking and their attitudes’ (Evans, 2019:10–11). From her research, Evans (2019:9) indicates that

a key processual component, or stage, of what I call micro-level professional development, is the individual’s recognition of something as a ‘better way’ of ‘doing’ things (applying a broad interpretation of ‘doing’ to include mental as well as physical activity).

In the case of VET teachers, their professional development presents a complex and difficult challenge because they cross the boundary between two different professions in the sense of being both a skilled worker and a teacher (Canrinus et al., 2019). Thus, their CPD should focus on both these roles, and both subject and general pedagogical knowledge should make up the content of CPD programmes, which should be developed in dialogue with the VET teachers.

The research on successful CPD has highlighted how important collaboration and networking between teachers are for effective professional learning (Darling-Hammond, 2014). Hence, Canrinus et al. (2019:473) suggest that ‘teacher education and development programs for VET teachers should specifically consider creating an arena for them to share their knowledge and experiences’.

Collaboration and support are what UNESCO (2021:81) is calling for to bolster ‘the individual talents and abilities of teachers’. It highlights that co-operation and collaboration should be an integral part of their modes of working.

Andersson and Köpsén (2019), researching the dual identities of VET teachers in Sweden, also point out that in the dramatically changing worlds of work and technology, VET teachers who straddle school/college and working life have to engage in boundary crossing between different communities of practice. Their qualitative study reveals ‘how different forms of boundary encounters between VET teachers and working life, brokering of occupational knowledge, and reconstruction of occupational practices at schools provide opportunities for teachers’ CPD’ (Andersson and Köpsén, 2019:537). They point out

that these boundary encounters influence vocational teaching practices and facilitate CPD that offers VET teachers the occupational knowledge and skills with the currency needed to teach and prepare their students for employability.

As early as 1997, Young and Guile (1997:11) foresaw that the VET professional of the future would have to be a ‘connective specialist’ moving between and bridging different contexts. In addition to what they saw as the four characteristics of traditional professional occupations, they added four more, in the light of the changing circumstances facing VET professionals. The characteristics are outlined below.

Young and Guile saw the traditional features of professional occupations as comprising:

(i) technical competence – the specialist skills and knowledge associated with any sector or category of work (ii) underpinning knowledge – the theoretical knowledge that enables the VET professional to relate specific problems in her/his field to the wider political economic and cultural context (iii) practical experience – the actual experience of tackling real problems under all the constraints of time and resources (iv) ethic of responsibility – for their work, their colleagues and their organization. (Young and Guile, 1997:11)

In addition, they believe that the TVET professional of the future would require:

(v) research and innovation capacity – not just associated with R and D departments or universities but with all VET professionals (vi) customer/client awareness – an explicit concern with new markets and new learner needs (vii) flexibility – as expressed in the development of ‘polycontextual’ and ‘boundary-crossing’ skills and the ability to contribute to an organisation’s strategic needs (viii) telematic-based learning – making decisions about whether to use telematic media, and which telematic media and under what conditions to use them as a resource for learning. (Young and Guile, 1997:12)

Broadly speaking, they were prescient in terms of the very wide range of knowledge and skills TVET lecturers would need to teach effectively and the importance of connections. Indeed, this point is stressed by Wedekind (2022:7):

TVET lecturers need to have expertise as educationists and mastery of their field of work. But from a skills ecosystem perspective, Russon and Wedekind (forthcoming) argue that TVET lecturers are also mediators: an invisible connection point, right at the centre of the skills ecosystem.

Vocational pedagogy

The need for different types of pedagogy in TVET contexts has been recognised by many scholars. As we have seen above, Young and Guile (1997) pointed to new skills and knowledge demands from changing technologies and the global economy that would affect the preparation and continuing professional development of TVET professionals.

In South Africa, the establishment of new university qualifications specifically for TVET lecturers revealed that there is a need to conceptualise and define a vocational pedagogy that would ‘clearly differentiate the TVET educator qualifications from school-teacher qualifications’; and would prepare educators for teaching in technical and vocational contexts (Blom, 2016:4). Indeed, in 2016, Wedekind indicated that there was no clear definition of vocational pedagogy and ‘a major gap in the understandings of pedagogy that is specific to the technical and vocational sector’ (2016a:44).

Both Blom (2016) and Wedekind (2016a) turned to Shulman (2005) to explore the pedagogy that could constitute vocational teaching and learning. Shulman identified ‘signature pedagogies’. These are types of teaching that organise the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions. In these signature pedagogies, the novices are instructed in critical aspects of the three fundamental dimensions of professional work – to think, to perform, and to act with integrity:

Signature pedagogies make a difference. They form habits of the mind, habits of the hand and habits of the heart. ... they prefigure the culture of professional work and provide the early socialisation into the practices and values of the field. Whether in a lecture hall or lab, in a design studio or a clinical setting, the way we teach will shape how professionals behave (Shulman, 2005, cited in Blom, 2016:18).

Wedekind (2016a:44) points out that for teachers to be more professionally trained, the teacher training institutions must develop ‘a more focused theoretical understanding of the teaching processes required to train and apprentice new skilled professionals, artisans and workers’.

Because TVET is a form of education and training characterised by its close relationship with the world of work, TVET curricula need to ‘face both ways’ (Barnett, 2006, cited in Blom, 2016:3). The TVET curricula should provide general, as well as occupational knowledge, through its linkages with business and industry. This means that both initial lecturer development (ILD) qualifications and CPD would need to equip TVET lecturers with the appropriate types of knowledge, skills and dispositions. In this regard, Gamble (2009:3) notes that vocational pedagogy needs ‘a mix of different forms of knowledge, drawn from both non-empirical (conceptual) and empirical (situated in everyday life) domains, for the curriculum to enable both knowledge progression and occupational progression’.

Blom (2016:5), citing Lucas, Spencer and Claxton (2012), argues that vocational pedagogy should focus on ‘striking a balance between the conceptual and practical’; which involves ‘creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration’ with the purpose to stimulate ‘performance-related’ and ethical character traits in students that will ensure that they become ‘active and responsible citizens’.

In unpacking what kind of professional knowledge TVET lecturers need, Blom has stressed the importance of ‘tacit knowledge’, defined by Gamble (2004, cited in Blom, 2016:5) as the ‘implicit knowledge that is not clearly expressed in vocational knowledge, but which is central to vocational pedagogies’. This echoes Evans’ (2019) argument about the value of the implicit and informal components of professional learning.

Tacit knowledge is accumulated through exposure to craft knowledge and practice in ‘doing the job’. Hence, TVET lecturers would need ongoing workplace experience to acquire the tacit dimension of learning through work and occupational currency.

Blom (2016) points out that there are several principal concepts emerging from the typologies of other scholars such as Evans et al. (2010), Lucas et al. (2012) and Wheelahan (2005) that can be used to frame vocational pedagogies. All of them seek to unravel the pedagogies that fit the unique and multiple roles of a TVET educator and enable them to move successfully between theory and practice and bridge the subject-based and work-based aspects of a learning programme. However, a discussion of these concepts is beyond the remit of this section of the report and will be covered by another JET research team.

There are two schools of thought about how vocational learning should be delivered and assessed. The one group, as portrayed by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) in Australia, makes the case for micro-credentials. Unlike a degree, diploma, certificate or other lengthy accredited training, micro-credentials are mini qualifications typically gained from participating in short, free or low-cost online courses (NCVER, 2018). The NCVER (2018) describes the advantages of micro-credentials as :

- A focus on smaller blocks of learning;
- Formalisation of soft and hard skills attained at work, such as teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving;
- A pathway to higher education for students and help for employees to develop specific skills; and
- Technology that can capture and communicate what skills and knowledge a student has attained.

The NCVER (2018) sees micro-credentials as ‘a valuable tool for people to demonstrate both what they can do today and their future potential’. It makes the point that with regular upskilling essential in the future, micro-credentialing offers an accessible option for lifelong learning.

In sharp contrast, Wedekind (2022:2) expresses the views of the second group and raises the issue of ‘atomistic units of competence and assessment’ as opposed to ‘a broader conceptualisation of holistic competencies based on the integrated alignment of education and work and the social context within which work exists’.

He suggests that there are three conceptual domains – TVET knowledge, holistic competencies and TVET lecturers as mediators in the skills ecosystem – which TVET lecturers need to master because ‘they form the basis for a broader agentic and institutional understanding of TVET lecturer quality’ (Wedekind, 2022:8).

Clarke, Sahin-Dikmen and Winch (2020:659) also argue against a focus on narrow skills and outcomes-based approaches:

To be effective, VET programmes need to move away from learning outcomes-based approaches, focused on imparting narrow skills to carry out specific tasks, and to be founded instead on standards-based approaches and broad occupational profiles that combine knowledge, know-how and attitudes, develop transversal abilities – including communication, coordination, problem-solving, project

management and precision – and enable workers to apply theoretical considerations to practice.

The views of the researchers above make a strong case for ILD and CPD to offer a combination of both means of vocational pedagogy to address the different learning goals and pathways that will enable lecturers’ knowledge and occupational progression, as Gamble (2009) has argued. The path to their professionalisation will require a mix of learning experiences to strengthen both their teaching and their occupational identities.

Conceptual considerations

The preceding discussion has illustrated that there are multiple interpretations of the meanings of ‘profession’, ‘professionalism’ and ‘professionalisation’ as well as the linked concepts. Moreover, most of the contested concepts are not yet fully developed, and particularly not in the TVET field. This raises important questions as to which interpretation of the concepts policymakers and stakeholders in the TVET field should adopt in South Africa. After carefully considering their implications, decisions will have to be made to inform a framework for TVET lecturer professionalisation that is appropriate for South Africa within the global context of the 21st century.

The purpose of TVET is a key issue, as Afeti (2022) has pointed out. An expanded notion of TVET linking living, working and learning is part of a paradigm shift that need to be taken into consideration. Afeti (2022:3) goes on to ask:

How can this new meme be factored into the professionalisation pathway of TVET teachers? And how can we balance this evolving idea of TVET against the education-to-employment linkage which is an important goal of TVET? The key goal of facilitating the transition of the TVET learner from training to employment, especially in the African context, cannot be downplayed.

What would make TVET lecturers a recognised profession? The literature points to a specialised body of knowledge as the core of what distinguishes professions from other occupations. Taylor (2014:172) has explained that professions derive their protocols of practice from ‘their respective bodies of theoretical and empirical knowledge which are developed, maintained and elaborated by members of the profession’.

Muller (2009, cited in Taylor, 2014:174) has argued that teaching is one of the professions that are 'in the process of developing their knowledge bases, aspiring to the stability and autonomy of the established professions, but with a way to go still in terms of their disciplinary robustness'. The evidence in the literature indicates that TVET is further behind teaching in this process and so has a longer path to tread to achieve professional status.

Teaching is making good progress towards this goal, as the growing body of evidence-based knowledge and skills for teaching accumulates. This will assist the development TVET lecturers' teaching identity. Their occupational identity depends on the extent to which their occupational councils, such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), have sufficient independence and authority to have well-established occupational standards, and a generally accepted body of knowledge and skills, in order to recognise, regulate, monitor and advance the profession of TVET lecturers (Afeti, 2022).

In the case of professionalism, what approach would be attainable and appropriate for South Africa? The establishment of specific professional standards for TVET lecturers is essential and the Professional Teaching Standards (PTS) is a guide towards these. Another guide could be Evans' (2019) attitudinal, behavioural and intellectual components and dimensions.

Other hallmarks of a profession include a dedicated professional association for TVET lecturers with sufficient autonomy to uphold its specific TVET professional standards, monitor its members, take on the attendant responsibilities, and influence policy and practice through an independent voice that would foster agency and could encourage lecturer buy-in to changes.

In terms of the governance of TVET, many authors whose views we analysed above have pointed out the dangers of de-professionalising 'dictats' with too many top-down changes and the sapping of TVET lecturer morale, which is already low. As Wedekind (2022) has observed, if the autonomy and agency of TVET lecturers is too tightly constrained by formal education requirements, they are less able to work effectively and adapt and design curriculum and learning processes through collaborative processes. This means that a key consideration is the optimal sectoral and institutional conditions needed to promote TVET lecturer professionalisation. The roles of all the key stakeholders will have to be clarified, and the distribution of authority and power must be balanced so that too much state power does not undermine the effectiveness of the system.

How will TVET lecturers acquire the theory, subject knowledge and practical skills of teaching, as well as an occupational specialisation, unless their conditions of service make work-integrated learning (WIL) mandatory and the disincentives against them acquiring industry currency are removed. How can they be incentivised as the Subrahmanyam (2020) report on trends in TVET advises? The idea that most TVET lecturers will willingly undertake CPD without any reward or incentive is not borne out by the literature we have reviewed. Would micro-credentials be a means of making CPD more accessible and formally recognised for advancement?

Most importantly, how can business and industry be incentivised to make WIL available to TVET lecturers? Without that learning and exposure, how can lecturers be socialised into the culture of their occupation to develop the necessary occupational identity? Digital competence, networking and professional learning communities/communities of practice of TVET lecturers could assist this process. However, as UNESCO has warned, without the necessary resources and support, TVET lecturers will not be able to develop into a publicly recognised and trusted profession.

As CPD is seen as a crucial means through which the necessary knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes and identities of existing TVET lecturers are developed, it will be necessary to make decisions based on research about what vocational pedagogies should inform TVET lecturers' CPD. What we know is that CPD cannot be 'one-size-fits-all', given all the different needs of the lecturers in South Africa with their disparate qualifications and work experience.

The examples provided here have been used to indicate how important it is that the contested concepts and terms outlined above are thoroughly discussed, negotiated and agreed among the key stakeholders before any important decisions are made about the policies, institutions, approaches, processes and elements involved in professionalising TVET lecturers.

From the discussion above it is clear that the path to professionalisation of TVET lecturers in South Africa is complex and to complete this process will take a significant amount of time. It cannot be rushed if it is to be successful.

In seeking guidance for South Africa as it progresses along the path, we explored the available international literature for signposts to the best path to follow.





3. Overview of global TVET trends and issues

This section contains a summary of significant TVET developments in the global context to inform the DHET's aim of professionalising TVET lecturers.

There is no doubt TVET is high on countries' agendas. This is explained in the research report by Renold et al. (2018) for the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE). They point out that TVET is a major policy topic for countries all over the world, because 'policymakers want to know how strong VET systems manage challenges like rapid technological change, matching labor market demand for skills, attracting enrolment, and creating high-status VET programs' (Renold, 2018:1).

From an international literature review, we identified some mega-trends in TVET that are relevant to the professionalisation of TVET lecturers and transforming TVET systems. These are outlined below.

Purpose of TVET

Internationally, the role of TVET is increasingly under debate. In this regard, McGrath et al. (2020) discuss different strands of scholarship in TVET literature and posit that the majority of literatures of African TVET are grounded in an inadequate theorisation of both VET and development. They reject the dominant narrow view of the role of TVET as an engine of economic growth, poverty reduction and job creation.

Rather, McGrath et al. (2020) support the position of UNESCO, which has advocated for broader transformed VET as part of a transformative approach to development: 'It argues that credible, comprehensive skills systems can be built that can support individuals, communities, and organisations to generate and maintain enhanced and just livelihood opportunities' (McGrath et al., 2020:466). As we have seen, the new meme is TVET for 'living-working-learning'.

Internationalisation of TVET

The global influence on vocational skills development is increasing, leading to policy transfer and sharing of global concepts. 'Policy transfer' is the term that is typically used internationally to cover 'the transfer of education, but it also implies the transfer of procedures, measures, strategies, and concepts in the broadest sense' (Rose, 1991, cited in Li and Pilz, 2021:2).

