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THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR TVET LECTURERS

Abstract:

TVET - Technical and Vocational Education and Training has been part of the South African education and training system for a very long time. Interest in TVET peaked in recent years because it has fuelled extraordinary economic growth in some countries. During 2010 to 2013 enrolments at TVET colleges has increased from 350 000 to 650 000. The 2030 target is to have an enrolment of 2.5 million in TVET colleges. In the White Paper on Post-school Education and Training, the TVET sector is seen to be 'the cornerstone of the country's skills development system in order to address the country's critical skills shortages'. However, the same White Paper hints at the current shortcomings experienced in respect of lecturing staff: the current lecturing staff complement is inadequate for the growing student numbers; they are inadequately trained; or are not specializing in the disciplines they teach. Therefore, the sector is very poorly prepared for the massive development drive mentioned in the White Paper. In order to rectify this the Department of Higher Education published The Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Because there is no training facilities for TVET College lecturers, colleges were more often than not, forced to appoint lecturers from their own graduates because no other trained personnel are available. Universities and Universities of Technology are being tasked to develop formal qualifications for TVET college lecturers. This will ensure the future lecturers will have a path to specialized qualifications in order to build capacity in the TVET system.

Keywords:

TVET, Qualification, Technical and Vocational Education and Training

JEL Classification: I29

Introduction

This article discusses the need for the development of formal qualifications for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) lecturers. This as a core emphasis for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) educator development. It results from the recognition that the professional development of lecturers in the TVET sector has been ruthlessly neglected in terms of their preparation to educate young people for vocational, technical and occupational programmes.

The article will cover the context and rationale for the need to introduce TVET Qualifications for lecturers. It also discusses the historical qualifications of TVET lecturers and the reasons for it in South Africa; and looks at the proposed new suite of qualifications for TVET educators in addressing the need to further develop emerging vocational pedagogies.

Context and Rationale

TVET has been a part of the South African education and training system for many years. Recently however, the interest in TVET peaked again. This is partly because TVET has fuelled phenomenal economic growth in some countries (McLean and Wilson, 2009). With the economy in South Africa – being a developing country – being at a low it resulted in that a great portion of the available work force becoming unemployed. South Africa took notice and all the education sectors are being encouraged to ensure the upliftment of educational standards in South Africa. For those students who are not eligible for university education the post-school, pre-university, TVET and skills development sectors are encouraged to expand rapidly.

The public TVET sector in South African for example, enrolments has increased from approximately 350 000 to 650 000 in just three years (2010 to 2013) (DHET, 2014) and is set to expand further (DHET, 2013):

By 2030 the goal is to have head-count enrolments of 1.6 million in public universities, 2.5 million in TVET colleges, and 1.0 million in the community colleges... In addition, it is estimated that there will be approximately 0.5 million enrolments in private further and higher educational institutions.

The South African TVET sector faces a number of challenges that were discussed on many levels during recent years, one of the most important discussions was the TVET Stakeholder Summit held in early September 2010. This section will only concentrate on those that relates to the purpose of this paper. The Summit was organized in order to bring all stakeholders in TVET together not only to identify the challenges facing the South African TVET sector, but also to work together in consolidation the TVET sector, which “*is critically important for the future of the skills base of the country and would give hope to the people*” (DHET 2009, 2).

There is a perception that TVET colleges are mediocre institutions producing low-status qualifications (Hoeckel 2007) and this is one of the biggest challenges facing the TVET sector. Even Previous Ministers of Education and Higher Education's attempts and financial investments to recapitalise and turn around the TVET sector did not bring any certainty, the uncertainty remains in the country about the level to which TVET colleges should be seen as suitable alternatives to higher education (Akojee *et al.*, 2005).

One of the biggest challenge facing the TVET sector is the fact that a significant number of teaching staff at TVET colleges are either "unqualified or under-qualified " (Booyens 2009). Among others, the South African Council of Educators (SACE, 2011:5) acknowledges the problem, linking it to "a lack of clear policy on the initial preparation of college lecturers as well as to a lack of professional development programmes". According to available statistics, in 2014, twelve percent of TVET educators were not in possession of any recognised tertiary qualification (DHET, 2014). Lecturers in TVET colleges with the necessary trade and industry experience generally do not hold formal teaching qualifications (Booyens, 2009). The DHET 2014 report shows that only 15% of all lecturers are academically and professionally qualified as college lecturers. 34.5% is deemed to be academically and professionally qualified but as for the schooling system. 38.6% of all the lecturers is deemed to academically qualified but professionally unqualified. There is an overabundance of literature pointing to a relationship between the quality of educators and students and, by extension, the quality of the education system. The opening speech made by the Minister of Higher Education at the TVET Summit recognised this challenge when he put it up front that "*quality interventions will include initiatives to improve management capacity, materials development and the introduction of formal qualifications for lecturers* (TVET Summit Report 2010).

