Leadership development for technical and vocational education and training college leaders in South Africa: a post-graduate curriculum framework

by

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DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any other qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The South African public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges have experienced considerable change in the past 20 years. Recently, these colleges have become the focal point of education and training, ever since the publication of the Green Paper on Post-School Education and Training in 2012, transferring the colleges to the higher education and training system. These colleges are expected to increase their enrolments from 650 000 to 2.5 million by 2030. Leaders in these institutions have been faced with constant challenges in a rapidly changing environment. It has been internationally acknowledged that in order for leaders at all levels of vocational education and training institutions to be capable of and effective in transforming their institutions, leadership development is essential. Even though a leadership development programme was advocated in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training in South Africa (RSA, 2012), this training was not mentioned specifically in the subsequent White Paper (RSA, 2014). This lack of leadership development prioritisation of leaders in this sector differs from governments in other countries where customised leadership development in this complex sector has not only been prioritised but has become a matter of urgency. The purpose of this study was thus to develop a leadership development curriculum framework specifically for leaders, present and future, of public TVET colleges in South Africa. These colleges have also been examined as activity systems with their cultural and historical influences, according to Engeström's (1987) version of activity theory. Through interactive qualitative analysis (IQA), an interpretive methodology grounded in systems theory (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004) which uses an interpretive approach by means of focus group and individual interviews with different constituency populations, an attempt was made to gain an understanding of what challenges these college leaders face and what knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes they may need to achieve the mandate of the White Paper (RSA, 2014).

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OPSOMMING

Die openbare tegniese en beroepsgerigte onderwys-en-opleidingskolleges in Suid-Afrika het die afgelope 20 jaar groot veranderings ervaar. Hierdie kolleges het onlangs die hoof-fokuspunt van onderwys en opleiding geword vandat die Groenskrif vir Na-skoolse Onderwys en Opleiding in 2012 gepubliseer is, wat die kolleges verskuif het na die hoër onderwys-en-opleidingstelsel met die verwagting om teen 2030 inskrywings van 650 000 tot 2.5 miljoen te vermeerder. Leiers in hierdie instellings ondervind voortdurende uitdagings in 'n vinnig-veranderende omgewing. Daar word internasionaal erken dat om leiers op alle vlakke by beroepsgerigte onderwys-en-opleidingsinstellings in staat te stel om hierdie instellings effektief te transformeer, leierskapontwikkeling essensieel is. Al word leierskapontwikkeling in die Groenskrif vir Na-skoolse Onderwys en Opleiding voorgestel, word daar nie vir hierdie opleiding in die daaropvolgende Witskrif (2014) voorsiening gemaak nie, wat verskil van die optrede van regerings in ander lande wat leierskapsontwikkeling in hierdie komplekse sektor prioritiseer. Gepaste leierskapskwalifikasies en -programme is oral ter wêreld vir leiers in dié sektor beskikbaar, maar nie in Suid-Afrika nie. Hierdie kolleges is ook as aktiwiteitstelsels ondersoek en daardeur is 'n analise van die kulturele en historiese invloede gemaak volgens Engeström (1987) se weergawe van Aktiwiteitsteorie. Die doel van hierdie studie was dus om 'n leierskapkurrikulumraamwerk vir huidige en toekomstige leiers van openbare tegniese en beroepsgerigte onderwys-en-opleidingskolleges in Suid-Afrika te ontwikkel. Deur interaktiewe kwalitatiewe analise, 'n interpretatiewe metodologie wat sy basis in stelselsteorie het (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004) en wat 'n interpretatiewe benadering toepas, is daar gepoog om deur middel van fokusgroep- en individuele onderhoude vas te stel wat leiers in die sektor glo in so 'n kurrikulumraamwerk ingesluit moet word, sodat die mandaat van die Witskrif (RSA, 2014) uitgeoefen kan word.

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ACRONYMS

ART	Affinity relationship table
CEO	Chief executive officer
CHAT	Cultural historical activity theory
DBET	Department of Basic Education and Training
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FE	Further education
FET	Further education and training
GET	General education and training
HET	Higher education and training
HR	Human resources
IQA	Interactive qualitative analysis
IRD	Interrelationship diagram
NQF	National Curriculum Framework
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SID	Systems influence diagram
TAFE	Technical and further education
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VET	Vocational education and training
ZPD	Zone of proximal development (also known as Zoped)

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The publication of the most recent White Paper on Post-School Education (RSA, 2014) has highlighted the essential role of the South African technical and vocational education and training or TVET colleges (formerly known as further education and training or FET colleges) (RSA, 2014:xi) in post-school education and training in South Africa. According to the White Paper (RSA, 2014), TVET colleges will be expected to address high unemployment rates in the country by providing relevant education and training. Such training will be aimed at preparing students for the workplace and to upskill people presently in employment or who are considering returning to the job market. These colleges are also expected to change radically in order to meet the social and economic needs of the country by playing a transformative role in education as required by legislation. In order for the colleges to rise to this challenge, their leaders will have to be equipped with leadership competencies, knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes to lead these colleges into the future (RSA, 2014). Not only do these colleges and other educational institutions need to transform education and training nationally, but change and transformation have become universal themes.