Research, debate, policy and best practices in TVET have become internationalised. As Li and Pilz (2021) observe, the reasons given for policy transfer in the TVET sector are complex and include aspects such as youth unemployment, poverty reduction, developing skilled workers and increasing economic growth. Moreover, TVET is seen as an essential component in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015.

Zinn, Raisch and Reimann (2019:175–176), citing Baumgarten et al. (2017), highlight the following factors:

The importance of international cooperation for the expansion of vocational training has also increased significantly, due to increasing economic globalisation and further current global societal challenges, such as intercontinental refugee flows from Africa to Europe along with the apparent high regard for the German educational system⁴. As such, research on international vocational training is increasingly coming into focus in vocational education research.

As Li and Pilz (2021) point out, global actors such as the World Bank, ILO, and Asian Development Bank have a major influence on setting the agenda for TVET activities on the ground. Other notable actors include the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), UNESCO-UNEVOC, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the European Union (EU), which play a very significant role in the promotion and development of quality TVET.

As UNESCO's designated international centre for technical and vocational education and training, UNESCO-UNEVOC promotes the United Nations' mandate through TVET. UNESCO-UNEVOC assists countries to strengthen and upgrade their TVET systems towards ensuring access to quality skills training and development for all.

GIZ is an agency of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Germany. GIZ is responsible for implementing bilateral co-operation between Germany and other countries and provides technical co-operation (OECD, 2021b). GIZ's assistance to countries is clear in the case of Moldova in Section 4 of this report.

Agencies of the EU such as CEDEFOP and the European Vocational Training Association are important in supporting the training of TVET teachers and trainers. Additionally, the EU has a programme running from 2021–2027 called Erasmus+, which supports education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The European Trainers' Training for Excellence is a specific project of Erasmus+ that aims to improve collaboration between VET centres of excellence in Europe and foster the continuous professional development of teachers and trainers.

The European Commission's report on international co-operation in VET (Oberheidt et al., 2015, cited in Li and Pilz, 2021) advocates co-operation within the EU. According to Li and Pilz (2021:16), the reasons given in the report include: 'to strengthen and promote, at international level, the positioning and recognition of countries' VET systems, qualifications and certificates; to strengthen the supply of a skilled and globally aware labour force; to modernise their own VET systems'.

Importance of national contexts

There are many scholars of TVET that point to national contexts as a significant challenge to any policy transfer or TVET reform (McGrath et al., 2020; Needham, 2019; Winch, 2013). McGrath and Lugg (2012) argue that national contexts are more important than generalisable laws of TVET reform (cited in Needham, 2019).

Regarding vocational training, the literature suggests that all forms of policy transfer between countries are challenging. National contexts and cultures are very different, and TVET systems are complex, so the outcomes or effects of policy transfers cannot be neatly predicted. Research has shown that policy can never be directly transferred from a foreign context to a recipient country (Li and Pilz, 2021). Afeti (2022:3) warns against policy transfer and instead advocates for 'policy learning' rather than 'policy borrowing' (author's emphasis).

Even the transfer of individual training elements cannot guarantee success because frequently it is the sum of the parts, and their interaction, that makes for an effective and sustainable training strategy (Li and Pilz, 2021). The researchers point out that this includes attempts to transfer the dual VET system of German, Austrian or Swiss character abroad (Gonon, 2014, cited in Li and Pilz, 2021).

Similar problems can arise when a particular country introduces a new policy. Li and Pilz (2021) refer to the policy ecology approach developed by Weaver-Hightower (2008, cited in Li and Pilz, 2021), where the introduction of a new policy is viewed as similar to disrupting an ecosystem with its many components: 'The complex cause-effect relationships are not linear and require a holistic analysis of all components: actors, relationships, environments, structures, and processes' (Li and Pilz, 2021:20–21).

4 German-speaking countries (e.g. Germany, Austria and Switzerland) have a history of transfer to other countries, which is encouraged by the German government, particularly in the context of the dual system of training.

Low status and high expectations

Despite the wide acknowledgement of TVET being one of the main drivers of societal progression and transformation, it is still the ‘poor relative’ of many education systems in both developed and developing countries, as Rawkins (2018) emphasises in her research report for the Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), *A global overview of TVET teaching and training for CEART: Current issues, trends and recommendations*.

Rawkins (2018) posits that TVET teachers face a paradox: they are both change agents that have to realise the government’s economic and social expectations but also bear the brunt of the low status afforded to the TVET sector. Her work highlights the plight of TVET lecturers who are expected to act as both teachers (with pedagogical skills) and occupational experts (with practical skills) and, additionally, are expected to maintain close collaboration with business and industry, as well as ensure that their skills are updated regularly to adapt to rapidly changing workplaces (Rawkins, 2018).

Balance of power

In their research for the NCEE, Renold et al. (2018:1) compared the biggest VET programmes in the 20 top-performing countries,⁵ which showed that ‘the level of linkage between actors from the education and employment systems is what differentiates the strongest and weakest VET programs’ rather than their TVET curricula.

Countries with higher linkage tend to have stronger youth labour market outcomes and lower youth unemployment.

The authors defined ‘the optimal education-employment linkage as an ideal balance of power between actors from the education system and actors from the employment system on decisions related to all processes of VET, from curriculum design through application and updating’ (Renold et al., 2018:1). Because there is information and resource asymmetry between educators and employers, achieving the right balance of power is difficult. For instance, ‘educators can develop curricula and teach general education subjects, while employers know what skills matter and have skilled workers to train them’, and ‘while educators operate in subjects, employers work in projects and processes on products and services’ (Renold et al., 2018:2).

Renold et al. (2018) point out the consequences of a severe imbalance of power:

- If the actors in education have all the power, the typical result is school-based VET that ignores the needs and opinions of employers; and
- If programmes are dominated by employment-system actors, or are on-the-job training, they help employers fill jobs and offer a lot of practical experience, but it is unlikely they would link to further or general education pathways.

In short, ‘education-side programs are, in economic terms, too general, and employment-side programs are too specific’ (Renold et al., 2018:2). The ideal is in the middle, with both education- and employment-system actors having power in key decisions (see Figure 2).

Overall, our research suggests that TVET developments and progress towards professional status for TVET lecturers are essentially controlled by governments rather than practitioner bodies or industry.

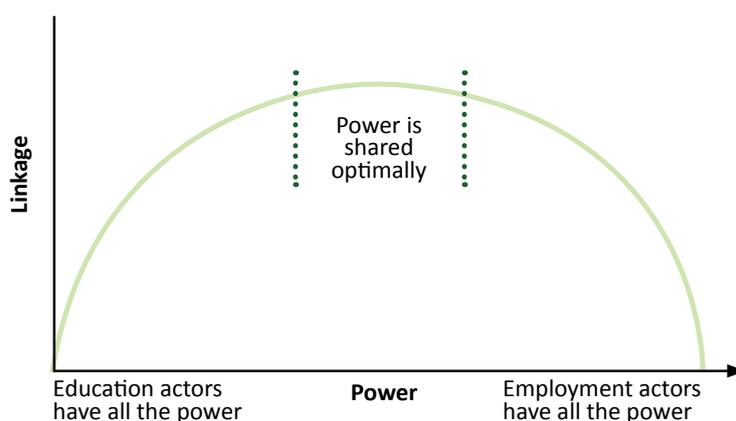


Figure 2: Education-employment linkage is power-sharing

⁵ The 20 top-performing countries were selected based ‘either on the strength of their youth labor markets as measured by the percent of young people who successfully enter the labor market after post-compulsory education or on their general education systems as measured by their performance on the OECD PISA assessment’. The authors also point out that their findings hold ‘only for countries with more data reported to international statistical organizations. Among countries that do not report such data, the relationship is unclear. And, because of the small sample size in this feasibility study, no correlation is statistically significant’ (Renold et al., 2018:1).

Collaborative networks

Spours and Grainger (2018:1) reinforce the importance of local networks, co-operation and open digital economies for development:

We suggest that a key vehicle for social ecosystem development are [sic] area-based collaborative networks (comprising educationalists; employers; local government, civil society) and local anchor institutions that utilize open digital technologies to facilitate skills development and civic participation.

They visualise TVET colleges as possible anchor institutions, although they suggest that in many countries these may not be strong enough yet to fulfil this role.

Similarly, Subrahmanyam (2013) reports that members of a virtual UNESCO 2013 conference on tackling youth unemployment through TVET saw partnerships as vital for increasing TVET's success rate in promoting youth employment.

Spours and Grainger (2018) argue that TVET institutions should strengthen links, not only with private sector employers, but also with a wider set of partners, including parents, community groups and youth groups, and that these groups should be involved in TVET design and implementation.

Social dialogue among stakeholders has been identified by CEART as the 'glue for successful educational reform' (ILO–UNESCO, 2003, cited in Rawkins, 2018:18). This has been strongly advocated by international agencies and researchers in the past two decades. Rawkins' (2018) policy recommendations coalesce around the need to place system coherence, stakeholder collaboration and evidence-based approaches at the centre of all policy processes concerning the TVET sector.

Levers for excellence

Grollmann (2009) reminds us that the quality of TVET lecturer education and the institutional environment in which they work are key levers for enhancing their professional performance. Accordingly, he claims that 'any reform trying to professionalize TVET – whether on the global or the local level – needs to take into account both levers' (Grollmann, 2009:1185).

In a report for WorldSkills UK, James Relly et al. (2021:28) highlight the inextricable link between 'policy, people and practice' and argue that these three elements are key to supporting technical excellence. The authors found that in countries with successful TVET systems, there were

'supportive policy structures, social discourses that valued vocational pathways and a skilled and valued technical teaching workforce', and that these elements are 'mutually constitutive' (2021:28). Concurrently, strong TVET policy shapes public dialogue and allows for the status of skills systems to improve while also supporting the workforce. At the same time, when there is excellent practice, productivity is enhanced, public discourse is shaped, and economic and skills policies are guided: 'These dynamics between policy, practice and people drive excellence within skills systems and propel the skills economy, by ensuring there are strong links between skills systems, productivity and economic growth' (James Relly et al., 2021:28).

Rawkins (2018) highlights four key policy areas that impact on TVET lecturers – recruitment and pre-service training, CPD, working conditions and social dialogue. This is very important for TVET with its 'multiplicity of actors and its need for flexibility and adaptability' (2018:8). Yet lecturers' voices and agency were found by Rawkins to be weak among TVET teachers globally. In addition, she argues that the focus of future TVET reform should be on developing policy that 'facilitates and prioritizes quality not quantity' (2018:28).

James Relly et al. (2021) further argue that the skills economy cannot and should not be viewed as being something separate from the knowledge economy. What the bias towards knowledge economies often misses is that skills economies draw on an understanding of – and recognise – the skills that underpin the knowledge that is developed. It is crucial, therefore, that any attempt to improve the quality and image of TVET must adopt a strategy that incorporates the skills economy and gives it equal importance with the knowledge economy.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic has profoundly affected teaching and learning, jobs and economies, as Subrahmanyam (2020) points out in her UNESCO-UNEVOC study on the trends shaping the future of TVET teaching. Globally, TVET institutions have not been spared. They have had to close and while many institutions offered online and distance learning, it was difficult to facilitate distance learning in low-income countries with poor infrastructure. In some instances, this widened digital divides and inequalities within countries (Hoftijzer, Levin and Parker, 2021; Subrahmanyam, 2020). TVET staff were not well prepared for multi-modal teaching, including the ICT/digital learning tools (Subrahmanyam, 2020) that were essential during the height of the pandemic to ensure that no student was further disadvantaged (Hoftijzer et al., 2021).

UNESCO (2022) points out that COVID-19 will continue to affect education and training and economies. Importantly, the pandemic has highlighted the need for agility, but there is still uncertainty about the skills and competencies that will be required post-COVID-19, as its disruptions and rapidly accelerating global developments feed on each other to change every aspect of our lives and work. What is clear, however, is that during these uncertain times, TVET staff have to timeously reskill or upskill themselves (Subrahmanyam, 2020).

In contrast to the largely negative effects of the pandemic on TVET, some important positive outcomes were identified by Ramsarup et al. (2020), who undertook research on the impact of COVID-19 on TVET in six countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – Botswana, Eswatini, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The research used small-scale case studies of sustainable enterprises that the researchers located within their local communities. The study investigated the links between emergent livelihoods, decent work and skills development through TVET. The researchers found that the pandemic ‘provided a platform for the re-emergence of the green economy/circular economy opportunities with a focus on local economies and products and waste’ (Ramsarup et al., 2020:7).

Given the travel and consumer restrictions of the pandemic, the local economy and interpersonal relationships became critical as entrepreneurs, small-scale farmers, store owners and metalworkers relied on more localised sales or access to materials. Access to online channels for local trade or learning connections also became necessary for survival during this period, and in some cases even resulted in access to new markets. The pandemic facilitated green economic practices as people realised that waste or by-products from manufacturing could be a valuable source of materials or ingredients for products that generate an income (Ramsarup et al., 2020).

As Ramsarup et al. point out, changed business practices, shocked into being by COVID-19, are likely to continue into the future, and this means that there will be a ‘demand for the associated knowledge and skills by potential TVET students and local communities as a way to reduce their vulnerability during periods of crisis by offering new and alternative routes to markets’ (Ramsarup et al., 2020:27–28).

The interviewees in the research voiced the need for technical and practical knowledge and skills, and online and digital skills; ‘how to operate a business for growth and continuity, financial management and literacy, marketing skills and how to acquire capital’; and vocational courses providing ‘practical knowledge and skills, such as sewing, cooking, gardening, farming ... and the operation of advanced or computerised machines’ (Ramsarup et al., 2020:27–28).

In the meantime, Ramsarup et al. (2020) found that non-formal TVET had grown – with local initiatives to support local economies. The researchers point to the need for links between TVET institutions and local communities to be forged so that curricula could be developed, adapted or reinvented to meet their identified needs and make entry level transitions into the formal TVET sector clear. This resonates with the work of Li and Pilz (2021), which indicates that while formal TVET was the focus of most research, the focus is increasingly shifting to a range of vocational training activities in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Afeti (2022) has also pointed to the importance of TVET trainers in the informal economies in Africa and the challenge of including them in the process of professionalisation.

The overview below could serve as a type of framework against which each country’s case study could be interpreted. We provide a summary of the main cross-country findings from our literature review of the developments, challenges and opportunities in the eight countries we selected, and the markers that could indicate progress to professionalisation.



STORE
MANAGERS'
DAYS





4. Country case studies

This section reviews the literature on TVET in eight countries: Australia, Brazil, England, Germany, Kenya, Malaysia, Moldova and South Korea. We used the key concepts unpacked in the Conceptual Framework as the main markers or indicators to analyse and identify the extent to which our sample of countries have made progress towards professionalisation. These include: TVET status, quality of lecturers, professional autonomy, agency and voice, identity and accountability. We describe the main features of the TVET systems in each country and TVET teacher qualifications, initial lecturer development (ILD), CPD and other developments to the extent that they might be relevant to TVET lecturer professionalisation.



Australia

Status of TVET

TVET in Australia is known as VET (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018a). The VET sector is seen as crucial for the Australian economy, both for the development of the national workforce and as a major export industry. The system has grown in prestige and is the first choice for many young Australians who do not want to follow the

university route. The Australian VET system displays the following characteristics: strong industry leadership; national quality assurance through the registration of training providers and qualifications; national training qualifications developed by industry; and industry-determined competencies for each qualification.