In the TVET college sector, the shortage of professional lecturing staff in technological fields is considered incapacitating. In the *White Paper on Post-school Education and Training*, the TVET sector is seen as 'the cornerstone of the country's skills development system...to address the country's acute skills shortages' (DHET, 2013). However, the same *White Paper* mentions the current shortcomings that experienced in respect of staff: they are inadequately trained; the staff complement is inadequate for the growth in student numbers; and a high number of lecturers are not trained in the disciplines they teach. Thus, the sector is very poorly prepared for the massive expansion drive mentioned in the *White Paper*.

In a review done by Taylor on the priorities for education and training for the National Planning Commission (NPC) (2011), he confirms that until recently in South Africa '*there was no training base for TVET college lecturers*' and further, that no effort has been made to develop a new source of lecturers. The TVET sector therefore has being forced to appoint lecturers from the ranks of their own graduates because no other trained personnel are available. This state of affairs does not bode well for a sector that has to

carry the burden of expectations, both in terms of the economic and social needs of the country.

The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) examined this problem in its review of the South African TVET system (2014) and noted that:

“Effective and professional teachers and college leaders are the key to quality in vocational education and training. In South Africa, although many teachers and college leaders are of high caliber, some teachers lack the right mix of skills and there is little structured preparation for college leaders... [Intervention] measures need to ensure the right balance of both industry experience and pedagogical skills in teachers, and include strengthened professional preparation for college leaders.”

TVET Lecturer qualifications

The South African policy on qualifications for TVET lecturer (RSA, 2013) requires the lecturers to have specialised vocational teaching qualifications in conjunction with their respective trade or occupational qualifications, and they need to show industry experience. Currently, based on the TVET Lecturers Qualifications Profile Report (LQPR) (2014) in the research, only 854 (15%) of the 5712 lecturers that provided their information had the required qualifications. Trying to make sense of the teaching qualifications that lecturers hold proved more complex than expected and the question arises as to what education qualifications are appropriate for teaching at a College.

The issue of overall lecturer qualifications is a widely discussed issue and the following needs to be discussed first:

Categories of Qualifications:

- Unqualified lecturers:
 - Lecturers who do not hold an academic qualification that represents at least three years of post-school full-time study and deemed to be at NQF level 6 or above, nor do they hold a professional (teaching) qualification.
 - These lecturers would need to complete academic and professional studies at an appropriate level in order to be deemed professionally qualified.
- Academically qualified but professionally unqualified:
 - Lecturers who do hold an academic qualification that represents at least three years of post-school full-time study and deemed to be at NQF level

6 or above, but who do not hold a professional teaching qualification.

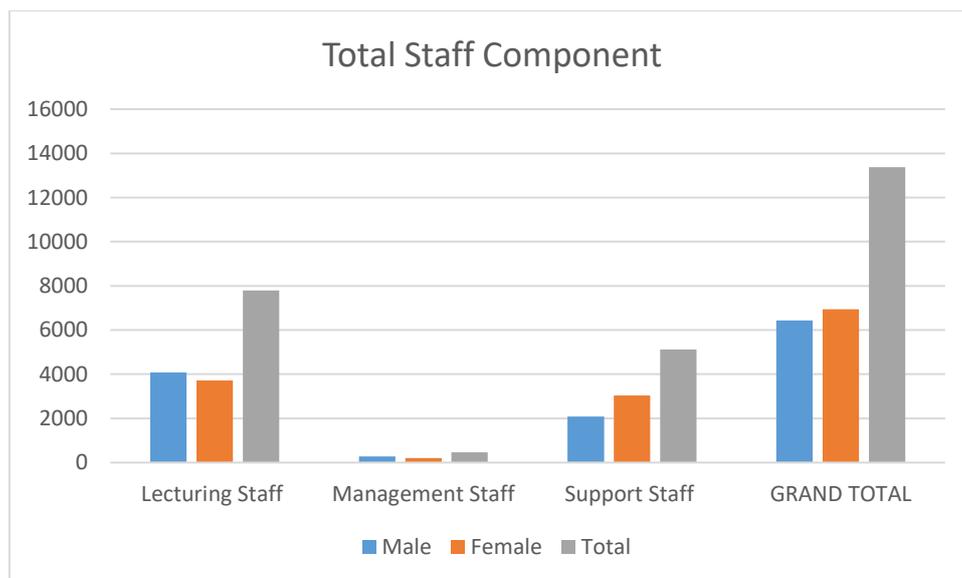
- Academically qualified and professionally qualified, but for the schooling sector:
 - These are lecturers who trained and qualified as schoolteachers, but who are now teaching in a TVET college.