The early 21st century is a time of 'rapid and even instantaneous change', which poses formidable 'cognitive and experiential challenges' to learning institutions (Barnett & Coate, 2005:164). This view is shared by McWilliam (2008:vi), who states that 'immense and accelerating change' is taking place. A knowledge and information revolution is occurring within society as a result of developments in computing and communications technology. This revolution is forcing organisations to change (Kiran, Agarwal & Verma, 2013). Various other influences on higher education in the 21st century have made change and transformation in the public TVET college sector essential, especially in view of the fact that since 2012, TVET colleges have been located in the higher education system. These influences include globalisation, massification and the development of technology.

Geyser (2004:140) refers to globalisation, internationalisation and massification as three major themes that have brought about rapid change in higher education. This view is supported by other authors (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007; Du Toit, 2011; Saunders, Brake, Griffiths & Thornton, 2004) who suggest that advances in technology have accelerated these changes. Various authors (Barnett & Coate, 2005; McWilliam, 2008; Geyser, 2004; Merriam *et al.,* 2007; Du Toit, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2004) also refer to the

unprecedented international growth in knowledge conception and production at a rate unknown in the past.

These changes require new ways of thinking and doing in the workplace, which emphasises the importance of preparing future leaders for both life (Carl, 2012) and labour (Bitzer & Botha, 2011). This study aimed to develop a context-specific curriculum framework for training present and future leaders of TVET colleges. This chapter provides a contextual framework for the study, underpinned by an investigation into the terms and concepts used throughout the study.

Many nations share a clear divide in post-school education between vocational and higher education (universities). Even though the terms for the vocational sector differ: TVET in South Africa, VET (vocational education and training) in many other countries or TAFE (technical and further education) in Australia, FE (further education) in the UK and community colleges in the USA, to single out a few, the further-higher distinction is normally 'a pyramid of institutions with universities at the apex' (McLaughlin & Mills, 2011:233). It needs to be highlighted that, unlike in most other countries where higher education refers broadly to post-school education and includes a variety of institutional types, in South Africa, following the mergers instigated by the then education minister, Kader Asmal, in 2002, higher education refers specifically to some kind of university: a traditional or comprehensive university or a university of technology. In South Africa, post-school simply means 'out of school' (Cloete, 2013b). Bringing the TVET colleges from the school sector into higher education started under former education minister, Naledi Pandor (Minister of National Education, 2004 – 2009), and the sector has been prioritised by the current minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande.

As will be discussed further in 1.5.3, TVET colleges, as post-school institutions, were positioned at the crossroads between schools, work and universities when the colleges were moved to the department of higher education and training. Even though TVET colleges share a sub-sector of the education system with universities, in essence they are very different institutions. The colleges' major client groups are the pre-employed, the employed and the unemployed, all of whom have exited formal schooling. So, in essence, the colleges differ from the school sub-sector as well. The scope of this study will be to focus on the colleges operating in the higher education sub-sector. The TVET colleges thus also have to become aware of the challenges that accompany their new roles amidst change and transformation in higher education. A brief description of three major trends in higher education which are also relevant to TVET colleges follows.

1.2   TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION THAT DRIVE CHANGE

The three major trends that drive change in higher education are globalisation, internationalisation and massification. Even though the focus of TVET colleges is not on higher education in the same way as universities, all three trends have an effect on the context of these colleges since their transfer to the higher education system.

1.2.1   Change driven by globalisation

Globalisation refers to major changes in the manufacturing sectors of most economies in the world. The focus has shifted to the manufacture of high-quality exports aimed at specific niche consumer markets, which has made innovation and the ability to reinvent products continuously essential (Kraak & Hall, 1999). The growing number of internet users has had an effect on globalisation (Kiran *et al.*, 2013) and its consequences are felt everywhere (Giddens, 2002). Pieterse (1994) believes that the world is becoming more uniform and standardised through a technological, commercial and cultural synchronisation. This has meant that South Africa has not only gained access to international expertise, but also to international social and cultural practices. This exposure is important to TVET college leaders if they wish to become global players since globalisation can broaden their terms of reference and influence their way of thinking and doing when benchmarked against international best practice.

Globalisation has moved skills development up the political agenda as it is seen as an important element of competitive advantage and a way of addressing inequality, while a lack of skills is seen as a major element of poverty (McGrath, 2005). Globalisation has thus put a great deal of pressure on the TVET college sector since training programmes must be responsive to the requirements of trade, technology and skill to satisfy a rapidly changing world economy. South Africa needs a highly skilled and innovative workforce and the TVET college is regarded as the 'key instrument available to the state to address these needs in terms of the programmes that they offer, the people they train and the community development initiatives that they facilitate' (Kraak & Hall, 1999:41).

1.2.2   Change driven by internationalisation

Internationalisation is a result of globalisation and refers to global access to global networks as sources of learning at home or abroad. International students who study at South African educational institutions, bring with them their own histories, cultures and perspectives. Internationalisation can take many forms such as co-taught courses, massive open online courses (MOOCs), international research projects or staff and learner exchanges. TVET colleges have recently been forming more and more international partnerships with

international educational institutions with the purpose of learning from other practices (FET Times, 2012).