Recent misuse of government funding on the part of commercial registered training organisations (RTOs) has tainted the image of the VET system that resulted, in part, to a decline of student enrolment in VET. The decline in enrolment is also attributed to the withdrawal of funding for certain qualifications by the national and state governments (Smith, 2020).

Governance

One of the key features of the Australian VET system is the strong partnerships between governments, VET institutions and industry representative bodies (Smith, 2020). The development of VET-related policies is the collective responsibility of the Australian federal government's Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) and state and territory governments.

VET is provided through a network of eight state and territory governments and the federal Australian government, along with industry, public and private training providers. The providers of VET include technical and further education (TAFE) institutes, adult and community education providers and agricultural colleges, as well as private providers, community organisations, industry skills centres, and commercial and enterprise training providers. In addition, some universities and schools provide VET (JET, 2018).

Skills service organisations (SSOs) and industry reference committees (IRCs) also play an important role in the governance of VET in Australia. IRCs ensure that industry requirements are considered in training packages, while SSOs assist in this regard by providing skills forecasts for the various industry areas and assisting in the development and review of training packages. There are currently six SSOs representing industry in Australia (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021a).

Funding

Government financial expenditure on VET through appropriations and intergovernmental funding was \$6.4 billion in 2019, made up of \$2.6 billion from the Australian government and \$3.7 billion total from state and territory governments (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021a). According to Rasmussen (2016), there is no budget allocation by the Australian government for the professional development of VET teachers. Because funding is generally limited (Smith, 2019), professional development is a lesser priority, and when funds are allocated, it is often for compliance purposes (Rasmussen, 2016). Companies and individuals also bear the cost of training, for example ‘fee-for-service’ revenues are paid for by individuals and industry firms for training and any other related fees. According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2018a), the value of these revenues is estimated to be in proportion to government budgets for VET.

Lecturer development

As per the JET report of 2018, the qualification requirement for VET teachers, trainers and assessors is a Certificate IV in Training Assessment and Education (TAE), which is pitched at Level 3 on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Smith (2019:1631) argues that this minimum requirement ‘seems an inadequate level of qualification’. Rasmussen (2016) recommends that in order to improve the quality of VET, this minimum qualification requirement should be raised beyond the Certificate IV in TAE. Watson (2022:4) also points out that the Certificate IV in TAE is not a teaching qualification. He further states that the current workforce is not keen to have the minimum requirement raised. Previously, TAFE teachers held at least a Graduate Diploma in Teaching. However, since the introduction of ‘trainers’, the skills required to be a teacher have been overlooked.

Smith (2019) states that public or private institutes seek to encourage VET teachers to undertake higher-level pedagogical qualifications – a diploma or higher. However, enrolment rates for degree or graduate diploma qualifications amongst teachers who are working tend to be low because teachers are not funded by TAFE institutes for their studies. Smith (2019) also points out that VET teachers are required to have industry qualifications and experience and are expected to maintain their industry currency.

The Australian federal DESE is developing a VET Workforce Quality Strategy and has so far covered the following key themes: capability frameworks and professional standards; industry currency; and professional development and support, as well as support for learner cohorts (Australian Industry and Skills Committee, 2022).

The Education IRCs 2019 Skills Forecast (Australian Industry and Skills Committee, 2022) indicates that the skills shown in Figure 3 will be needed by industry.

National standards for TVET lecturers

There are no national VET professional teaching standards (Rasmussen, 2016), although there are standards for the registered training organisations (RTOs) as well as for the training packages. According to the website of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (n.d.) on trainers and assessors, training packages detail the required knowledge and skills necessary to perform effectively in the workplace, articulated as units of competency. Additionally, the training packages also describe the manner in which units of competency are packaged into national qualifications on the AQF.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

Watson (2018) indicates that trainers’ and learners’ voices have been missing in the Australian VET system. He believes that it is important for them to provide inputs into the design and development process of the VET system in Australia and states that ‘trainees need to be capable of dealing with changing work conditions and expectations not just procuring a checklist of outdated work ready tasks’ (2018:3). The author further emphasises the importance of VET trainers needing to embody a dual identity by meeting requirements of both the vocational industry and the VET system although ‘they had no say in the system they work in’ (2018:3). Watson’s argument highlights that TVET trainers and lecturers/teachers must have professional agency and voice to act in their own interests by improving the quality of TVET offered whilst also improving their professional journeys.

Smith (2019:1633) found that many VET teachers in Australia ‘identify with their previous industry areas as well as with their role as teachers’, which suggests that the VET teachers may well have developed a dual identity.

TAFE teachers in Australia are represented through the Australian Education Union (n.d.), which ‘campaigns and lobbies for increased funding and resources for TAFE institutes, improved industrial and professional conditions for TAFE teachers and improvements in vocational education for all TAFE students’. The effectiveness of the union is brought into question in Smith (2019) because although it provides generalised support for higher qualifications for VET teachers, it does not assist them in fulfilling these requirements.



Figure 3: Industry forecast for required skills (Australian Industry and Skills Committee, 2022)

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Professionals Association (AVETPA) is a professional organisation for practitioners working in the Australian VET sector (AVETPA, 2022). One of the aims of AVETPA is to improve the quality of VET provision in Australia by supporting initial and CPD of practitioners, which indicates that their focus area is not teachers exclusively, but that teachers are included in their membership.

Universities that offer VET teacher training have established a working group within the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group (ACDEVEG), which advocates for higher qualifications for teachers within the VET sector and has established working relationships with VET stakeholders to improve the overall standard of teaching in the sector.

Brazil

Status of TVET

TVET is called vocational, scientific and technological education in Brazil. As with many developing countries, Brazil has managed to expand access to education; however, the quality remains poor, and much of the country's labour force is low-skilled (Almeida, Amaral and de Felicio, 2016). The average schooling in Brazil is only 8.4 years, and completion rates are affected by a number of factors, including the lack of proper infrastructure such as libraries, science laboratories, and computer and language facilities, overloaded curricula and a shortage of qualified maths and science teachers (Almeida et al., 2016). Learner performance is also generally poorer than in other OECD countries (James Relly et al., 2021).

Despite lower enrolment numbers in Brazil, TVET is still seen as a central part of the education sector. This is due to vocational programmes being aligned to industry needs to produce students with a professional identity and employable skills (James Relly et al., 2021). TVET is viewed as an alternative to tertiary education because it can better absorb student numbers and assist in preparing a low-skilled workforce for changing work environments and fast-growing sectors, and as a result, also assist in productivity challenges in Brazil (Almeida et al., 2016).

One way that the Brazilian government is attempting to improve the offerings in TVET using technical and financial assistance is through the introduction of the national Programme for Access to Technical Education and Employment (PRONATEC). The Ministry of Education has partnered with other government ministries to select potential trainees for TVET courses. The specific objectives of PRONATEC are as follows:

- The expansion of federal and state TVET networks;
- The expansion of distance courses;
- The expansion of free access to TVET courses in public and private institutions;
- The expansion of training opportunities for workers in conjunction with policies for the generation of work, employment and income; and
- The dissemination of pedagogical resources for TVET (Presidency of the Republic of Brazil, 2011).

Governance

The main body responsible for TVET policy in Brazil is the Secretariat of Professional and Technological Education of the Ministry of Education (SETEC/MEC). SETEC/MEC is responsible for the formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of TVET-related policies and programmes as well as developing guidelines for TVET courses and actions for professional certification of workers. It also bears responsibility for the maintenance, supervision and strengthening of institutions that comprise the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education. Members of this network include TVET institutions that develop professional and technical skills and are involved in research and innovation (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021b).

Other important stakeholders in TVET in Brazil are the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research, responsible for identifying challenges in the educational system and developing and implementing policies for the education sector, as well as collecting and disseminating data on the education system in the country. The National Commission for Higher Education Assessment is responsible for the development of higher education

and oversees the supervision and co-ordination of the National System of Higher Education Evaluation. The Co-ordination for Improvement of Higher Education Personnel is responsible for the evaluation of graduate programmes (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021b).

According to James Relly et al. (2021), the Ministry of Education has a close relationship with business and is thus able to respond to the needs of industry and also have industry experts' input into the development of the TVET curriculum. TVET courses are therefore aligned to business needs, resulting in qualified professionals who meet industry and business demand. The development of cross-occupational key competencies such as teamwork, digital and entrepreneurial skills is also emphasised in TVET courses in Brazil (James Relly et al., 2021). The OECD (2022), however, recommends that employers can play a greater role in offering work-based learning for TVET students as that is currently limited.

Funding

Several state entities are responsible for TVET funding in Brazil, including the Ministry of Education, the states, the municipalities and federative entities. Through an initiative of PRONATEC, Bolsa Formação, the government provides scholarships at TVET institutions to vulnerable students and individuals who could otherwise not afford TVET training (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018b). In this way, employment prospects are not only improved, but there is also a strong element of social inclusion in such an initiative.

According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2018b), there was an increase in funding for TVET until 2014, which enabled the expansion of public and private TVET networks, especially through the PRONATEC programme. Currently, however, funding for TVET has decreased, and this has necessitated alternative funding sources (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018b).

Lecturer development

TVET teachers should have a graduate certificate with a teaching degree for all education levels and are required to have subject specialisation at the tertiary level (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018b). The OECD (2022) has pointed out that, as with many other countries, Brazil allows vocational teachers who do not have teacher qualifications but have work/industry experience to teach. This assists with teacher shortages and also ensures that those teaching in the TVET system are qualified in the most current industry developments (OECD, 2022). Educational institutions are responsible for establishing training programmes aimed at developing the skills of their TVET teachers, and there are a number of training programmes already in place such as the Continuing Staff Training Plan, the Languages without Borders initiative and the Managers' Training courses (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018b).

National standards for TVET lecturers

We were unable to find evidence of professional teaching standards for TVET lecturers in Brazil.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

There do not appear to be professional associations for TVET teachers in Brazil. According to the OECD's 2021 *Education Policy Outlook: Brazil*, 'Brazil engages a wide range of stakeholders in education governance and this is formally stated as a national priority' (OECD, 2021a:20). It is also noted that 'Brazil has several formal spaces for stakeholder engagement and there are promising emergent or small-scale initiatives for horizontal collaboration at federal and subnational level' (OECD, 2021a:3).

The formal spaces for stakeholder participation in education policy, such as the National Conference on Education and the National Forum on Higher Education, regularly convene subnational representatives, civil society and professional organisations and can have decision-making power (OECD, 2021a). It is likely that in these forums, TVET lecturers are able to make their voices heard.

England

Status of TVET

In England, vocational and technical education is included in the further education (FE) system, which refers to all learning delivered to those over the age of 16, except for higher education courses (JET, 2018). Accordingly, FE encompasses a considerable range of learners who differ regarding age, ability, subjects of study and purpose of study (JET, 2018).

Hyland (2020:32) observes that the status of TVET in England is poor owing to a number of factors: liberal/humanist traditions dominating educational debates resulting in a bias against technical education and pursuits; central government less involved in the planning and funding of TVET, which means that TVET was left to 'medieval craft traditions and untheoretical workshop practice'; and the divide between the vocational and academic routes becoming entrenched in the culture and practice of mainstream education, resulting in TVET being seen as second class.

As noted in the 2018 JET study, there is a range of courses in FE (in English and mathematics), up to higher national diplomas. FE also includes three types of technical and applied qualifications for 16–19-year-olds: Level 3 technical level to specialise in a specific technical job; Level 2 technical certificate that helps to gain employment or progress to another technical level; and applied general qualifications to continue general education at an advanced level through applied learning (Hupkau and Ventura, 2017).

Governance

The UK government and departments in the devolved administrations are responsible for the governance of TVET in the UK. The ministers of the devolved government departments are responsible for issuing lists of approved qualifications once they have been advised by relevant advisory bodies on such matters (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021c). In England, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) is an inspection body responsible for schools and further education colleges. Ofsted looks at several aspects within these institutions, such as the effectiveness of learner outcomes, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, as well as the effectiveness of leadership and management (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021c).

As regards the professionalisation of TVET lecturers, the Education and Training Foundation supports this and is responsible for improving the quality and professionalism of teachers/lecturers across the further education and training sector (JET, 2018). The Education and Training Foundation is making good progress in establishing links with employers to facilitate dual professionalism in practitioners' technical and teaching proficiency (JET, 2018).

The Society for Education and Training (SET), which falls under the Education and Training Foundation is a membership body for professionals working in further education, vocational teaching and training and is the largest membership body in the education sector (JET, 2018).

Funding

Funding for TVET education providers (including school-based TVET) is now channelled directly from the government as opposed to local authorities, indicating that funding is largely centralised (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021c). Employers also fund workplace training through a levy system, including in-company training and learning that takes place through specialist consultants and agencies.

The Education and Training Foundation receives grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE), but also raises its own commercial income and receives additional grants from a variety of sources (Education and Training Foundation, n.d.).

Lecturer development

As noted in the JET report (2018), the main teaching qualifications currently sought by FE employers are:

- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training (DET), which allows a teacher to teach learners aged 14+; and
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Secondary, which allows a teacher to teach in both schools and the FE sector.

In 2013, the government lifted the requirement for newly appointed teachers to have had formal teacher training before working in FE. The responsibility for employing suitable teaching staff was transferred to FE organisations, allowing them to set their own criteria. This has allowed FE employers to widen their net to employ staff from outside the teaching profession, thereby tapping into vocational expertise and talent.

According to Rasmussen (2016), the learning and skills teacher (LST)⁶ is a ‘dual-professional’ in the English setting. LSTs are required to first gain competence in the vocational qualification by working in industry and then train to be a teacher. In this way, LSTs draw on both technical and vocational experience, as well as pedagogical knowledge to provide high-quality teaching and learning (Rasmussen, 2016). There are specific standards for LSTs that provide a ‘well-defined description of the expectations of these positions’ (Rasmussen, 2016:12).

The SET administers both Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and Advanced Teacher Status on behalf of the ETF (JET, 2018). The QTLS is a non-mandatory professional status obtained by successfully completing professional formation. This process enables FE lecturers and vocational practitioners to demonstrate how they are developing and applying the skills and knowledge gained since their initial teacher education qualification (JET, 2018). Even though it is not mandatory to gain QTLS status, Rasmussen (2016) states that there is an increasing number of teachers/lecturers who seek it. Additionally, she notes that Ofsted audits indicate that high-performing colleges tend to have a higher number of teachers with QTLS status as opposed to poorer-performing colleges.

To support quality teaching in England, the DfE (2021) released the *White paper: Skills for jobs: Lifelong learning for opportunity and growth*, in which the professionalisation of TVET lecturers is emphasised. In particular, the following reforms have been suggested in the White Paper:

- Launch a national recruitment campaign to communicate the opportunities in further education teaching;
- Support the reform of initial teacher education;
- Enable a strong relationship between employers and providers
- Drive the provision of high-quality professional development to improve the quality of teaching and support progression for teaching staff;

- Support apprenticeships teachers and lecturers with a tailored professional development offer; and
- Introduce comprehensive workforce data collection (DfE, 2021).

Professional standards for TVET lecturers

As previously found in the JET (2018) research, a major achievement of the Education and Training Foundation was the development of professional standards for FE teachers in 2014. The purpose of these standards is to support teachers and trainers to maintain and improve standards of teaching and learning and outcomes for learners and define common expectations of teachers and trainers in the FE sector. The standards require that FE teachers (amongst other things):

- Are reflective and enquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practices;
- Draw on relevant research as part of evidence-based practice;
- Act with honesty and integrity to maintain high standards of ethics and professional behaviour in support of learners and their expectations;
- Are subject and/or vocational specialists as well as experts in teaching and learning; and
- Are committed to maintaining and developing their expertise in both aspects of their role to ensure the best outcomes for their learners (Education and Training Foundation, 2014).