- Academically and professionally qualified as a college lecturer:
 - These lecturers hold academic and/or professional qualifications that enable them to be recognized as fully qualified to teach in the college sector.

According to the TVET Lecturers Qualifications Profile Report (LQPR) (2014) following data was presented on TVET lecturers in South Africa.

Table 1: Total Number of TVET Staff in the South African TVET System in 2014:
(LQPR; 2014)

Staff Category	Male	Female	Total
Lecturing Staff	4076	3713	7789
Management Staff	272	199	471
Support Staff	2084	3031	5115
GRAND TOTAL	6432	6943	13375

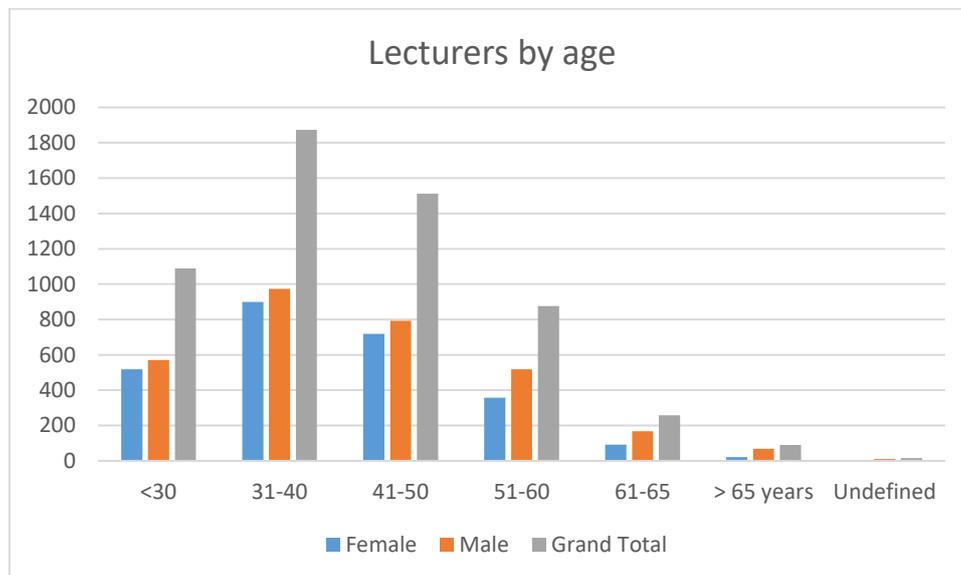


- Of a total staff complement of 13 375, lecturers made up 58.2% (7 789), management staff made up 3.5% (471) and support staff made up 38.3% (5 115).
- Of the lecturing staff, males constituted 52.3% (4 076) and females constituted 47.7% (3 713) of a total lecturing staff complement of 7 789.
- Of the management staff, 57.7% (272) were male, and 42, 3% (199) were female of a total management staff complement of 471.
- 40.7% (2 084) of the support staff were male whilst 59.3% (3 031) were female.

Table 2: Number of lecturers by age categories in 2014:

(LQPR; 2014)

	Category	<30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-65	> 65	Undefined	Grand
RSA	Female	518	900	718	358	91	22	4	2611
	Male	571	973	793	518	167	68	11	3101
Grand Total		1089	1873	1511	876	258	90	15	5712