1.2.3   Change driven by massification

Massification is one of the recent key changes in higher education. There is a move away from the idea of elitism, where only those who can afford to or who meet the necessary entrance requirements are able to enrol at a university, to an opening up of access to higher education to provide every member of a society with equal opportunity to education. Since the Second World War, there has been a growing demand to widen access to higher education (Guri-Rosenblit, Šebková & Teichler, 2007). The labour markets and social demands have necessitated teaching reforms and the relevance of curricula has also become a major challenge (Teichler, 1998). Higher education institutions need to become more heterogeneous because of diversity (Guri-Rosenblit *et al.*, 2007). The way in which massification has an influence on TVET colleges is that since the profile of the learners has changed to a more non-traditional learner with different motivations, competencies and work prospects (Teichler, 1998), modes of delivery at learning institutions have had to adapt to the various needs of these different and diverse groups of learners. How best to expand and diversify higher education systems, which includes TVET colleges, has become a crucial issue for policy makers at these institutions (Guri-Rosenblit *et al.*, 2007). Since enrolments are expected to grow substantially at TVET colleges by 2030, with increasing numbers of learners who do not all fit the traditional profile, TVET college leaders need to think and act differently to overcome potential resource challenges.

Higher education has already undergone rapid and far-reaching change which means that learning institutions must continually transform their access to knowledge and their curricula to reflect the new global realities. A knowledge-based society, rich in information, demands new technologies for access (Du Toit, 2011). Implicit in the contemporary Information Age is the routine access to knowledge as the first step in problem-solving (McWilliam, 2008). However, as the pace of change continues to accelerate, the Information Age is giving way to a successor, the Conceptual Age, which requires more sophisticated tools such as empathy, inventiveness and 'big-picture capabilities' (Pink, 2005:2).

These three related issues have major effects on higher education institutions, such as changed student profiles and changing approaches to programme development. Throughout the world, educational institutions are now re-examining their curriculum offerings in order to prepare diverse bodies of students adequately to cope with rapidly changing environments. It seems important that TVET colleges will have to reflect on these

altered expectations, thus requiring TVET college leaders to recognise these and adapt accordingly.

1.3   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Leadership development seems central to the effectiveness of educational organisations (Muijs, Harris, Lumby, Morrison & Sood, 2006). International research in the post-school vocational education and training (VET) sector has indicated connections between leadership and organisational performance. For instance, Drodge (2002) found that leadership styles of community college principals in the United States of America (USA) affect the ethos of colleges, which could in turn affect performance. Similarly, Cloud (2010) suggests that an effective leader improves the quality of an institution, which points to some agreement that leadership development may enhance institutional and individual effectiveness (Cloud, 2010).

In their studies of effective further education (FE) providers in the United Kingdom (UK), Muijs *et al.* (2006) found links between transformational leadership and improvements in teaching and learning. Recent literature (Clarke, 2009; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Simola, Barling & Turner, 2010; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Isopahkala-Bouret, 2008; Muijs *et al.*, 2006) inclines towards transformational leadership, which helps to transform individuals and organisations through an appeal to values and long-term goals. A new trend in leadership studies sees leadership as a more shared and distributive form of leadership where the leader is not seen as a single person but where leadership tasks are delegated to followers who also share in the running of the organisation (MacFarlane, 2014; Van Wart, 2011; Kezar, 2014; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Eddy, 2010; Yukl, 2010; Morse, 2008, among others). Morse (2008) believes that leadership can be found at all levels of the organisation and leaders appear rather to lead from the middle.

Internationally, there are many leadership development programmes in vocational education. In the UK, there is strong government support for leadership development in the VET sector (Muijs *et al.,* 2006) and in the USA, leadership development takes place at most community colleges (Robison, Sugar & Miller, 2010). In the latter instance, 70% of community college presidents have doctoral qualifications (Wallin, 2010; Robison *et al.,* 2010). There is also a strong emphasis on leadership development in the VE sector in Australia (Callan, Mitchell, Clayton & Smith, 2007). Organisations to promote VET leadership development exist in numerous countries since these countries recognise the importance of leadership development. However, there are no comparable TVET leadership development initiatives in South Africa.

Although various studies have focused on vocational-related aspects in the South African context during the last decade (Cloete, 2009; Perold, Cloete & Papier, 2012; Akoojee, Gewer & McGrath, 2005, among others), leadership development seems to be neglected even though leadership has been linked to VET performance (Akoojee *et al.,* 2005). As early as 1999, Kraak and Hall pointed out that the Green Paper on Further Education and Training (RSA, 1998) recognised the need to develop effective management and leadership skills. To date, however, there has been no formal leadership development strategy at the colleges.

Leadership development was again prioritised in South Africa as is evident in the statement in the Green Paper on Post-School Education and Training (RSA, 2012:21) that 'within three years, specific programmes to train existing and new [TVET] college managers also have to be developed'. These specific programmes are not mentioned in the subsequent White Paper (RSA, 2014), but it is still acknowledged that strong leadership at TVET colleges is important as many of the colleges are regarded as being dysfunctional. Expanding access at all the colleges will be hampered unless quality can also be improved, which has direct implications for the expectations placed on the leaders of these institutions. The White Paper (RSA, 2014:18) also recognises that college leadership at council and management levels is vital for ensuring that the system transforms in the desired direction since structural inequalities in the education system have to be tackled as a whole. This means that 'effective, efficient, dedicated and motivated leadership' (RSA, 2014:18) to provide the quality of education and training is required because of the greatly increasing numbers of enrolments at the colleges.