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

TVET lecturers in England are given an opportunity to have their voice heard through the SET, which campaigns to raise the status of TVET professions as well as champion the quality of teaching and training in the TVET sector.

One of the main evidence gaps identified by Greatbatch and Tate (2018) was the lack of research and literature on CPD for lecturers, particularly whether the CPD on offer is driven by teachers’ priorities or informed by organisational workforce strategies more broadly. It was found that over 60% of teachers did not spend time on any CPD.

6 For further detail on the standards, see: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/learning-and-skills-teacher-v1-1>

Germany

Status of TVET

TVET has traditionally been very highly revered in Germany, and the country is considered the leader in vocational education with its dual system of apprenticeship training (Haasler, 2020; JET, 2018). A key feature of the dual system is that students are allowed the opportunity to gain both theoretical and practical knowledge simultaneously – via schools and companies (JET, 2018). Apprenticeship programmes are typically 70% work based and 30% school based and are linked to smoother school-to-work transition as well as lower youth unemployment (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021d).

The historical dominance of the dual system is being challenged (Haasler, 2020). During the 1990s, firms had to respond to increasing globalisation, accelerated technological change and digitalisation, which meant that skills had to be adapted rapidly (Haasler, 2020). The TVET system in Germany could not adequately and timeously accommodate this rapid skills transformation (Fazekas and Field, 2013) owing to complex governance structures, and as a result, companies began to employ university graduates who had the necessary skills for a digitised world and flexible labour market (Haasler, 2020). Gessler (2017) has also argued that although a company-based dual training system has existed in Germany since the 1960s, there is still a tremendous lack of collaboration between vocational schools and companies.

Recently, the absolute number of first-year students in higher education was higher than those entering a dual apprenticeship programme in 2013 – indicative of the increasing preference for academic education as opposed to vocational (Haasler, 2020). This general trend to academisation (Peters, 2021) and the expansion of tertiary education is noticeable across all OECD countries, with the number of youths bearing a higher education qualification having increased by 19% between 2000 and 2017 (Haasler, 2020).

Teaching of TVET in Germany is carried out by TVET schoolteachers, who teach general and occupation-related theoretical knowledge, and in-company trainers. TVET teachers are further categorised as vocational schoolteachers and practical work teachers (Werklehrer). General subject teachers are university trained at master's level, while Werklehrer (master craftspeople or technicians) must have occupational competence and a pedagogic course in practical teaching methods (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019). Various chambers such as chambers of industry and commerce or the chambers of skilled crafts are responsible for the training and registration of the in-company trainers (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019).

Governance

In the German dual system, the development of TVET and other related policies is the responsibility of the federal government and the länder (states/regional governments) (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021d). The Federal Ministry of Education and Research provides policy, co-ordination and legislation for out-of-school vocational training and continuing education, training assistance and the higher education system.

The federal government is responsible for in-company training (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019), with businesses organising and providing the in-company training (Haasler, 2020). The länder are responsible for the school-based components of TVET training (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019).

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) has a national board on which employer organisations, unions, and federal and local government are each equally represented and take all decisions on a consensus basis. The board articulates a joint VET stakeholder position, is the central national political co-ordination mechanism of dual VET in Germany, and the mechanism where stakeholders jointly steer the VET system group's particular interests (CEDEFOP, 2018:37).

Other important entities involved in the governance structure of TVET include 'competent bodies' that consist of 38 professional chambers. The länder also have committees that represent employers, employees and the highest regional authorities (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021d). Their representatives are members of the BIBB's main board, together with the federal and state governments, and participate in their vocational training committees and those of the competent bodies.

This high degree of co-operation in Germany between the state, companies and social partners (Haasler, 2020) leads to TVET qualifications being viewed in high esteem (even with increased higher education participation), thus enabling better labour market prospects (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019). The commitment of the state and other partners is clear in the following shared principles:

We want to jointly steer VET;

We share the responsibility for VET;

VET should be practice-oriented, coherent and of high quality;

VET standards need to be demand-driven and up to date; and

VET is the precondition for competitiveness in the global market. (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021d:19)

Social dialogue and co-determination of TVET policies, strategies and structures are of critical importance to ensure a well-functioning TVET system. This requires all participants to act responsibly – beyond their particular interests (CEDEFOP, 2018:37).

Funding

The financing system for VET in Germany is complex and comes from a range of sources, including state and non-state stakeholders. State stakeholders could include government ministries and agencies as well as local authorities. Non-state funders could include companies, unions, chambers, associations, private institutions and individual students/teachers (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019).

As was noted in the JET study (2018), the involvement of business is entirely voluntary in the TVET sector. The partnership between the state and private sector is an important stabilising factor in the TVET system, according to Haasler (2020), as costs are shared between the parties – and also between small and large enterprises and between employers and apprentices.

Teacher training is funded by the various states (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019) and companies carry the costs of training in-company trainers.

Lecturer development

Initial teacher education in Germany has some unique features. It is the longest in Europe and lasts for at least six years for secondary teachers and five years for primary teachers (Eurydice, 2012).

Initial teacher education consists of two phases, both ending with an examination regulated by state authorities. The first phase (usually three or four years long) is provided at universities for all teacher categories (excluding pre-school teachers), and it covers at least two subjects plus educational studies. The second phase, the preparatory service, lasts between one and a half and two years and follows a dual model: it is partly organised in schools as a kind of on-the-job training, and partly in special non-university teacher training institutions, operating under the control of state ministries of education (Halász et al., 2004).

TVET teachers in Germany can choose to undertake initial vocational education and training (IVET). This refers to training (school based or work based) after compulsory education, which prepares individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for entry to an occupation (JET, 2018).

In-company trainers train apprentices at workplaces, and only those who possess pedagogical and professional aptitude (special competencies) are eligible to train apprentices. Various chambers such as chambers of

industry and commerce or the chambers of skilled crafts are responsible for the training and registration of the in-company trainers (Hippach-Schneider and Huismann, 2019).

Full-time teachers and trainers are usually employed exclusively to teach (Fazekas and Field, 2013). Teachers do not have to participate in continuing vocational education and training (CVET), but there are numerous opportunities for full-time trainers and teachers to update their existing knowledge and skills including:

- Twelve months of work experience after completing a relevant university or university of applied science course;
- Attendance of courses organised by enterprises who want to ensure a high-quality graduate supply;
- Supervision of student projects linked to the workplace that allow teachers indirect experience of workplace requirements;
- Participation in examination committees for initial and advanced vocational examinations that expose teachers to up-to-date vocational practices; and
- Three to four week-long internships in industry that can be done alongside teaching jobs.

Despite these opportunities that are available to full-time teachers and trainers, Fazekas and Field (2013) posit that they are still not effectively equipped to act as both teacher and occupational professionals with high-quality practical skills – and so do not embody a dual identity. Fazekas and Field (2013), in fact, recommend that it should be mandatory for full-time teachers and trainers to engage in workplace training and experience regularly.

National standards for TVET lecturers

According to the OECD (2021c), VET teachers and trainers typically hold a VET qualification and are well experienced. However, there are no uniformly defined standards for these teachers (Fazekas and Field, 2013).

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

Teachers have a voice and joint decision-making power via the tripartite system and competent bodies. The competent bodies include 38 professional chambers, as well as various federal and state authorities. Their tasks include ensuring the suitability of training centres; monitoring training in enterprises; advising enterprises, trainers and apprentices; establishing and maintaining lists of training contracts; organising the examination system; and holding final examinations (CEDEFOP, 2018).

Each competent body has a tripartite vocational training committee whose members represent employers, trade unions and teachers. These committees must be

informed of and consulted on all important VET issues and decide on regulations for implementing VET (CEDEFOP, 2018). The views and input of all these stakeholders are considered to ensure that the content and form of TVET meet the demands of industry.

As self-governing bodies, the chambers of industry and commerce, the chambers of crafts and the appropriate professional boards for the liberal professions have all been assigned public tasks as competent bodies in dual training. Training advisers from the 38 chambers verify the capacity of companies and ability of trainers to train and advise both companies and apprentices. They receive training contracts, check, register and monitor them and provide counselling services. The chambers also oversee the overall organisation of examinations by fixing dates and establishing examining boards. Any suggested changes to qualifications, curricula or training regulations must be reviewed and agreed upon by all the stakeholders mentioned above before changes are enacted (CEDEFOP, 2018).

Kenya

Status of TVET

According to the Ministry of Education, TVET in Kenya is considered a very important sector that provides the skills and competencies required for economic enhancement and global competitiveness, and the main goal of TVET in Kenya is to 'develop an effectively co-ordinated and harmonised TVET system that is capable of producing quality skilled human resources with the right attitudes and values required for growth and prosperity of the various sectors of the economy' (Ministry of Education [Kenya], n.d.). TVET has appeared to gain popularity amongst Kenyans as registered TVET institutions increased from 1,291 to 2,289 between 2016 and 2019. Enrolment in public TVET colleges increased from 101,108 to 175,278 at the same time, and enrolment numbers in youth polytechnics increased from 77,465 to 89,598 between 2016 and 2019. At the same time, university enrolment decreased from 548,160 to 542,005 (Ministry of Education [Kenya], 2019).

There are several TVET reforms in place, to which the increased enrolment could be attributed. Targets were set in 2019 to improve TVET enrolment from 446 to 780 per 100,000 by 2022.

Governance

The State Department for Vocational and Technical Training under the Ministry of Education bears the responsibility for TVET in Kenya. Other important actors in the Kenyan TVET sector include the following stakeholders:

- TVET Authority (TVETA): responsible for a range of functions, including accreditation of institutions, programmes and trainers, ensuring quality standards and licensing, regulating and co-ordinating training, determining national TVET objectives, and promoting access and relevance of training programmes with the national socio-economic plans and objectives.
- Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council: develops TVET curricula and manages certification. The Council has representatives from various bodies including the State Department of Vocational and Technical Training, TVETA, Technical University of Kenya, as well as TVET principals and industry members.
- Micro and Small Enterprise Authority: regulates, harmonises and co-ordinates the TVET sector and its growth.
- National Industrial Training Authority: provides industrial training and assessment, administers the training levy and regulates trainers. It is involved in curriculum development, integrates labour market information and awards certification.

TVET trainers were formerly under the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) but have since been transferred to the Public Service Commission Kenya (PSCK). This transition was met with resistance from some stakeholders, especially trade unions and policy implementers, resulting in a delayed process of transfer of services of TVET trainers. In 2019, 3,780 TVET trainers were transferred to the PSCK, but this number was expected to increase to 3,836 (Ministry of Education [Kenya], 2019).

Funding

Ministries responsible for the funding of TVET include the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Water and the Ministry of Energy. Public TVET institutions are provided funding through the National Treasury but are also funded through public-private partnerships as well as the training levy administered by the National Industrial Training Authority. This levy is collected from employers who want workers to be trained. Because TVET has gained increasing attention in Kenya, the sector has received a larger budget allocation over recent years. Development funding from institutions such as the African Development Bank, World Bank, New Partnership for Africa's Development and donor support from various countries have also assisted in ensuring sufficient funding for the TVET sector (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021e).

Although TVET teachers are now associated with the PSCK, and their payroll is being managed by the Ministry of Education instead of the TSC, the budget for the management and supervision of TVET teachers was not

allocated in 2019. TVET institutions have thus met with obstacles in their efforts to train TVET teachers efficiently and effectively.

Lecturer development

TVET trainers teach in national polytechnics, technical and vocational centres, and schools at the secondary level. TVET instructors, on the other hand, are responsible for teaching in vocational training centres and private industrial centres. Qualification requirements differ depending on the level being taught. Trainers at secondary level need to be qualified with a diploma or Craft Certificate (ISCED 5), while those at tertiary level are required to have a higher diploma or a Bachelor of Technology (ISCED 6). Both pre- and in-service training for TVET trainers is offered at technical trainer colleges and universities. A diploma takes two years to complete, whilst a university qualification takes four years.

Subrahmanyam (2020) found discrepancies between the length of pre-service TVET teacher training as stipulated in policy and that which teachers and trainers actually receive. In the survey conducted by Subrahmanyam (2020), it was found that although TVETA reported that secondary-level TVET teaching staff should receive 12–18 months of pre-service training, institutions and practitioners reported that TVET teaching staff receive only 6–12 months of pre-service training. This indicates that training regulations and quality assurance of training for TVET teaching staff is not as stringent as it should be to ensure that the correct length of training is received by teachers and trainers.

It was also found that two-thirds of Kenyan TVET teachers were ‘more comfortable teaching theory than practice’, even though the required criteria for coaches and mentors include academic and industry knowledge (DHET, 2018:17).

The development of TVET trainers included a partnership with the Netherlands where a technical trainers’ college was supported with infrastructure upgrades (workshops, laboratories, classrooms, open working areas and offices, and a smart classroom). It is through such initiatives that enrolment numbers increased from 2712 in 2016/2017 to 4,461 in 2018/2019. Owing to the huge expansion of TVET across Kenya, the PSCK hired an additional 1,000 trainers in 2018 to ensure that national polytechnics and TVET colleges were sufficiently resourced. A recent report indicates that the government plans to hire an additional 3,000 trainers in the TVET institutions across Kenya (Mogendi, 2022).

National standards for TVET lecturers

Although there are professional TVET standards for the sector in Kenya, they do not apply to teachers and trainers exclusively. There are occupational standards relating to the world of work more broadly, and there are

occupational training standards relating to competencies that should be achieved in training. According to Kenya’s TVETA (2020:1), these standards

provide a firm foundation towards ensuring the quality of training delivery that is critical for the smooth functioning of TVET. Quality in TVET includes industry-aligned, up-to-date and relevant training and consistency of delivery across public and private institutions, among other considerations.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

There does not appear to be any professional body with which TVET trainers and instructors can be associated in Kenya. The Kenya Association of Technical Training Institutions (KATTI) is a body that co-ordinates the activities of technical training institutes all over the country (Devex, 2022).

The representation of TVET teachers by trade unions is also a point of contention. The Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) attempted to block efforts by TVET trainers to register their own union (Education News Hub, n.d.). KUPPET was instructed in 2021 to refund Sh90 million that they had appropriated through fees for more than 3,500 TVET trainers who were not associated with the union since the transfer of trainers’ services to the PSCK from the TSC (Mogendi, 2022). Because KUPPET does not have a recognition agreement with the PSCK, they cannot claim to represent TVET trainers. Mogendi (2022) specifically states that ‘technical trainers [should] stop engaging in partisan politics during this electioneering period’, and ‘while the technical trainers had the right to attend political rallies and even interrogate aspirants as voters, they should not join political formations and must remain loyal to the government’. Given this disorganisation of trainer representation by trade unions and strong stance from the government, it appears unlikely that the trainers will be provided a platform to have their voices and needs heard.

Malaysia

Status of TVET

As noted in the 2018 JET study, the current National Dual Training System (NDTS) was introduced in 2005. It evolved from the Dual Training System Project that was formulated with the purpose of strengthening TVET in Malaysia by incorporating the German dual training system. The NDTS was introduced to meet the growing demand for a highly skilled workforce and changes brought about by technological development (Othman et al., 2011).