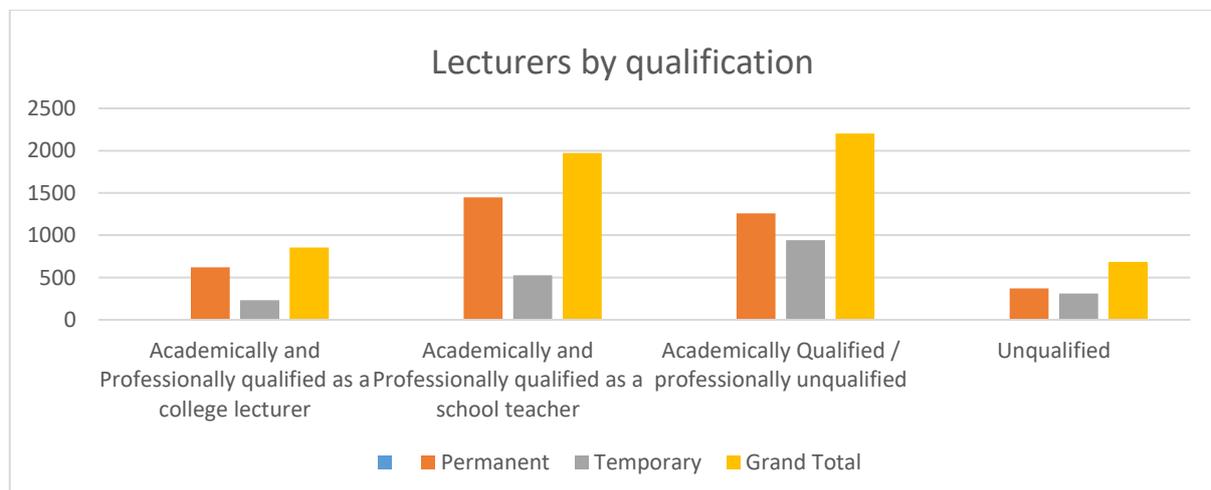
- Only 5712 staff member out of 7789 submitted information.
- A high proportion of the lecturers (4 473 or 78.3%) are under the age of 51.
- The biggest number of lecturers (1 873 or 32.8%) are between 31 and 40 years of age.

- A large proportion of lecturers (1 089 or 19%) are under 31 years of age.

Table 3: Number of TVET lecturers by qualification

(LQPR; 2014)

	Employment Status	Qualification Status				Totals
		Academically and Professionally qualified as a college lecturer	Academically and Professionally qualified as a school teacher	Academically Qualified / professionally unqualified	Unqualified	
South Africa	Permanent	621	1446	1259	373	3699
	Temporary	233	527	943	310	2013
	Grand	854	1973	2202	683	5712



- 5712 lecturers of 7 789 provided qualification this represented 73.3% of the group. Of the 5 712 (73.3% sample):
- 683 (12%) were deemed to be academically and professionally unqualified.
- 2 202 (38.6%) were deemed to be academically qualified but professionally unqualified.
- 1 973 (34.5%) were deemed to be academically and professionally qualified but for the schooling sector.
- 854 (15%) were deemed to be academically and professionally qualified for the TVET sector

The issue of analysing overall educator competence became even more complex when experience was factored in as a constitutive component. According to the data, only 36.3% of the lecturers had both a teaching qualification and any form of teaching experience.

This correlate with findings from studies conducted in the Western- and Eastern Cape provinces (McBride, Papier and Needham, 2009; ECCSEC, 2011). In all four provinces, the Higher Education Diploma (HED)/Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) were the most prevalent teaching qualifications. In many respects this was not surprising, given that there have not been dedicated qualifications for vocational teachers for more than a decade. The only exception was the National Professional Diploma in Education for Vocational Teachers (NPDE:VT), an NQF Level 5 qualification based on a school-teacher upgrade initiative offered by a limited number of universities. This initiative catered for lecturers who had occupational qualifications and no education qualifications. A surprising range of technical and vocational qualifications was found in the system, and would be worth further interrogation.

Industry experience and qualifications

“The single greatest challenge in improving and expanding the Colleges is the capacity of lecturers, particularly their subject-matter expertise” (MHET, 2013), the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training focuses on a further dimension of overall lecturer competence: their expertise in their trades or occupations. However, owing to the often tacit or embodied nature of this kind of knowledge, the relationship between practice and competence is significant (Gamble, 2009). Therefore, the experience lecturers has in practising their trades in the workplace must be seen as an important qualitative dimension of what and how they will teach their students. The workplace experience also related to lecturers’ abilities to prepare their students adequately for the world of work, as vocational training by its very nature must bridge education and training, and work. In the data, 43% of the lecturers had both industry qualifications and industry experience.