The White Paper (RSA, 2014:19) acknowledges that the quality of leadership is not as good as it should be at all colleges. In order to address this problem, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) envisages intensifying leadership development interventions at council and management levels in the short term. Where there are immediate problems, appropriate measures will be put in place to address these at each individual college. The White Paper also announced that DHET will partner universities and other competent institutions to develop and offer capacity-building programmes for senior managers at college level to help them perform their duties and provide effective leadership at their institutions on an ongoing basis. New principals and leaders will only be appointed if they have the necessary management training and experience. However, there is no mention of a long-term solution to the leadership development challenge. It is this gap that was addressed by this study.

1.4   PROBLEM FORMULATION

Post-school education world-wide has faced major changes that have implications for educational leaders in this sector. One of the biggest challenges in the South African context will be for TVET colleges to function at the same level of leadership as universities and universities of technology.

The leadership problem in the VET sector is exacerbated by the imminent retirement of many of the veteran leaders in South African TVET colleges, with the resultant loss of institutional knowledge and experience. This concern is shared internationally (Maguire, 2001; Shults, 2001; Boggs, 2003; Lovell, Crittenden, Stumpf & Davis, 2003; Campbell, Syed & Morris, 2010; Eddy, 2010; Lambert, 2011).

Against the background of a need for leadership development in VET, the research question for this study was therefore:

> *What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at technical and vocational education and training colleges in the Department of Higher Education and Training environment?*

The subsidiary questions were:

- What is the current status of leadership development in the TVET college sector?

- What kind of TVET college leader is needed to meet the challenges and demands of the future in the sector?

- What competencies (including knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes) will be needed by TVET college leaders to engage meaningfully in the new DHET environment?

The South African TVET college environment is examined in the next section.

1.5   THE POST-SCHOOL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING LANDSCAPE IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW

Research in the field of VET in South Africa has been neglected, and it is even more unlikely that any of the research has been written by someone with insider knowledge (McGrath, 2005). There is thus a paucity of published information available on the historical development of this sector prior to 2000.

1.5.1   The origins of technical and vocational education and training colleges

In Powell and Hall's (2000) quantitative survey of the technical colleges in South Africa, they established that there were 152 technical colleges in South Africa, with 232 delivery sites. These sites, which were widely distributed across the country, were located in most major towns and the colleges served rural, peri-urban, urban and metropolitan communities. Figure 1.1 indicates the geographical distribution of these colleges in 1998.

Number of colleges per province 1998

- Eastern Cape (26)
- Free State (11)
- Gauteng (33)
- KwaZulu-Natal (24)
- Mpumalanga (10)
- Northern Cape (6)
- Northern Province (14)
- North West (11)
- Western Cape (17)
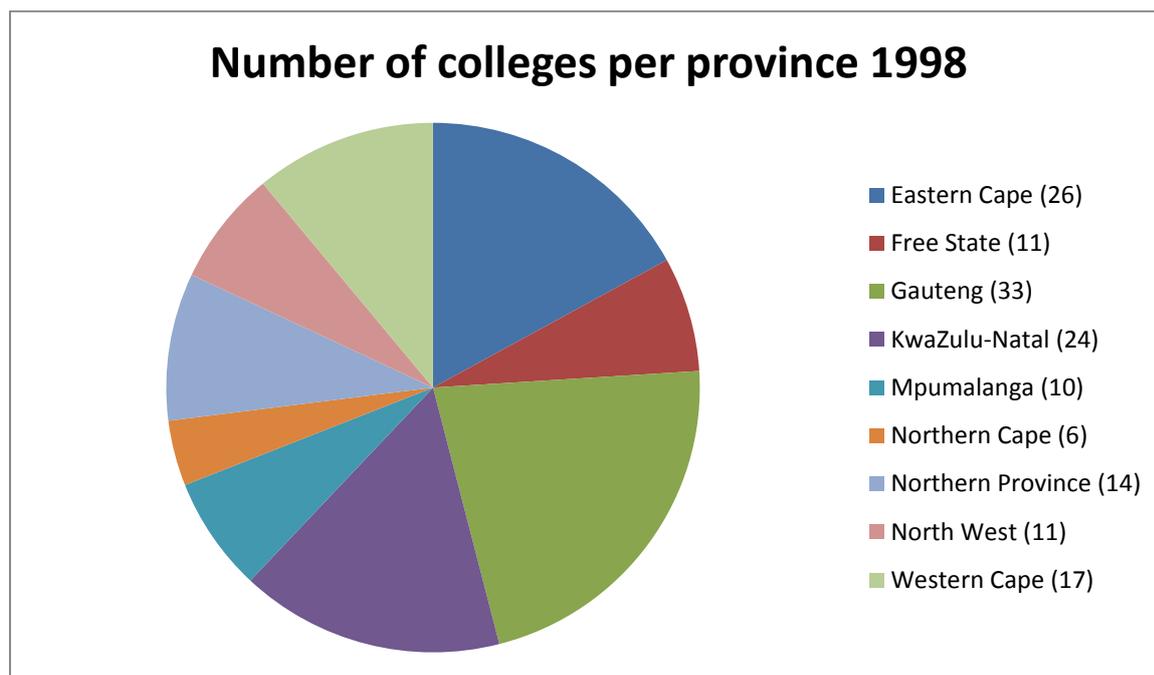
Figure 1.1   Geographical distribution of colleges per province in 1998 (adapted from Powell & Hall, 2000:19)

The Apprenticeship Act of 1922 heralded the development of the South African technical college sector to provide the theoretical training of employed (indentured) apprentices already engaged in practical on-the-job learning (Akoojee *et al.*, 2005). Some of these colleges were established to serve specific training needs of organisations such as the South African Defence Force and the Navy or to provide training in the rural areas (Powell & Hall, 2000). Other colleges were established to provide training for specific industries such as ISCOR (the early Iron and Steel Corporation, now known as Arcelor Mittal South Africa). Until 1994, the colleges were racially segregated. This historical diversity is reflected in the programmes offered by the individual institutions, the staff and student profile, the size of the institutions and the racial and gender profiles of the institutions (Powell & Hall, 2000). South African TVET colleges still have an extremely broad focus, offering education and training to three categories of learners: the pre-employed, employed and unemployed (Kraak & Hall, 1999; RSA, 2014).