The status of TVET in Malaysia is relatively low despite various reforms to policies and systems made by the Malaysian government in support of the sector (JET, 2018; Yusoff, Harun and Munzir, 2020). As noted in the JET study (2018), TVET in Malaysia is not highly regarded and is seen as inferior to academic education. Ismail and Hassan (2013) explain that this perception has been aggravated by the lower academic requirements for admission into TVET programmes and the limited prospects for further educational and professional development of TVET graduates. In addition, TVET-based qualifications and careers are still poorly perceived and recognised in the workplace (JET, 2018). Furthermore, it has been noted by Menon (2021a) that companies are reluctant to accept students for industrial training or work-based learning. In 2018, there were approximately 285,000 students enrolled in secondary TVET in Malaysia (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021f).

The Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025) indicates a continued focus on TVET and the improvement thereof. This will be done to, ‘produce future-ready talent ... that can better meet industry demand’ (Government of Malaysia, 2021:13). The Twelfth Malaysia Plan sees TVET as being a catalyst for the country’s socio-economic development.

Governance

The Ministry of Education is the main authority responsible for TVET in Malaysia and is tasked with TVET policy (administration and co-ordination) for all institutes of higher learning, including four universities, 36 Polytechnics, 102 community colleges and 81 vocational colleges (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021f). Other ministries responsible for TVET include Higher Education; Human Resources; Youth and Sports; Defence; Works; Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry; and Rural Development. Rosly et al. (2019) highlight that because of the multiple stakeholders involved in the governance of TVET in Malaysia, this threatens the sustainability of collaborative initiatives. The multiple stakeholders’ needs have to be understood and commitment promised to ensure continuity in efforts to improve TVET in Malaysia. The Twelfth Malaysia Plan lists as one of its strategies improved co-ordination amongst stakeholders. While there is better engagement between industry and institutions, according to Rosly et al. (2019), this could be further improved, with explicit reference to responsibilities for each partner to ensure the currency of TVET in Malaysia.

Funding

Funding for TVET in Malaysia comes from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources (SEA-VET, n.d.). The Human Resources Development Council was established by the Ministry of Human Resources to encourage greater participation of industry

in implementing staff training and to collect levies from companies. The Human Resources Development Fund collects levies from companies, and this funding is used to provide training for employees/trainees (JET, 2018).

In 2022, the budget allocation for the TVET sector was set at RM6.6 billion, an increase from the RM6 billion in 2021 (Menon, 2021b). There is a strong focus on meeting the needs of industry, with joint state and industry programmes being planned.

Lecturer development

Abdullah et al. (2019) emphasise the importance of competencies in general skills for TVET instructors as a means of transforming the TVET sector. The basic principle of the competency model is that the performances of civil service officers will increase if they have all the competencies required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position they hold. Specialising in a particular field and the frequency in performing a task will enable the officers to perform their duties effectively and excellently. Frank et al. (2010) identified knowledge, skills, values and attitudes as basic competencies, which are the elements of professionalism, and the generic skills required by a lecturer or an instructor in TVET or any other organisation (Abdullah et al., 2019).

As noted in the JET study (2018), practising TVET teachers under the Ministry of Education system in Malaysia are typically either diploma holders who graduate from TVET institutions such as polytechnics and community colleges, or degree holders who graduate from universities. A bachelor’s degree is a four-year programme including teaching practice, while a diploma programme lasts for three years (Sulaiman et al., 2014). Additionally, TVET teachers must possess at least the Malaysian Skills Certificate Level 3 (supervisory level). To be awarded such a qualification, lecturers need to pass the minimum requirement in the National Occupational Skills Standard (NOSS).

The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) states that it is the aim that, by 2030, all lecturers in Malaysia should have at least an advanced diploma or bachelor’s degree before joining the TVET teaching profession, to ensure that all TVET educators pass the ‘quality criteria’ and minimum standard of competencies before leaving the training institute (MQA, 2021:i).

As found in previous research conducted by JET (2018), trainers are selected from experts in the following categories: experts from industry; existing instructors in other ministries; and teachers under the Ministry of Education. The trainers must possess the Malaysian Skills Certificate Level 5. Trainers at schools are not required to have the certificate but must provide evidence that they have the right competencies. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of qualified technical and vocational trainers.

National standards for TVET lecturers

The MQA (2021) mentions that there are various ‘teaching competency standards’, developed separately by the Department of Skills Development and the Ministries of Human Resources and Higher Education. The Malaysia TVET Educator Standard, developed by the Ministry of Higher Education, acts as a support for implementing the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025, which aspires to produce quality TVET lecturers who are then able to produce quality graduates. The core competencies for TVET lecturers listed in this standard are personal traits and professionalism; teaching, learning and training; and technical competence and innovation.

The Teaching Competency Standards by the Department of Skills Development were developed in response to the national TVET agenda and the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025. The Teaching Competency Standards appear to be a national occupational skills standard (NOSS), according to MQA (2021), to which TVET lecturers teaching at institutions accredited by the Department of Skills Development must comply. Besides being used as standards for the training of TVET lecturers and trainers, they also take into consideration the need for industry-led curriculum development and delivery (MQA, 2021).

The MQA has designed a Graduate Certificate in TVET Teaching Competency Guidelines, the purpose of which is to guide the development and certification of TVET lecturers, at both pre-service and in-service levels, at public and private TVET institutions accredited by the MQA (MQA, 2021). The MQA envisions that the implementation of this guideline will ensure that TVET lecturers have the appropriate competencies that enable them to provide high-quality teaching and learning, thus allowing for smooth school-to-work transitions.

The existence of different standards for TVET lecturers at different institutions (those accredited by the Department of Skills Development and others by the MQA) can create confusion and does not allow for a TVET system with uniform quality.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

There is no clear evidence in the literature that TVET lecturers are adequately represented in the system by trade or labour unions. Therefore, it is unlikely that lecturers have an opportunity to have their voices heard, which may result in a lack of agency. The Malaysia Board of Technologists (MBOT) is a professional body with which technicians (with MQF Level 3 to advanced diploma level) and technologists (bachelor’s degree level and above) are affiliated and registered as professionals. The mission of MBOT is to provide technologists and technicians with standing, visibility and recognition and to ensure that the TVET workforce continues to grow in industry. MBOT also

ensures that the quality of the profession is in line with current industry growth and trends (MBOT, n.d.). There is thus the opportunity for some lecturers to be associated with such a professional body and thereby contribute to their professionalisation, but this would be dependent on the lecturers having the relevant qualifications.

Moldova

Status of TVET

TVET is a priority for the Moldovan government, as set out in the National Development Strategy ‘Moldova 2020’. The strategy aims to promote sustainable economic development and poverty reduction, with one of the seven development priorities being ‘Aligning the education system to labour market needs’ (ILO, 2021:17). TVET is well represented at the upper secondary level, and enrolment in vocational programmes is increasing, reaching 46.6% in 2018, up from 37.1% in 2013 (European Training Foundation [ETF], 2021).

Governance

TVET governance in Moldova is centralised, with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MECR) being the key actor responsible for TVET governance and policy development (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021g). The following bodies assist the MECR in fulfilling its mandate:

- TVET Department: develops and promotes the country’s TVET policy; monitors and co-ordinates TVET institutions; and oversees the implementation of national programmes and strategies as well as the normative, regulatory and education policy framework;
- Lifelong Learning Department: develops and implements both the lifelong learning and adult education policies;
- National TVET Centre and Methodical Training Centre: provides technical support and policy to the TVET system in general and also contributes to the regulatory and normative framework, and the training of teachers, counsellors and managerial staff; and
- National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research: an independent authority responsible for quality assurance across all education sectors that also conducts external evaluations on research and innovation organisations (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021g).

The Education Code (2014) established two pathways for TVET in the country: secondary TVET (TVET schools and centres of excellence) and post-secondary TVET (colleges and centres of excellence) (ETF, 2021).

While there have been some inroads made with regard to public-private partnerships to support the dual TVET regulation proposed by the government, institutional structures do not fully allow for this. However, according to GIZ (n.d.a), there is keen interest from both the government and private sector to further consolidate dual TVET in Moldova.

GIZ has recently collaborated with the Republic of Moldova's MECR, as well as several private sector actors, social partners and training institutions to improve the framework for dual TVET in the country. Some state responsibilities for TVET have been transferred to the private sector, which includes companies and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The initiatives assist government ministries and social partners in defining and fulfilling their mandates with regard to TVET. According to GIZ, not only has social dialogue improved but dialogue partners have initiated normative and institutional frameworks that regulate dual TVET in the country. The role of companies in the TVET system has also improved, with almost 70 companies providing 1,500 apprenticeships for the 2018–2019 year, and the graduate recruitment rate is almost 60% (GIZ, n.d.a).

Although industry has been brought on board at a higher level and there is strong emphasis placed on work-based learning (WBL), it appears that in various contexts in the country, TVET institutions struggle to establish and sustain relationships with companies that often do not have the capacity and resources to support quality WBL (ETF, 2021). This challenge is particularly acute when there are shortages of large firms that have the technical and human capacity as well as the motivation to provide WBL opportunities. Smaller firms are often not motivated or prepared to provide WBL (ETF, 2021).

Funding

The education budget in Moldova was 5.5% of the gross domestic product in 2018, which included 0.6% for TVET. This budget for TVET is the highest in any EU country, and the budget allocation for TVET has increased since 2014 despite budget constraints. The budgets of TVET institutions are drafted by the Ministry of Finance and approved by Parliament. The main sources of funding for these institutions are the state budget, their own generated income, external sources (such as national/international donors, private companies, public-private partnerships) and other legal revenues (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021g). As such, TVET institutions are financially and economically self-managed; however, some institutions have struggled with managing this autonomy and also with generating their own income (ETF, 2021).

Lecturer development

Moldova appears to be one of the first countries to launch a master's degree level study programme for TVET lecturers (GIZ, n.d.b). This milestone might be achieved after collaborative work between the bilateral GIZ programme in Moldova, the GIZ 'TVET Academy', the Technical University Moldova in partnership with the Pedagogical University from Balti and the Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg from Germany (GIZ, n.d.b). The reference basis for the programme was UNESCO's International Framework Curriculum for a master's degree for TVET teachers and lecturers. According to GIZ (n.d.b), the consortium will continue working closely together to implement the programme so as to improve the quality of lecturer training in the country, thereby producing young and well-qualified lecturers to enter the TVET system. GIZ assumes that better trained and qualified lecturers can transfer their skills to learners in the classroom more quickly, resulting in a high-performing, efficient and quality TVET system in Moldova.

National standards for TVET lecturers

There are no professional standards for TVET lecturers in Moldova at present. There is a recommendation by the European Training Foundation (ETF, n.d.) that a VET Teachers National Council should be established. One of the objectives of this proposed council is 'setting expectations of VET teacher practice and behaviour (Code and Standards)'.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

According to the ETF (n.d.), there are no mechanisms for TVET lecturers to participate in or contribute towards the development of TVET policy and legislation. Furthermore, lecturers do not have the opportunity to voice their opinions, especially regarding the practical provision of TVET. There are also no tools for communication between lecturers such as communities of practice (ETF, n.d.). Rawkins (2018) mentions that Economic and Social Councils and TVET Councils or Employment Councils have been established in the EU and neighbouring countries at various levels. However, evidence of this in Moldova was not clear.

South Korea

Status of TVET

As in many countries around the world, South Korea struggles with the image of TVET as a second-class option compared to academic pathways and qualifications. According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2018c), there is a significant imbalance between vocational and academic qualifications in terms of student numbers. James Reilly et al. (2021) also makes mention of 'over-education', which creates a supply-demand mismatch in the TVET sector.

To ameliorate this, the Korean government has established a national qualifications framework that makes explicit reference to national competency standards and learning outcomes. It is the view of the government that links between industry, TVET and the qualifications system can be strengthened and the status and significance of TVET improved in the country. As noted in the JET study (2018), the Korean government undertakes regular TVET reform as a means to achieve alignment between skills supply and demand in the labour market.

Governance

In South Korea, there is a clear distinction between vocational education, for which the Ministry of Education is responsible, and vocational training, governed by the Ministry of Employment and Labour (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018c). Several divisions are responsible for fulfilling the TVET mandate of the Ministry of Education, including the Human Resource and Competency Policy Division, Lifelong Education Policy Division, Career Education Policy Division, and Secondary Vocational Education Policy Division under the Lifelong and Vocational Education Bureau. Likewise, the Ministry of Employment and Labour is supported by various divisions to co-ordinate vocational training, including the Skills Development Policy Division, Human Resource Development Division, and Skills Development Assessment Division under the Skills Development Policy Bureau of Employment Policy Office. Private training facilities also offer vocational training in South Korea.

The Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET) and the Korea Labour Institute play an important role in conducting research in the TVET sector. KRIVET also conducts research on qualification frameworks, TVET programmes, managing qualifications, assessing TVET institutes and courses, and providing career counselling.

Because of the regulation of new TVET policies, graduates from special vocational high schools called Meister high schools are viewed as the best skilled and most competently trained, consequently improving the image of TVET schools and reducing the stigma attached to these schools (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018c).

South Korea has several corporations that are global industry leaders (e.g. Samsung, Hyundai, Hanwha Corp, SK Holdings and Kia) which are sought-after employers. Craft and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) also play a role in industrialisation as their own country suppliers in global value chains. However, both large corporations and SMEs are challenged by shortages of skilled workers. Hence, the system of TVET educator recruitment and development to supply industrial training institutions and the scarcity of trainers in the workplace are a great concern (JET, 2018). It appears that this situation is improving, according to Cho (2016), who indicates that

memoranda of understanding between Meister high schools and select large companies (such as Hyundai) and government entities (such as Korea Hydro and Nuclear Power) are still in effect and aid the hiring of technical high school graduates. However, other authors still stress the need for further industry participation in the TVET system.

Funding

TVET is jointly funded by the national and municipal governments as well as the private sector through the payment of employment insurance. The employment insurance fund acts as a levy system and, as such, provides vocational skills development for registered workers. Training institutes receive funding from the government, companies and individuals. Most vocational colleges are private and, hence, receive very little support from the state, which tends to focus its support on public sector institutions (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021h).

Lecturer development

According to James Relly et al. (2021), since the 1990s, there has been an increased emphasis on developing the professional knowledge of workers within the service and technological industry. For this, the government deemed it necessary to open Korea Tech – a college providing four years of training for TVET instructors – and as a result, this college assisted in developing high-quality lecturers with the necessary professional knowledge.

There is differentiation between TVET teachers and trainers. TVET teachers teach at vocational high schools and colleges and must have both industry and pedagogical knowledge. Most teachers at vocational high schools are part time (84%) and only 16% are full time (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2018c).

As was highlighted in the JET report (2018), TVET teachers' qualifications are specified in the Workers Vocational Skills Development Act (amended 31 December 2004). To be accredited, the teachers are required to pass both a theory and practice test as well as a final interview.

Trainers in vocational training centres need to obtain a national technical qualification in their area of expertise and some work experience. For contracted training, TVET institutions approved by the Ministry of Employment and Labour provide in-service training courses for teachers and trainers. Institutions include public (polytechnic colleges) and private training centres and institutes.

TVET teachers and trainers in ordinary vocational high schools and Meister high schools can also have a master's degree from a graduate school of education or have completed teaching courses at universities, industrial colleges, vocational colleges, open universities, or postsecondary tertiary and non-tertiary education institutions. Lecturers in vocational colleges are required

to have a doctoral degree majoring in the specific area in which they lecture or equivalent field experiences (Vocational Training Teacher's Certificate, Level 1–3 in Vocational Training) (JET, 2018).