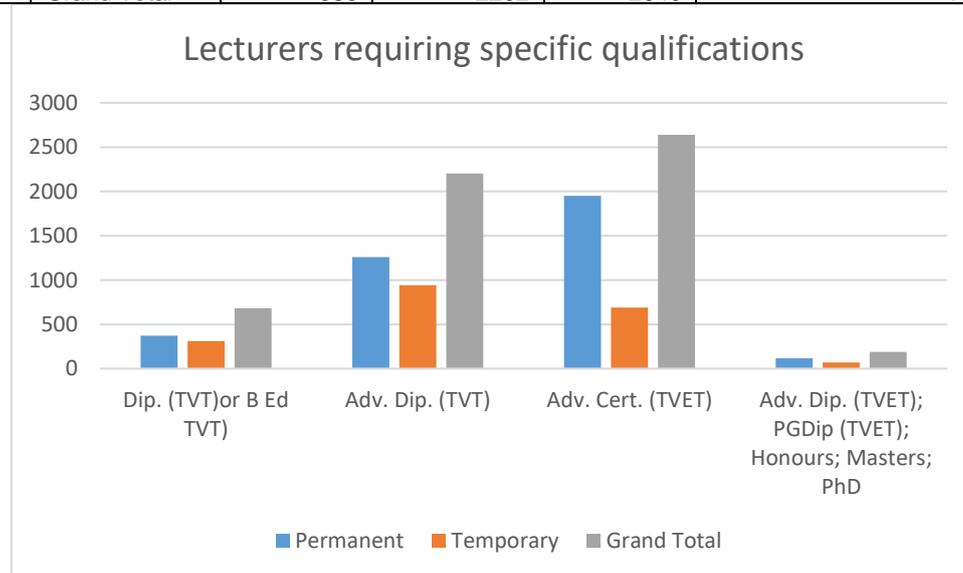
TVET lecturers requiring specific qualifications as the next step on a qualification development

The TVET Lecturers Qualifications Profile Report (LQPR) (2014) found that lecturers at colleges need to have access to a range of qualifications as described in the Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DHET, 2013).

Table 4: Lecturers requiring specific qualifications

(LQPR; 2014)

	Nature of Appointment	Type of Qualification				TOTAL
		Initial Professional		Retraining	Post Professional	
		Dip. (TVT) or B Ed TVT)	Adv. Dip. (TVT)	Adv. Cert. (TVET)	Adv. Dip. (TVET); PG Dip (TVET); Honours; Masters; PhD	
RSA	Permanent	373	1259	1950	117	3699
	Temporary	310	943	690	70	2013
	Grand Total	683	2202	2640	187	5712



Of the 5 712 (73.3% sample):

- 683 (12%) lecturers require an initial professional qualification, the Dip. (TVT) or the B Ed (TVT).
- 2 202 (38.6%) lecturers require the capping initial professional qualification, the Adv. Dip. (TVT).
- 2 640 (46.21%) lecturers require the retraining qualification, the Adv. Cert (TVET).
- 187 (3.3%) lecturers can proceed to relevant postgraduate qualifications in technical and vocational education and training.

It is a real concern that 50.5% of lecturers teaching at the Technical and Vocational Education en Training Centres do not have the required teaching qualifications. 12% of the lecturers have no educational training of experience and this is a recipe for disaster. The 38.6 % of lecturers that requires a capping professional qualification is already

experts in their related field but need the required teaching qualification to be in line with the regulations.

Concluding Comments

The combination of qualifications proposed by the DHET's *Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training* (Government Gazette, 2013), intends to address these shortcomings in the South African education and training system. The Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching (Adv Dip (TVT)) is one of the qualifications proposed to prepare TVET educators for the task. This qualification will assist close to 40% of the lecturers to comply with the regulations. To incentivise universities and universities of technology, the DHET funded the collaborative development of the Adv. Dip (TVT). Twelve universities were involved in the collaboration of a curriculum framework for the Adv. Dip (TVT).

The Adv Dip (TVT) is a professional teaching qualification for lecturing at institutions that offer technical and vocational education and training programmes. It is a 'capping' qualification for graduates and/or holders of diplomas already in possession of a general undergraduate bachelor degree or diploma, to become professionally qualified as a TVET lecturer or trainer. It offers entry-level professional teaching preparation of graduates/diplomates to develop expertise in teaching in a particular TVET field or subject.

Professionally qualified technical and vocational education and training educators will be able to:

- Teach their subject, in line with the requirements of the curriculum;
- Manage their teaching environments effectively;
- Develop and administer assessment in varied and reliable ways;
- Preparing their students for the demands of the workplaces;
- Understand the relevant policies and contextual realities of the sector;
- Deal with diverse socio-economic contexts, ages, cultural backgrounds, life and work experience, learning styles and aspirations, and special education needs of their students;
- Communicate effectively in the language of learning and teaching;
- Integrate information and communication technologies in an effective;

This paper and the interpretation of the data clearly shows that there is a need to develop formal qualifications for TVET lecturers, first to get them in line with the relevant regulations and secondly to create a career path for the lecturers to ensure that they do not become stagnant and discouraged in the profession of choice.

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