For some time, the technical college sector has been considered the 'Cinderella' of the education and training system (Asmal, 2003; Cosser, McGrath, Badroodien & Botshabelo, 2003; Kraak, 2012), lacking the esteem of traditional schooling in South Africa. This sector still struggles to shake off its 'trade school' identity of the past (Kraak & Hall, 1999:10). Accordingly, school leavers do not choose to enrol at colleges as their first choice institution because of this negative perception, preferring to enrol at universities. Approximately three times as many students enter universities each year as those who enrol at colleges. This 'inverted pyramid' has been regarded as 'a major problem for the system and results in a workforce with serious shortages of artisanal and other mid-level skills' (RSA, 2012:9).

Leaders of these earlier colleges were generally authoritarian with strong racial and gender divisions. Kraak and Hall (1999) identified three modes of leadership styles during a study of the colleges in KwaZulu-Natal along a continuum which ranged from the old-school autocratic style of leadership, which included leaders at traditionally black and white colleges, to a more consultative and team-orientated leadership style, and finally to a passive style where the leader depended on the state for assistance.

Owing to adverse working conditions and a great deal of uncertainty, there has always been poor staff morale and low professional self-esteem amongst the lecturers who feel as though they are working on the fringe of formal schooling and higher education. Kraak and Hall (1999) found that there were no staff development strategies at any of the colleges in KwaZulu-Natal, and it can be assumed that this was the case at most colleges nationally. Even today, there are no incentives for staff to improve their qualifications as salary increases are no longer linked with improved qualifications. There are no career paths, and promotional opportunities are limited. The earlier merit payments and notch increases to acknowledge meritorious work have been shelved. The components of the old technical college management, which had been in place in the old dispensation, were not replaced with a new system with a new human resource (HR) policy. A moratorium was placed on the filling of vacant posts and new posts were created, which led to a large number of temporary posts and 'acting' appointments (Kraak & Hall, 1999:164), a situation that has persisted.

1.5.2 Times of great change

Some of the major contributions to change over the past 20 years were made by four successive national ministers of education who not only set out to destroy the structures of the apartheid regime, but attempted to build what they believed would be a new and better South Africa. Necessary but radical change was enforced and before the changes could

become entrenched practice at the colleges, the term of office of each new minister ended. The last 20 years have therefore been characterised by uncertainty for leaders in the sector.

Professor Kader Asmal's term of office as the new national Minister of Education (1999 – 2004) marked a period of unprecedented turbulence in the TVET college sector. It was during this time that the merging or amalgamation of various educational institutions took place at university and college level. The 152 independent colleges, each with its own corporate identity and culture, were transformed into 50 so-called mega colleges with multi-campuses. Constant organisational change triggered extreme emotions since staff feared job losses and had to adapt to extensive changes in conditions of service. At the time of the mergers that started in 2000, senior managers of these colleges had to manage operational, resource and other major challenges on an unprecedented scale. They were promised training when appointed in senior positions, but received little institutional support (Kraak & Hall, 1999).

In their study of a merging process of six colleges in Gauteng, Mestry and Bosch (2013:144) found that there had been 'a lack of conflict management skills, poor communication and lack of participative decision-making amongst the role players'. These factors are linked to an appropriate management style; in the absence thereof, the mergers resulted in anxiety, stress, frustration and uncertainty for both staff and the often untrained and ill-equipped managers (Mestry & Bosch, 2013). The entire structure of the new college and its practices had to change (Mestry & Bosch, 2013). Staff felt threatened and uncertain about their employment opportunities in the newly merged colleges. Change was also expected to happen overnight and there did not appear to be a long-term strategy. Few leaders had the experience to deal with these changes.

1.5.3   The move to higher education

Up until 2009, the Department of Education had been one department. This meant that before 2009, the TVET colleges had never been given a special focus as a post-school education and training sector but were aligned with the school system, from which the colleges differed radically. It was only after Dr Blade Nzimande's appointment in 2009, that the Department of Education was divided between two ministries. The TVET colleges were moved away from the school sector (the latter of which now belonged to the Department of Basic Education) to share DHET with the universities since the education ministry aimed to provide a single, seamless, integrated system of education and training (RSA, 2014).

With the publication of the Green Paper (RSA, 2012), the colleges were placed in the spotlight with the expectation that they were to increase enrolments from 650 000 to 2.5 million by 2030 (RSA, 2014). At the launch of the Decade of the Artisan in 2014, Dr

Nzimande announced that every TVET college would be implementing artisan development strategies and it would be with these combined efforts that the target of delivering 30 000 artisans by 2030 would be met (FET Times, 2014). Little has been said about how these learners will be accommodated on the campuses and how the dramatically changed teaching and learning environment will be supported financially.