It was reported by JET (2018) that industry partners were barely involved in ordinary vocational high schools despite government attempts to encourage their engagement; however, teachers in Meister high schools are exposed to work-site training.

National standards for TVET lecturers

We found no evidence of professional standards for TVET lecturers in South Korea.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

There do not appear to be any labour or trade unions to which TVET teachers and trainers are affiliated, which means that their voice could be minimised. Furthermore, there is no apparent TVET teachers' council or collegial organisation.



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5. South Africa

The 2018 JET report on CPD included an extensive overview of the TVET system in South Africa. As explained in the introduction to this report, we decided to use that report as the foundation for our literature review of TVET in South Africa and look for developments in the sector since 2018 to see the extent to which the TVET sector and lecturer development in South Africa have changed, and how much progress towards professionalisation might have occurred since then.

The focus on CPD for TVET lecturers in the 2018 JET report is also relevant to professionalising the lecturer corps. As many scholars of TVET have emphasised, high-quality CPD is essential for professionalising any TVET lecturer corps currently and in future, given the rapidly unfolding changes in the political economies, labour markets, technology, demography, climate, and education and training systems throughout the world.

Among the main findings from the JET research (2018) were the negative impact of rapidly expanding student enrolment on the colleges' infrastructure and staff, and the need for increased funding for TVET, especially in a context where universities were still favoured.

Adequate resourcing of TVET colleges was seen as essential, as was capacity-building and upskilling of college management. While existing TVET lecturers, who were either academically or professionally unqualified or underqualified, urgently required upskilling, all senior lecturers would need mentoring and coaching skills. Moreover, all lecturers would benefit from enhanced ICT skills, especially if online learning was to be a key CPD strategy.

Business involvement was seen as critical for effective TVET and lecturer development. The evidence showed that much more had to be done to incentivise business to make its resources and expertise available to the TVET sector – and to remove the disincentives. This was vital because all lecturers would need meaningful workplace exposure for occupational currency that would enable relevant teaching and learning for their students and improve graduates' employability. However, it became clear that there were many disincentives that disinclined lecturers to participate in voluntary WIL.

Since 2018, the economic recession in South Africa has become more severe – with all the attendant consequences – and the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the education and training system, entrenched inequalities and caused significant learning losses, particularly among the poorest students. The consequences for the TVET sector have been serious.

Status of TVET

In all the South African national development and human resource plans and strategies, the TVET sector is seen as crucial to skills and economic development (Blom et al., 2022; JET, 2018). This holds true in President Ramaphosa's October 2020 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which sees skills development as one of the enablers of the plan, driving upscaled production of the required skills (Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, 2020). The sector carries the burden of high expectations in terms of its dual mission of mid-level skills supply and delivering social justice through poverty reduction and student employability. However, TVET remains one of the weakest and most vulnerable sectors in the post-school education and training (PSET) system. Moreover, the sector is still considered to be second class compared to the academic stream (Blom et al., 2022).

There were 50 public TVET colleges in the country with some 7,043 lecturers in 2015.⁷ A drive by the DHET to massify the TVET sector without a corresponding increase in the lecturer corps resulted in a massive strain on the colleges' resources and infrastructure and huge class sizes that made effective teaching and learning very difficult. However, between 2019 and 2020 student enrolment in the TVET colleges decreased from 673,490 in 2019 to 452,277 in 2020, a 32.8% drop.⁸ This decline was mainly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic as TVET colleges did not enrol students in the second semester of 2020 (DHET, 2022b).

The TVET colleges offer three main types of qualifications, including the National Certificate Vocational (NCV), which is an alternative vocational learning pathway for Grades 10 to 12; the Report 191 National Technical Education programmes, commonly known as NATED certificates, in engineering and business and general studies, all with elements of work experience; and occupational qualifications that address workplace demands and opportunities and include WBL (JET, 2018). As indicated by JET (2018), the current mix of programmes and qualifications for learners is complex to administer, difficult for the public, learners and parents to understand, and often poorly quality assured. Moreover, many lack credibility with employers.

However, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation recently announced that the curricula of TVET college programmes are under review to 'ensure their relevance, currency and alignment with the needs of industry and society' (SAnews, 2022). Blom et al. (2022)

point out that with the development of the SETAs, the colleges effectively lost their linkages to industry and to the Department of Labour (DoL), learnerships and skills programmes.

The knowledge, capabilities, behaviours and attitudes of the TVET lecturers are central to improving the quality of the learning and teaching in the TVET colleges and the status of TVET. The white paper on post-school education and training states that 'the most important indicator for the success of a college is the quality of the education offered and consequently the success of its students. For this, the colleges need a well-educated, capable and professional teaching staff' (DHET, 2013:16).

Other important initiatives have been launched by the DHET, and these have been addressed in this report.

Governance

Blom et al. (2022) highlight the many changes that the TVET sector and the lecturers have experienced since 1994. One of the main changes was the merger of 152 technical colleges into 50 multi-campus institutions. As part of the merger process, all further education and training (FET) college staff were transferred from the employ of their provincial education department to become FET College Council employees. Many older college staff had serious reservations about changing their conditions of employment as they feared losing government pensions, and so they resisted entering into employment contracts that provided only for provident funds as opposed to guaranteed pensions (Needham, 2019). Between 2003 and 2005, the colleges lost some 10% of staff owing to mistrust in college councils, with many lecturers opting for various provincial positions (Akoojee, 2008, cited in Needham, 2019).

Before 2009, FET colleges fell under the Department of Education, but this changed in 2009 when the Department was split into two – the DHET and the Department of Basic Education – and the TVET sector was moved to the control of the DHET. The DHET is tasked with the development of policy, norms and standards, curricula and staff development for the TVET sector. It is also responsible for funding and policy implementation (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021i). In 2013, colleges were again renamed from FET colleges to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges (Blom et al., 2022).

It was thought that colleges would become increasingly autonomous over time, but this did not happen. By

7 For a number of years, there have been no statistics on lecturers in the colleges, and even the latest 2020 DHET statistics do not contain any figures for the size of the TVET lecturer corps (DHET, 2022b).

8 In the DHET 2016 Statistics on Post-school Education and Training (PSET), it is explained that the way the number of TVET students is recorded has changed to a headcount that reflects a student record count where a student is counted only once in an enrolment period/cycle – using a unique student ID – irrespective of the programme and subject enrolment and taking into account the TVET college at which the student is registered. However, the DHET 2019 Infographic for Statistics on PSET gives the 2019 enrolment cycle count in TVET colleges as 673,490, while FTE enrolment was 311,832. The term 'headcount' was not used.

moving the TVET colleges from the control of the provinces to the DHET, their governance became far more centralised, and the colleges have lost much of their previous autonomy (Needham, 2019). Moreover, with this governance change, the conditions of employment for public TVET college staff were changed yet again, and the state became the employer of all staff.

In 2013, in line with the government philosophy of a developmental state, the SETAs and the National Skills Fund were also brought under the DHET, and occupational training was no longer a responsibility of the DoL and accredited providers. Skills levy funds were redirected towards public TVET colleges as opposed to private providers. Needham (2019:98) points out that:

The market for continuing education and training in the workplace that had been dominated by private providers was now redirected to the public TVET colleges, which were poorly equipped to realise these opportunities as a result of having previously been marginalised from workplace education and training.

He argues that the shifts in government policy regarding public and private providers of vocational education and training 'have further limited the possibilities for public and private providers to collaborate and share expertise in what should be a coordinated TVET education and training intervention'. The result is that 'the building of a coherent public and private TVET sector that is capable of contributing the critical skills required to stimulate economic growth' has been inhibited (Needham:2019:99).

In the case of TVET, there are a multiplicity of stakeholders: government, business organisations, trade unions, constituency bodies and delivery agents, such as SETAs, public bodies, employers, trade and professional bodies, public and private training providers, community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations. In terms of participatory democracy enshrined in the Constitution, they should be consulted when changes are envisaged that affect them. Although the intention to consult is there, this is not always achieved (Zinn et al., 2019).

The SETAs play an important role in the TVET sector. Currently, there are 21 SETAs in the country, each with its own clearly defined economic sector and sub-sectors. Among the responsibilities of the SETAs are administering and managing a skills levy; developing and implementing a sector skills plan; developing and administering learning programmes including skills programmes and learnerships; supporting the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); and undertaking quality assurance.

For TVET colleges, the ETDP SETA is the most important one because it is mandated to promote and facilitate the delivery of education, training and development in order to enhance the skills profile of this sector and contribute to the creation of employment opportunities, especially for those previously disadvantaged.

In the late 2000s, yet another change was the introduction of a new vocational programme, the National Certificate Vocational (NCV). This was not well received by employers according to Blom et al. (2022) and has served only to drive a further wedge between the colleges and industry. Furthermore, lecturing staff do not feel adequately prepared to deliver these NCV programmes to students (Blom et al., 2022). In 2019, it was planned that curricula would be finalised, and colleges would receive support for delivery of the revised curricula in the form of lecturer training, development of learning materials and access to learning resources (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2019). This did not materialise – a likely effect of the pandemic.

Funding

The total budget allocation for the TVET sector for the 2021/2022 financial year was set at R13,096.2 million (DHET, 2021). As stated in the DHET's 2021 budget vote, lecturer development is seen as critical to the success of TVET teaching and learning and will be 'vigorously pursued'. The TVET colleges also receive funding from the National Skills Fund (NSF), the ETDP SETA and other SETAs (JET, 2018).

It should be noted that since 2013, qualifying students can obtain a government bursary from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), which aims to provide access to education to students from poor and working-class backgrounds. However, the learning losses from the pandemic and the lack of quality teaching and learning in most schools and TVET colleges meant that a total of 93,532 TVET college students did not qualify for NSFAS funding for 2021 because they failed the 2020 academic year (Bhengu, 2021).

According to the JET report (2018), to fund TVET lecturer CPD, government made a significant decision that the DHET could deduct the 1% skills levy from each TVET college's wage bill and then transfer 30% of the 1% to the ETDP SETA and 70% to the colleges for CPD.

However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this important funding for TVET lecturer CPD has taken a severe knock. In May 2020, the skills levy was suspended for four months as part of tax relief for companies (Allais and Marock, 2020). The skills levy institutions (SETAs, the NSF and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations [QCTO]) are estimated to lose R6.1 billion over the period. Moreover, Allais and Marock (2020:68) point

out that ‘as job losses increase, even after the skills levy resumes, the income to the system will be much lower – DHET anticipates that it could be less than half of what was budgeted for the year’.

In 2021, headcount student enrolments into the ministerial approved programmes stand at 508,000, which is lower than the 2021/22 headcount enrolments funded by the state and TVET colleges from student fees: ‘It is also substantially lower than the envisaged enrolment growth expected by the National Development Plan. Therefore, the 2022 enrolment planning for the TVET colleges will only be funded by the State at R14.385 billion with a correlating budget deficit of R165 million or 1.15% funding deficit’ (DHET, 2022b).

In its 2021/2022 Annual Performance Plan (APP), the DHET points out that in the aftermath of COVID-19 and the drive towards skilling for the fourth industrial revolution, the unit costs will escalate further and require additional allocations in subsidies to the existing baseline. However, as a result of budget constraints, the number of enrolments must be adjusted downwards in the immediate term. The SETAs are seen as the main source of alternative funding in a plan for integrated funding of TVET programmes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only made this reality worse. According to the DHET (2021/2022), COVID-19 has highlighted pre-existing inequalities and has forced institutions to grapple with supporting students via forms of remote multi-modal teaching and learning. All institutions have been forced to adjust and reimagine their modus operandi, embracing technologies and forms of engagement.

Quality

It is commonly believed that the quality of teaching and learning in the TVET colleges is poor and that TVET lecturers lack the capabilities to deliver quality education and training. The minimum requirements for TVET lecturers in South Africa are a three-year post-matric qualification or a post-NQF Level 4 qualification. Lecturers also need to be fully or conditionally registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE). Full registration requires lecturers to have a qualification that aligns with the 2013 Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET (PPQLTVET) or the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (Blom et al., 2022). Conditional registration is granted when lecturers possess any three-

year trade-based or vocation-based national diploma or degree (Blom et al., 2022).

Quality assurance bodies play a key role in supporting the measurement and improvement of quality across the education system. There are three major TVET quality assurance authorities: the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (UMALUSI) and the QCTO.

SAQA is composed of stakeholders in education and training who oversee the development and implementation of the NQF. UMALUSI ensures that education providers have the capacity to deliver and assess qualifications and learning programmes. It is also responsible for certifying the NCV, the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and vocational senior certificates, among others. The QCTO is responsible for education and training in the workplace.

In addition to these three main quality authorities, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) advises the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation on higher education policy issues and ensures the quality of higher education in South Africa through the Higher Education Quality Committee. The many different quality assurance bodies make for a very complex system, with areas of overlapping authority (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021i).

Lecturer development

There are no recent figures for the number of TVET lecturers because it appears that colleges have not followed a standardised form of recording them, and some colleges have not submitted their workplace skills plans (WSPs) to the ETDP SETA (ETDP SETA, 2019/2020:6).⁹

The ETDP SETA explains in its TVET sub-sector report of 2019/2020 that the most recent figures were 2015 data released in 2017 and, together with the 2014 data, formed the basis for the statistics in the report.

The most recent qualifications profile is from a sample of some 8,000 permanent and temporary TVET lecturers in 2016. This profile is a cause for concern: it shows that less than 5% of lecturers were both academically and professionally qualified for TVET, and the majority of lecturers were a mixture of unqualified, academically qualified but without workplace pedagogy, and trained for the schooling sector.

⁹ Use of the Organising Framework of Occupations (OFO) codes on the part of colleges indicates some confusion as a consequence of lack of clear linkages to the occupations in TVET colleges. In many cases in the submitted WSPs, TVET lecturers are identified as 2015:23 1101 – University Lecturers, rather than 2015:23 2130 – Post School Educators. A range of alternative titles for these was also offered, including Teacher, Lecturer, Community Education and Training Lecturer, and others. More complicated is the need for dual qualifications for vocational lecturers, requiring both education skills and qualifications as well as industry-specific skills and qualifications. For example, TVET lecturers in fitting and turning need to be qualified fitters and turners but also need to be distinguished as lecturers (ETDP SETA, 2019/2020).

Given this profile, it is not surprising that TVET lecturers are not seen as a profession in South Africa. Government is very aware of their lack of appropriate qualifications, and the PPQTVET was developed to improve the capacity of TVET lecturers through ILD and CPD. Since most TVET lecturers' qualifications were designed for schoolteachers, professional qualifications specifically for TVET college lecturers were needed. The PPQTVET identifies qualifications, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, that can be used for the professional development of TVET lecturers. It describes the knowledge mix needed for specific TVET lecturer qualifications and defines a minimum set of agreed competencies for lecturers. With this policy, it is hoped that the quality of teaching and learning will be strengthened across the TVET sector (Blom et al., 2022).

In line with the PPQTVET, a suite of TVET qualification programmes is being developed within the Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme, a joint initiative managed by the DHET and co-funded by the EU. The first of these qualifications is the Advanced Diploma TVT, which 14 universities have developed with industry, SETAs and other partners. This qualification is for lecturers who have an undergraduate degree and need a capping qualification. It is the equivalent of the postgraduate qualification offered to schoolteachers. The diploma is seen as being able to strengthen the capacity of staff and nurture research (Mail and Guardian, 2020). Seven universities have the Advanced Diploma in TVT accredited by the CHE, but to date only two universities have rolled out this qualification (Blom et al., 2022). Additional higher TVET qualifications are also being developed up to master's and doctoral levels.

Table 2 shows that steady progress is being made in improving the qualifications of TVET lecturers.

According to the 2021/2022 APP of the DHET, the 2021/2022 annual target for the percentage of TVET college lecturers with professional qualifications is 65% – from a baseline of 60% in 2019,¹⁰ and the annual target for the percentage of TVET college lecturing staff appropriately placed in industry or in exchange programmes is 12%. Two new targets for 2021/2022 are 80 lecturers participating in project-based lecturer capacity-building programmes in engineering (electrical, plumbing and mechanical) and 500 lecturers participating in digital literacy programmes.

The APP 2021/2022 also states as a target: 'Strategy (regulations, guidelines, implementation plan) to build the capacity of TVET college lecturers and managers approved by the Director General by 31 March 2021', but it is not clear if this has been achieved (DHET, 2021/2022:63).

The 2017 Draft Lecturer Development Strategy (DHET, 2017) envisages business and industry playing a substantial role in the TVET system: assisting colleges with work-based experience; providing WIL for lecturers and keeping them abreast of developments in the industry; advising government and colleges on curricula; using their experts to teach at colleges occasionally or on a part-time basis; establishing partnerships; and donating machinery and equipment to colleges. However, to a large extent, this has not transpired.

The minimal involvement of business and industry in TVET is one of the greatest weaknesses of the South African sector, but as we have seen, in other countries the same is true. Hofmeyr (2017) has pointed out that businesses lack incentives to participate in the TVET sector in South Africa, especially with regard to improving its quality. Two primary reasons for this are detailed:

- Companies are expected to expend their time, expertise and resources in college partnerships voluntarily by providing WBL for lecturers and students. However, there is no return to the company for this investment in the form of grants for internships, broad-based black economic empowerment scorecard points, tax credits or other incentives; and
- Providing work exposure to lecturers and students is a cost for companies because their employees must get involved. Companies are very reluctant to release key people from their productive work for these activities (Hofmeyr, 2017).

There is the opportunity for business and industry to be centrally involved in TVET via the Centres of Specialisation (CoS) Programme, established by the DHET to address demands for 13 priority trades needed to implement the government's National Development Plan and to build the capacity of TVET colleges in delivering trade qualifications with employer partners (JET, 2018). A CoS is 'a department within a public TVET college campus, dedicated in partnership with employers, to training successful, quality artisans in one or more of the priority trades ... in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) and other strategic projects' (DHET, 2016:6).

¹⁰ The 2019 baseline of 60% professionally qualified lecturers seems a huge stretch from the less than 5% professionally qualified in the 2016 sample, unless it includes schoolteachers with a professional teaching qualification as well.

Table 2: TVET qualifications – number of students

No.	University	Programmes	Implementation date	Number of students registered since inception	Number of graduates
1	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2021	32	None
2	Central University of Technology	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
3	Durban University of Technology	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
4	Nelson Mandela University	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2019	1307	420
5	University of Fort Hare	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
6	University of Free State	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
7	University of Johannesburg	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2021	30	None
8	University of Pretoria	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
		Postgraduate Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education	2020	60	29
9	University of the Western Cape	Postgraduate Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education	2017	82	
10	University of the Witwatersrand	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2021	38	None
11	Tshwane University of Technology	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2021	308	None
		Bachelor of Education in Technical and Vocational Teaching			
12	Vaal University of Technology	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	2021	50	None
13	Walter Sisulu University	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		
14	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	No		

As mentioned in the introduction of this report, JET developed a draft CPD framework for TVET lecturers of the DHET in 2019. While consultations with all stakeholders have taken place, there is no formal approval yet for the implementation of the system. However, according to the Public College Administrative Measures document, Section I.1.1.1, 'All lecturers may be required by the employer to attend programmes/activities for continuing professional development (CPD), up to a maximum of 80 hours per annum', and these programmes will be funded through the skills levy funds allocated to colleges (DHET, 2020b, cited in Blom et al., 2022). The draft CPD framework proposes that it should be compulsory for staff to accumulate a specified number of credits in a three-year cycle. Both formal and non-formal qualifications can be pegged to this framework (Blom et al., 2022).

As indicated in the 2018 JET report, the online Lecturer Support System is an important means of ensuring CPD for lecturers, who must register on this system to access training and development manuals and videos. The system provides systematic support, assists in lesson preparation, provides new high-quality content and has 'improved collaboration between lecturers and colleagues across colleges' (DHET, 2017:16). Work is being undertaken to strengthen and populate the system further with additional resources. Workshops have been held for facilitators and managers. By mid-2018, the vast majority of TVET lecturers were registered on the system.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

Another important marker towards the TVET lecturer corps being recognised as a profession is that all TVET lecturers are required to maintain their professional registration with SACE, and employment in the sector is dependent on meeting the requirements for the government personnel system, one of which is SACE registration. SACE acts as the professional body for all educators, including TVET lecturers. Its mission is 'to register fit to practice educators and lecturers, promote their continuing professional development, and maintain the profession's professional teaching and ethical standards' (SACE, n.d.).

In terms of SACE requirements, the professional registration for TVET lecturers can only be achieved if an educator has an appropriate professional qualification. TVET college lecturers are currently registered in two categories by SACE: those who are professionally qualified – whether for the TVET sector or for the schooling system – enjoy full registration status; those who are only academically qualified have been provisionally registered and must renew their registration annually (Blom et al., 2022).

SACE has made it clear that it will be the guiding force in the professionalisation process and regulator of access into the teaching profession, which includes TVET lecturers. Professionalisation, according to SACE (n.d.) is

the process of improving the status and standing of teaching and includes four key professionalising processes of (i) initial teacher training (ITE), (ii) induction, (iii) registration of teachers, (iv) continuing professional development (CPD), and evaluation of teacher performance.

The proposed CPD framework for TVET lecturers as developed by JET in 2019 has not been formally approved yet and would go a long way in supporting the professionalisation of lecturers.

A dedicated autonomous professional association for TVET lecturers would be an important step towards professionalisation. Currently SACE is the professional body for all educators. However, the TVET lecturer corps has expressed doubt about whether SACE, dominated by the needs of some 400,000 teachers, can adequately meet the needs of some 8,000 lecturers (ETDP SETA, 2019/2020). They would prefer a dedicated body for TVET educators, such as the South African Institute for Vocational Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) that would give them an independent voice to make their views and needs heard. SAIVCET is in the DHET's plans, but has not yet materialised, mainly because of funding constraints (DHET, 2012). However, in the DHET 2021/2022 APP, there is mention of 'a report on cooperation agreement with Germany on SAIVCET work approved by the Director-General by 31 March 2022' (DHET, 2021/2022:62).

Unions to which college lecturers belong tend to be the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the National Association of Professional Teacher Organisations of South Africa (NAPTOSA). Support staff are represented by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) and other smaller unions (ETDP SETA, 2019/2020).

Thus, there is no specific trade union for TVET lecturers. It appears that they may be caught between SADTU and NEHAWU, which, in 2019, disputed who had organising powers in the TVET college sector (Sobuwa, 2019).

College principals are members of the South Africa College Principals Organisation, and students are represented by the South African Further Education and Training Student Association.

De Clercq (2013) has pointed to the key issue of voice in terms of the teaching profession in South Africa, which applies equally to TVET lecturers. To what extent does the TVET policy framework and governance allow

lecturers to have a voice in determining their role and professionalisation? Is there genuine social dialogue between the DHET, TVET lecturers, industry, the SETAs and other primary stakeholders about the future policies and plans for the TVET sector?

Professional standards are another marker of a profession. As yet, there is a very rudimentary and rough draft of professional teaching standards (PTS) for TVET lecturers based on the PTS for educators, with a few additional points relevant to TVET lecturers. However, these PTS have not been formalised or the stakeholders consulted.

As Blom et al. (2022) observe, to develop TVET research capacity, the DHET has initiated the College Lecturer Education Project to support five collaborative TVET-focused research projects with master's and doctoral students. A new journal, the *Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training* (JOVACET), has also been established and has already published three issues.¹¹

The extent to which TVET lecturers in South Africa can be held accountable when such a small percentage are academically and professionally fully qualified is a vexed issue. However, both South African and international research on teacher accountability can assist in this regard. As seen earlier in this paper, Darling-Hammond (1989) has made a signal contribution to the field of teacher evaluation with her distinction between professional and bureaucratic accountability.

In line with her reasoning, the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit report (NEEDU, 2012) in South Africa made a crucial distinction between 'teachers who can't do' and 'teachers who won't do' what is expected of them. From its research into the factors behind the poor teaching and learning in most South African public schools, the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE, 2017:28) concluded that where 'teachers "can't do", they must be supported and professionally developed to improve their teaching'. Government must provide them with high-quality training, meaningful professional support and development opportunities to enable them to improve their performance. Unless this happens, they cannot be held accountable for what they have never been taught or had the opportunity to learn. However, where educators 'won't do' or are guilty of wrongdoing, bureaucratic accountability must apply: 'teachers, managers and officials must be held accountable for their personal and professional conduct in fulfilling the basic functions and duties of their jobs' (CDE, 2017:36).

Although the CDE's 2017 empirical research was undertaken in South African schools, the same argument could hold for TVET lecturers in colleges, most of whom are unqualified or underqualified for the jobs they do (JET, 2018). If they have not been given the opportunity until recently to study TVET courses, nor been taught the appropriate vocational pedagogy, they cannot be held accountable for not knowing those. The same applies to a lack of industry experience, which most TVET lecturers have not had. However, they can be held accountable for their personal and professional conduct and fulfilling the basic requirements of their jobs, as any employer has the right to expect.

11 JOVACET has been a useful source of articles for this research report. See <https://jovacet.ac.za/index.php/JOVACET>





6. Summary of cross-country findings

Despite ‘professionalisation’ being a buzzword in the literature, it proved very difficult to find any literature specifically addressing TVET lecturer professionalisation in the eight countries, or whether progress towards this goal has been made. It seems that the call for TVET lecturer professionalisation is more a rhetorical and an aspirational goal than a plan for implementation or achievement. It is a reality that, in most countries, TVET lecturers are not yet seen as a profession.

Nonetheless, from our meta-analysis of the evidence that our research was able to find, we were able to identify certain common issues, challenges and insights about the professional development of lecturers and potential markers of progress towards professionalisation, which are summarised below.

Status

As we have seen, TVET suffers from low status and a poor image in the majority of the reviewed countries. Even countries like Germany, where TVET has been well regarded for generations, are now seeing a trend towards academisation, with the university pathway favoured and TVET a second choice for many students.

However, the status of TVET seems to be slowly improving in some of the countries. For instance, it is encouraging that in Brazil and Kenya, the image of TVET appears to be increasingly favourable owing to the pro-TVET policies implemented by their governments. In Brazil, TVET is a central part of the education system because programmes offered in the sector are aligned to industry needs and thus produce graduates who are more employable. The PRONATEC programme is a government initiative to expand TVET opportunities across Brazil.

Similarly in Kenya, a number of reforms have been implemented in the TVET sector and, as a result, TVET enrolments increased while university enrolments decreased between 2016 and 2019.

Governance

Germany has a decentralised system of governance for TVET, but tripartism and co-determination at all levels enable effective governance of the world of work. There are opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in social dialogue, policy development and decision-making about TVET, thus achieving their collective interests.

England also has a decentralised system for the governance of TVET, with devolved administrations partly responsible for TVET in the country. In the decentralised governance structure for TVET in Australia, the responsibility for developing VET-related policies is shared amongst the Australian federal government DESE and the state and territory governments. However, in both England and Australia, there is no equivalent of the tripartite system, and government plays the dominant role in TVET at all levels.

All the other countries – Brazil, Kenya, Malaysia, Moldova, South Africa and South Korea – have more centralised TVET governance structures. The development and implementation of TVET policies is mainly driven by national departments in these countries. However, multiple government ministries and departments with overlapping authority and roles in the TVET systems make them less efficient and effective, and it is more difficult to introduce change.

Funding

For the continued sustainability of quality TVET, a mix of funding sources is required. However, in most countries, the majority of the funding for TVET originates from national government departments responsible for TVET. This is not the case in Germany, where cost-sharing amongst public and private stakeholders operates, and, in fact, companies contribute just more than double the state budget towards the dual system for VET, illustrating the commitment of non-governmental stakeholders towards the quality provision of TVET (Haasler, 2020).

In Kenya, owing to the increased interest in TVET, the funding for this sector has been prioritised. However, in Brazil, despite several reforms in the TVET sector and policies to support these initiatives, there has been a decrease in funding in recent years. In the Australian case, teacher development is often not a prioritised budget item and, therefore, on the rare occasion that funding has been allocated to teacher development, it was usually for compliance purposes. The corruption involving RTO providers in Australia also saw the withdrawal of funding for certain qualifications by the national and state governments (JET, 2018). Financial constraints in many countries, because of COVID-19, will have diminished the budgets for TVET.

It appears that most of the surveyed countries have occupational standards for each industry or are in the process of developing them, as in Kenya. However, the existence of professional standards was not evident in the majority of the reviewed countries. In our review, we found clear evidence of professional standards for TVET lecturers only through the ETF/SET in England, and these are non-mandatory and very broad. Another encouraging English development is *The skills for jobs: Lifelong learning for opportunity and growth white paper* (DfE, 2021), which sets out possible steps that would be needed to professionalise those working in further education and vocational teaching and training.

Lecturer development

The qualifications required of TVET teachers and trainers vary across contexts but usually combine theoretical and practical knowledge. In practice, for a variety of reasons, vital workplace experience, knowledge and skills typically constitute a gap in the training of TVET practitioners, and many countries do not require professional teaching qualifications. However, we noted that several governments have developed these qualifications for TVET practitioners, even if they are not mandatory.

The minimum requirements to teach as a TVET teacher or trainer also varied across the countries. In general, requirements are low, but it appears that many governments are committed to improvements. Developing countries, such as Moldova, have recently introduced a master's qualification for TVET lecturers to improve the quality of lecturer training in the country. GIZ was an important partner in realising this achievement.

Germany requires teachers of general subjects to be university trained at a master's level. Workplace training and experience is not mandatory in Germany for full-time teachers and trainers. In South Korea, TVET teachers and trainers in vocational high schools and Meister high schools are expected to have a master's degree, while lecturers in vocational colleges are required to have a doctoral degree, majoring in the specific area in which they lecture, or equivalent field experiences.

In Australia, Brazil, England, Kenya and Malaysia, TVET teachers and trainers are not required to have teacher qualifications, and in most instances a certificate or diploma in their areas of expertise will suffice. In England, the requirement for newly appointed teachers to have undergone formal teacher training before working in further education (FE) was lifted in 2013. It appears that a shortage of FE trainers in industry is what drove this change.

In the 2018 JET report, a minority of the surveyed countries had established effective CPD systems for TVET lecturers. The world leaders in this regard continue to be the Germanic countries, whereas developing countries continue to struggle. In many developing countries, initial lecturer development is still a huge challenge (JET, 2018). A troubling discovery in some countries was the reluctance of TVET practitioners to participate in CPD opportunities. As a result, the reviewed literature proposes that incentives should be used to encourage practitioners to reskill and upskill themselves on a regular basis, and related obstacles removed.

Professional autonomy, agency and voice

One of the greatest challenges in our research was trying to find evidence of professional associations for TVET lecturers. In many countries, we found that there are associations of TVET institutions/providers but not for the TVET practitioners. Economic and Social Councils and TVET Councils or Employment Councils exist in some EU countries, as well as EU-neighbouring countries. These councils could enable the views of TVET practitioners to be heard through social dialogue at various levels.