As a strategic document of the government of South Africa, the White Paper (RSA, 2014) is focused on using the education and training system to achieve government's objectives – namely to address the legacy of apartheid. But it is vague on how this aim will be achieved. The quality of education offered and consequently the success of the students are the most important success indicators of a college. Success not only requires a 'well-educated, capable and professional teaching staff' (RSA, 2014:16), but inspired, capable and effective leaders. Without leadership development in the necessary knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes, leaders in the TVET college sector will struggle to meet their mandate.

1.6   SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The broad focus of this study was thus on the need for leadership development in the TVET college sector. Since a contextualised, custom-designed education and training programme for TVET college leaders was identified as a real gap, the narrow focus of this study was on the development of a custom-designed post-graduate curriculum framework which could equip TVET college leaders, present and future, with the necessary competencies to function in the DHET environment. It is hoped that this framework will contribute towards the development of a new TVET college-specific leadership qualification which will be recognised and embraced by DHET, following the example that has been set by many countries elsewhere with more established VET sectors.

In the next chapter, relevant concepts and theories specific to the type of leadership needed by a leader of a TVET college in South Africa today will be examined. This is followed in Chapter 3 by an exploration of some of the knowledge and learning theories as well as the need for societally and culturally influenced transformative learning in a changing environment. Engeström's (1987) version of cultural historical activity theory or CHAT, which has its roots in the cultural historical theories and research of Vygotsky (1981) and Leont'ev (1981) will be examined. The TVET college will be described as an activity system in order to identify the elements of influence within the TVET colleges and the need to understand the inter-relational conflicts, contradictions and potential transformations within the activity system of the TVET college. By explaining the components and internal relations, the structure and dynamic relations of this system are elucidated. The development of the TVET colleges is rooted in history especially in terms of the diversity and

multiplicity inherent in South African society as has been indicated above. Each historical phase has required a different type of leader with a need for different tools for mediating change. This fits into the cultural-historical view of activity theory.

For the purpose of this study, interactive qualitative analysis or IQA (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004) has been selected as a suitable methodology for the data collection and analysis phase of this study which is explained briefly in the next section.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:141) define research design as a 'plan of action'. These authors argue that there must be a research design logic; in other words, there must be coherence between the nature of the study and the selection of the research methodology.

There are a number of reasons why IQA was chosen as a suitable research methodology. The first is that IQA is consistent with activity theory since the latter is situated within the dynamics of the formal organisation, in this case, the TVET college. Secondly, IQA is a methodology for understanding how a group or constituency derives meaning from a phenomenon. Activity theory proposes rules for interaction and implications for the division of labour of a group. In IQA, the selection of the two groups or consistencies was made according to this division of labour at the TVET colleges, namely senior and middle management. Thirdly, the important dimensions of the phenomenon, the themes (called 'affinities' in IQA) and relationships among the themes or affinities are described in the process. Like IQA, activity theory applies the constructs of phenomenology and systems thinking to an organisation.

IQA is focused within the interpretive paradigm (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). Babbie and Mouton (2006) define the interpretive paradigm as a meta-theory, which is focused on interpreting how humans derive meaning from their behaviour in the study of human phenomena. According to Henning *et al.* (2004), in interpretive research, the research design must make provision for data that are of such a quality that they can be described, interpreted and explained. IQA is a systems-based qualitative methodology grounded in systems theory (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). IQA uses an interpretive approach by means of identifying focus groups and conducting focus group and individual interviews with these different groups or constituencies to gain an understanding of an identified problem. This study aimed to capture the views of the participants (also called 'constituents' in this study) in an open-ended way with the purpose of analysing and interpreting their worldviews.

The IQA approach used in this study will be described in greater depth in chapter 4.

1.7.1   Defining the target population and sampling

The main unit of analysis was the main research question which was '*What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development of leaders at technical and vocational education and training colleges in the Department of Higher Education and Training environment?*' Participants in the study needed to be selected with the aim of shedding light on this question (see Henning *et al.*, 2004).   In IQA terms, participants in or constituents of such a study must be selected according to their proximity to the problem and their power over the problem or phenomenon (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). If comparisons are to be made, there need to be differences between the compared groups (called constituencies in IQA terms) based on their proximity to the problem and power over the problem. The group therefore had to be leaders in the TVET college sector who had some knowledge about what a leader needs to be, and what knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes he or she needs to have to be able to lead effectively in the sector.

In order to provide a comparative element to the study, current TVET college leaders in top leadership positions, consisting of chief executive officers (CEOs) or principals and their deputies, were included in Group 1.   Future TVET college leaders or present mid-level leaders or middle managers, operating as campus, academic or programme managers, were included in Group 2.

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study so that they are representative of the target population from which they have been selected (Henning *et al.*, 2004).   Babbie and Mouton (2006:164) define sampling as 'the process of selecting observations'. This study made use of purposive sampling. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:114) describe purposive sampling as the handpicking of participants who are to be included in the sample. Researchers may choose the participants according to whether they typically display the characteristics required for the sample.   The participants were purposively selected to represent leadership at as many of the colleges and the provinces as possible.

In this study, the group from which the sample was selected were all employed by a TVET college and fell into one of two groups: senior or middle management. This meant that new and future managers at the TVET colleges were also invited to participate in the focus group interviews and the selection was made according to whoever was available and willing to participate at the time, until the required sample was obtained. Purposive sampling was also used to select individual interviewees.   Respondents from all four focus groups were selected as well as six additional respondents who had not attended the workshops but fitted

the profile of the two main groupings, namely senior and middle managers. The reason for this selection is described in Chapter 5.