Trade unions in the surveyed countries would typically be for teaching professionals rather than exclusively for TVET practitioners. TVET practitioners are likely to be represented in these, although in some countries, quite which trade unions include their membership is not clear, and indeed, is a matter of contestation. Thus, it is not clear how well represented TVET lecturers/trainers/trainers are.

The clearest evidence of TVET practitioners' involvement in TVET decision-making is in Germany, as a result of the German tripartite system. The voices of employers and trade unions (representing employees) are considered to ensure that the content and form of TVET meets the demands of industry. There are also professional associations (through which teachers are represented) that are represented in the chambers of commerce and industry, although it is not clear from the literature exactly where TVET trainers are involved.

England is another country that has a membership body (SET) for professionals working in further education, vocational teaching and training, but membership is voluntary. It is assumed that through the SET, FE practitioners' input could be heard. England appears to be one of the few countries that has an institution, the Education and Training Foundation, exclusively responsible for improving the quality and professionalism of TVET teachers/lecturers.

In Malaysia, MBOT is a professional body to which technicians (with MQF Level 3 to advanced diploma level) and technologists (bachelor's degree and above) are associated and registered as professionals.

AVETPA is a professional organisation for practitioners working in the Australian VET sector. One of the aims of AVETPA is to improve the quality of VET provision in Australia by supporting the initial and continuing professional development of practitioners, and teachers are included in their membership. The ACDEVEG operates at a higher level (deans within universities), and it is possible that they represent their lecturers' perspectives.

In Kenya, KATTI is a body that co-ordinates the activities of technical training institutes all over the country; however, this is at an institutional, not an individual, level. There are trade unions, but it is unclear where TVET practitioners' views and needs are heard.

Identities

The concept of lecturer identity has become a major theme in the research on TVET lecturers. The importance of lecturers developing a strong dual identity – both an occupational and a teacher identity – and being able to cross boundaries is emphasised. However, in countries where there are only weak links with industry and business, it is unlikely that TVET lecturers will develop an occupational identity from workplace experience and learning.

Moreover, as in the case of Germany, full-time teachers and trainers are usually employed only to teach and so have not developed a dual identity from workplace experience. In Kenya, the research indicates that lecturers are resistant to developing an occupational identity – even when given opportunities to do so – and prefer their teacher identity.

Accountability

Accountability of TVET lecturers is an important marker of professionalisation that is linked to a professional association of TVET lecturers, which sets professional standards, monitors its members and holds them accountable for meeting the standards. It is also linked to performance appraisal/management of TVET lecturers who would be held accountable for their performance, knowledge, skills and attitudes by their employers – typically a TVET institution or a government body.

However, we have not looked into the accountability and performance management of TVET lecturers as this is the brief of another JET research team.





7. Professionalisation

Our search for evidence of professionalisation in our sample of eight countries and how it can be achieved yielded little by way of concrete guidance for South Africa. However, the literature on what elements and processes a profession requires does provide useful pointers for how to raise the status and quality of TVET lecturers such that they win public recognition as a profession. Key components include a set of professional standards specifically for TVET practitioners, an independent professional association established by law with the autonomy and authority to uphold the standards and regulate the membership, and a specialised body of knowledge and skills. This is where South Africa must start the process. The DHET has already launched initiatives to achieve these components and has the process of professionalising the teaching force in South Africa as a guide.

The elements listed above are necessary components, but they are not sufficient, as the literature has shown. Professionalising the TVET lecturer corps needs the firm foundation of an effective and reformed TVET

system. Quality lies at the heart of TVET lecturer professionalisation and TVET reform, and how to achieve a high-quality TVET system and high-quality teaching and learning in TVET is the challenge.

Subrahmanyam (2020) has outlined ten forward-looking trends that are needed to effectively prepare TVET systems and staff for the future. These speak to the challenge of professionalising TVET lecturers to meet the ever-changing demands of national and global economies and a volatile international environment. They are reproduced in full below.

Key messages that emerge from the trends include the importance of collecting and disseminating data about emerging industry needs and the skills of TVET lecturers, the all-important role of the private sector and industry, thorough consultation with all stakeholders, and most importantly engaging with and incentivising TVET staff.

Future-focused TVET systems have frameworks in place to deliver pre-service and in-service training, regularly assess teaching staff's skills and training needs, and develop or reform training programmes based on these assessments. The right set of incentives need to be offered to encourage them to engage in training and professional development. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

The DHET and TVET stakeholders could use the ten trends as a valuable checklist along the journey to professionalise TVET lecturers and reform the TVET system, with the future firmly in mind.

Trend 1: As digitalisation and automation are changing the world of work, demand for transversal and applied skills are most likely to grow in the next 10 years. The spread of new technologies and other changes taking place in the world of work are redefining what skills workers need to remain productive. While traditional skills will continue to play an important role in the future, new skills in emerging areas, transversal skills such as problem-solving, and cross-occupational competencies in areas such as entrepreneurship, will be demanded more frequently. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:7)

Trend 2: Collection and dissemination of data on emerging skills for planning is becoming critical for future-oriented TVET programmes. TVET systems need accurate and continuously updated information on what these skills requirements are. Data must be regularly gathered and systematically disseminated to TVET institutions and teaching staff. The most important source of information on current and evolving skills needs is the private sector, so TVET systems should actively engage the private sector in their data-gathering exercises. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:7)

Trend 3: Results of skills assessment are being used to develop in-service and not so much to reform pre-service training. Teachers and trainers are now expected to possess future-oriented skills, be self-directed learners, and be sensitive and inclusive with regards to gender, cultural and learning differences and social disadvantage. To fulfil these high expectations, TVET teaching staff need strong training and support. Future-focused TVET systems have frameworks in place to deliver pre-service and in-service training, regularly assess teaching staff's skills and training needs, and develop or reform training programmes based on these assessments. The right set of incentives need to be offered to encourage them to engage in training and professional development. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 4: Future-focused TVET systems value industry experience and exposure as part of pre-service training. Quality pre-service training not only builds teachers' and trainers' professional skills but also enables reforms to take place. To provide TVET teaching staff with the practical skills and knowledge needed to prepare learners for the future, pre-service training must include industry experience or industry exposure. TVET teachers/trainers also need grounding in active, learner-centred pedagogy to build learners' cross-curricular skills and cross-occupational competencies. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 5: Linking in-service training to career progression increases TVET staff's openness to adopting new methods of teaching and learning. Continuous professional development enables TVET teaching staff to keep up to date with new developments in their subject field and the world of work. It is especially important in a rapidly changing labour market, where skills requirements change regularly. To overcome teachers' and trainers' reluctance to undergo in-service training, long-term future-oriented incentives are needed. Certification of teaching staff competencies linked to career progression can create a pull for in-service training. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 6: High-quality in-service training focuses on industry exposure, transversal and applied skills, and pedagogy as much as content.

The curricula used to train TVET teaching staff must be regularly updated to take into account the skills of the future. Transversal and applied skills such as problem-solving and collaboration need to be integral to curricula, and teachers and trainers need grounding in learner-centred pedagogy as much as content to build learners' practical and applied skills. The mode of delivery needs to incorporate industry exposure to develop teachers' and trainers' own practical skills and knowledge. Industry projects as part of training could be a powerful means of providing this. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 7: Responsive TVET systems ensure that TVET staff receive adequate training in gender responsive and inclusive methods.

To minimise the impacts of global disruptions on disadvantaged and vulnerable learners, TVET teaching staff require training in inclusive methods. They need to know how to deliver TVET using alternative (e.g. digital) formats and how to implement gender responsive/inclusive pedagogy, manage cultural/linguistic diversity and teach students with special needs. They also need training in educational psychology and labour rights to build learners' resilience and ability to cope in an increasingly competitive environment. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 8: TVET of the future relies on the private sector as an essential partner within in-service and CPD curriculum.

The private sector has core roles to play in both delivering TVET teaching staff training and creating value for it by certifying teachers' and trainers' skills and competencies. However, to engage the private sector in a practical and sustainable way, TVET teaching staff training must be aligned with the private sector's own interests. Examples of delivery models that could bring about such an integration include use of live industry projects and secondment of industry practitioners to training institutes as part of their career growth. Donors and higher education institutions also play important roles in increasing access to and enhancing the relevance of TVET teaching staff training. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 9: Effective stakeholder co-ordination is seen as a mechanism to improve the relevance and quality of training and professional development of TVET staff.

Effective governance mechanisms enable coordinated action by public and private stakeholders across different levels (international, national, regional/local and sectoral) in objective setting, implementation, monitoring and review. However, stakeholder cooperation will only take place in a constructive and sustained manner if stakeholders understand each other's views and constraints and plan initiatives in a manner aligned with all of their interests. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)

Trend 10: Mechanisms to engage TVET teaching staff are vital for aligning TVET systems to future skills needs.

TVET teaching staff, as the frontline of TVET delivery systems, have the most complete knowledge of the impacts of policies on TVET learners, as well as what training and support they themselves need to do their jobs and fulfil their career aspirations. TVET teaching staff should therefore be regularly consulted on the decisions that affect them. Strong communication channels between governments, TVET institutions and teaching staff can also lead to more effective policies and improve the responsiveness of TVET systems to evolving skills requirements. (Subrahmanyam, 2020:8)





8. Concluding comments

The brief of this JET research project was to explore the meanings of profession, professionalism and professionalisation, conduct an international and South African literature review on the professionalisation of TVET lecturers and undertake desktop research on recent developments in the South African TVET sector to identify contextual factors, policies and initiatives affecting lecturer development. This research report is the result of that work.

A sober assessment of the country's context and the dynamics and capacity of its TVET system is key when introducing education change. Various local and international scholars of TVET have pointed out that the national context is key, and there are no international TVET policy toolkits or generalisable laws of TVET reform. The DHET is committed to a dual system of education and training, but a wholesale transfer of the German system is unlikely to succeed in the very different South African context. However, in this regard the CoS pilot will have produced very useful lessons as to what can work.

Moreover, TVET is limited in what it can achieve. The sector labours under very high expectations – not only to train young people, providing them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for employment in the labour market, but also to help solve the severe social problems of poverty, inequality and unemployment. It is unlikely that any education policy can be an engine of development: TVET can support but cannot generate development on its own (McGrath et.al., 2020). Quality teaching and learning in TVET is not enough to make the economy work better.

Industry and employers must be involved in TVET decision-making so that they help determine policy, curricula, planning and implementation. This is essential for the workplace experience and training of TVET lecturers

and students and for the credibility, responsiveness and image of TVET. However, the literature shows that both TVET lecturers and employers/industry/business must be well incentivised to overcome their reluctance to participate in any form of ILD or CPD. To develop both occupational and teacher identities, lecturers need not only to see themselves as teachers but also as industry specialists. This means that lecturers must have ongoing workplace experience for industry currency.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the future has become even more unknowable. How the huge global forces and complex dynamics will play out is very uncertain. Digitalisation and the loss of traditional forms and types of employment are fundamentally shifting where and how people work. As economies change, so 'workplaces' are shrinking.

The importance of social dialogue and collaboration has been repeatedly emphasised in the literature. In addition, an evidence-based argument has been presented for a balance in power between key stakeholders. When power is shared optimally between various stakeholders, as in the German corporatist model of governance, a well-functioning, effective TVET system is more likely. If all stakeholders are engaged in social dialogue, their voices are heard, and the varying needs of all actors in the TVET sector are considered. Such interaction results

in collaboration. Partnerships and new networks develop as trust is built.

As we have already noted, the literature review, unfortunately, has not yielded much in the way of examples and strategies for how to professionalise TVET lecturers, but it has provided some pointers to what would be needed. At the very least, we know that the way forward for the professionalisation of TVET lecturers and reforming the TVET system requires an agreed policy framework, a concrete strategic plan that involves all key actors, draft policies and white papers converted into legislation, implementation in carefully considered stages, and monitoring and evaluation.

To achieve this, the DHET, employers, universities, colleges, lecturers, professional associations and unions, and key stakeholders have to grapple with key issues and challenges for successful reform of TVET and lecturer professionalisation. The literature tells us that these include: conceptual clarity; a dedicated professional association for TVET lecturers with authority, autonomy and influence; a clear understanding of the knowledge and competencies base needed for TVET lecturers as a profession; professional standards for TVET lecturers; adequate resourcing and capacity-building of the colleges; the upskilling and reskilling of management and lecturers through relevant quality ILD and CPD; and a more coherent and integrated TVET system.

The DHET has already recognised the need for many of these components and launched initiatives to begin to meet them. The latest DHET 2021/2022 APP is evidence of this. The DHET knows that a coherent, integrated and effective TVET system is required and aims systematically to integrate theoretical, practical and workplace learning in almost all vocational programmes offered in a TVET college, link the SETAs more closely to TVET institutions and the world of work, and establish an integrated funding system in which SETAs can make up the shortfalls in state funding. Among other initiatives, it has established the CoS pilot with industry and supported universities to develop a range of qualifications for TVET lecturers.

The DHET's 2021/2022 plans and goals show recognition and commitment to future-oriented goals and strategies:

for instance, the skills necessary for the fourth industrial revolution and a digitised economy; repositioning TVET colleges to deliver skills that match the latest global workplace standards and practices; vocational pedagogy that is current and innovative; and blended and multi-modal approaches to learning that will reach students in urban and rural places (DHET, 2021/2022).

The literature also asks us to consider the ultimate purpose for which we want to reform the TVET system and capacitate TVET lecturers to achieve professionalisation. International bodies like UNESCO-UNEVOC urge countries to broaden TVET beyond just providing skills for the labour market to an educational activity that provides students with civic capabilities, as well as skills and abilities for employment and life: in short, for 'living-working-learning'. Increasingly, the role of TVET colleges is seen as 'building skills for work and life that contribute to poverty alleviation through the sustainability of families, communities and the planet, as well as those that promote productivity and the greening of economies' (McGrath and Powell, 2015:12).

There is no doubt that TVET lecturer development must be at the forefront of TVET provision in an age of rapid technological advancements, new work processes and significant socio-economic changes. The need for properly qualified professional lecturers, with appropriate knowledge, skills, dispositions and competencies for the 21st century – and especially digital competencies – has become even more evident with the COVID-19 pandemic. Changing skills requirements and job demands in the future point to the need for well-prepared TVET lecturers who can engender the necessary skills sets in students and enable them to navigate an uncertain future.

It is now essential to convert rhetorical discourse into clear guidelines, national interventions and a clear pathway to action. However, it is only through collaboration and co-creation between stakeholders in this uncertain and challenging environment that the TVET sector can truly transform and contribute to social and economic development, skills for life and work, and the sustainability of the planet.

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There is no doubt TVET lecturer development must be at the forefront of TVET provision in an age of rapid technological advancements, new work processes and significant socio-economic changes. The need for properly qualified lecturers, with the correct knowledge, skills and competencies for the 21st century, and especially digital competencies, has become even more evident with the development of the COVID-19 pandemic. Skills requirements and job demands for the future, post COVID-19, are likely to be different and this indicates the need for well-prepared TVET lecturers who can transfer the necessary skills sets to students and enable them to navigate an uncertain future. It is now essential to convert rhetorical discourse into clear guidelines, national interventions and a pathway to action. However, it is only through collaboration and co-creation between stakeholders in this uncertain and challenging environment that the TVET sector can truly transform and contribute to social and economic development, skills for life and work, and the sustainability of the planet.