The data collection, analysis and presentation will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

1.7.2   Validity and reliability

Validity as a requirement of research is worthless if the instrument does not measure what it sets out to measure. The researcher must strive to optimise validity. In qualitative research, validity can be addressed by 'honesty, depth, richness and scope as well as triangulation and the objectivity of the research' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:133). In IQA terms, internal validity is the 'extent to which a System Influence Diagram (mindmap) is consistent with the individual hypotheses comprising it' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17). IQA defines external validity as 'the extent to which mindmaps constructed by independent samples of the same constituency on the same phenomenon are similar' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17). Babbie and Mouton (2001) suggest that controls must be built in to ensure validity of the results. The IQA protocols ensure that these controls are present.

Validity can be addressed by presenting data in terms of the respondents rather than the researcher by seeing and reporting the situation through their eyes (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Participants offer different points of view when identifying words that can be clustered into affinities or themes through consensus of the group. The same consensual process identifies the relationships among affinities. In the interviews in my study, the group conceptual map of the problem or SID was reviewed and verified for credibility by the individuals, most of whom were part of the original group. The description of the data is therefore factual and accurate. In the interpretation thereof, a serious attempt was made to capture what the participants themselves meant; thus the findings (see Chapter 5) describe the phenomenon accurately.

Through the notion of trustworthiness, the researcher gets close to the respondents and earns their trust to the extent that they ensure that their findings are worthy of attention and notice (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). They feel free to speak openly. By using their own words which they offer freely in an atmosphere of trust, the information supplied is reliable, dependable and credible in order to be considered valid. I believe that I gained the participants' trust and that it is evident from the results obtained in the interviews. Participants' conversations were recorded and transcribed verbatim and can be checked for validity. The recordings reflect the views of the respondents and not those of the researcher. According to this approach, the researcher cannot distort what was said in the interviews.

Validity and reliability cannot be ensured completely (Cohen *et al.*, 2007*),* but every attempt was made to focus on these aspects throughout the study. The researcher needs to make

every effort to ensure that the instrument used measures what it sets out to measure. Descriptions, analyses and interpretation need to be presented as authentically as possible. All accounts need to be factual and not selective or distorted (Cohen *et al.*, 2007*).* IQA ensures that all these criteria are met by means of triangulation or a multi-method approach utilising both focus group and individual interviews. Triangulation (using more than one method of data collection) is a powerful way of demonstrating validity in qualitative research since reliance on one method may cause bias or distort the researcher's picture of the reality being investigated (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

Validity was furthermore demonstrated by ensuring that the SIDs of both focus group interviews were verified through individual interviews. The resultant descriptions were backed up or grounded by contextualisation. Through a process of induction and deduction, theory was induced and tested. The SIDs of the groups or constituencies and the individuals are the theory or 'a set of relationships from which hypotheses can be deduced' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17). The theory represents the perception or the 'mental model' of the phenomenon with respect to the group or individual (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17).

Reliability means that the data would be the same if the method of collection were repeated under the same conditions (Babbie & Mouton, 2006). IQA ensures that this will be the case because of the rigorous structure of this methodology. The results from each group were compared by providing clear, detailed descriptions, allowing others to assess the generalisability of the findings*.* By comparing and validating data through interviews, the researcher attempted to maintain the reliability of the research. In this study, the SIDs were distinguished more by their similarity than their differences in terms of the affinities and the relationships among the affinities.

Northcutt and McCoy (2004) regard dependability as synonymous with reliability since the findings, interpretations and recommendations support the available data. It is thus the degree of accuracy (Cohen *et al.,* 2007) that is important. In this study, the same format, structure and sequence for both the focus groups and the interviews were followed. It is especially important to ask the questions in the same way (Cohen *et al.,* 2007). The coding of the responses was also consistent.

The various SIDs produced by the groups and the SIDs produced by the individuals during the interviews can be characterised more by their similarities than their differences in terms of both the affinities and the relationships among the elements which created the SIDs. The principles of IQA support constructs such as 'credibility, transferability and dependability while highlighting … the concepts of validity and reliability through public, accessible and accountable procedures' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17). This is true of this study. The

affinities were named by the focus group interviews and then validated by the individual interviewees as described in Chapter 5. The relationships that were identified were also tested and confirmed with the individual interviewees. SIDs produced for this study can be repeated by another researcher who will get the same systems topography if the rules and protocols of IQA have been followed. This study therefore passes the tests of reliability.

There is also an audit trail which can confirm the validity of the data: the process notes in the form of flipchart recordings, the cards which were grouped to form affinities, the names of the affinities, the individual affinity relationship tables (ARTs) recording the relationships among affinities and the interrelationship diagrams (IRDs) to which the results of the ARTs were transferred. The IRDs inform the construction of the SIDs. The recordings of respondents at the interviews as well as the verbatim transcriptions are also available, as are the interview axial code tables (ACTs). Examples of the ARTs, IRDs and SIDs are provided in Chapter 5. An example of an ACT has been included as Addendum 4.

Similar respondents in a similar context should be able to produce similar findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This is true of this study. Validity and dependability demonstrate that the study is reliable and would thus have credibility. The presence of validity and reliability are sufficient to establish dependability (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Owing to the rigorousness of the protocols of IQA, a different researcher would obtain the same results.

In IQA, rigour refers to procedures for both data collection and analysis. These procedures are public and replicable without depending on the elements, which means that IQA rules for constructing the system are 'independent of the content or nature of the elements themselves' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:38). It also means that any two researchers who are presented with the same focus group data, will reach the same systems representations that are topologically identical, provided that they adhere to the rules of rationalisation regardless of personal bias or the meaning of the elements. Such representations are possible since the participants identify the elements as well as the relationships among the elements. Through rationalisation, three different versions of each system can be produced: 'a Cluttered SID (high in complexity but low in simplicity), Uncluttered SID (high in simplicity but low in complexity) and Clean SID (simplicity is highlighted and complexity is represented but in the background)' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:38). This means that the visual representation of the system followed specific rules in the rationalisation of the system from the Uncluttered to a Clean SID format, by removing redundant relationships, identifying feedback loops and rationalising conflicts (see Chapter 4 for an explanation of these activities in IQA with a tabular or graphic representation of the findings in Chapter 5).

1.7.3 Bias

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), bias could cause invalidity. Babbie and Mouton (2006) define bias as the quality of the measuring device that could misrepresent what is being measured or the researcher's bias. Babbie and Mouton (2001:270) regard the researcher as the 'main instrument' in the research process. The subjectivity, opinions, attitudes and perspectives of the researcher can bring bias into the research study. The challenge for the researcher is to make a genuine attempt to see things from the participants' point of view and not to allow subjectivity or bias to influence the descriptions or interpretation of the data. The connection between the researcher and the phenomenon continues to cause concern in qualitative analysis. IQA's response to this is to break down the research process into stages and then 'vary the nature and extent of researcher engagement by stage' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:292). The researcher's engagement is highest at the design stage but decreases during the data collection stage and is relatively minimal during analysis (which is largely driven by protocol or rules) and then increases during the interpretive stage.

The researcher uses mainly induction (seeing patterns and organising ideas into topics) during the design stage; both induction and deduction in the collection phase (facilitating participants through the inductive and axial coding of data); deduction during the analysis phase (by following the analysis protocols); and finally, induction and deduction in the interpretation stage (following the rules of comparison and seeing connections in the larger patterns). IQA is designed to help the researcher facilitate these different thought processes at the various stages by means of the protocols available for each stage. The mindmaps (SIDs) are the foundation for interpretation, the final stage of the study.

To explore the stages further, since affinities are identified, clarified and described by participants themselves, it should leave little room for researcher bias. The IQA rules for constructing a system (rationalisation) are 'independent of the content or nature of the elements themselves' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:38). With IQA, the interviews verify the group's worldview independently of researcher bias, thus validating the data. The actual words of the interviewee provide the descriptions of each of the affinities. This means that the procedures for both data collection and analysis do not depend upon the nature or meaning of the elements themselves. In other words, two different researchers, irrespective of their personal biases, presented with the same focus group data and adhering to the rules of rationalisation, will produce visual representations in the same way. The topology of the system will be identical and replicable by yet another researcher since IQA allows the participants in the research to identify both the elements and the relationships among the elements themselves. By applying the rules of rationalisation, they are the ones who are able to produce the visual representation of the system that they have created.

The IQA process is therefore a rigorous one that curbs bias during the data generation and analysis phases. In this study I applied IQA's rigorous protocols to each of the stages of the analysis of the data, namely the grouping and naming of the affinities, the design of the Interrelationship Diagram (IRD) and the determining of the SID (more detail can be found in Chapters 4 and 5).

Cohen *et al.* (2007) suggest that purposive sampling has a greater risk of bias as the selection itself is already skewed. IQA's protocol for selecting participants is based on selecting participants who have something in common and therefore have something to say about it.   The pre-selection of identified and formulated criteria for the selection of respondents is regarded by De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport *(*2011:392) as being of 'cardinal importance'.   In this study, the participants who have working experience in leadership positions at the TVET colleges were selected according to specific criteria. Purposive sampling was thus essential to this study as I had to target specific 'knowledgeable' people, those with an in-depth knowledge of particular issues (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:115), in this case, leadership issues at TVET colleges, to achieve the objectives of this study.   I was concerned with acquiring in-depth information from those who were in a position to give it.

1.8   ASSUMPTIONS

The researcher must be mindful of assumptions which come with a particular philosophical or experiential bias when organising and analysing the discourse (Henning *et al.*, 2004). Regarding the long history that I have with the vocational education and training sector, it could have been easy to suggest a curriculum framework that was influenced by my own experience as a manager in the sector. This is another reason why IQA was selected as the methodology as the rigorous nature of IQA guards against possible bias. The affinities that were generated to inform the curriculum framework were generated from the experiences of the participants in this study. These affinities were then verified through individual interviews with the researcher. No leading questions were asked but each respondent was asked to tell me what he or she thought each affinity meant and whether he or she agreed with the affinities selected by the focus group interviews. The respondent was allowed to speak freely without interruption, except when asked to clarify what had been said.

The suggestion in the White Paper (RSA, 2014) that most TVET colleges are dysfunctional led to the assumption that with a different kind of leadership, many of these colleges could be turned around. Leadership theory has evolved throughout history. A type of shared, democratic and transformational theory of leadership appeared to be best suited to this study. Soon after the completion of this study, there may be a new theory that is equally

applicable to the study than the one that has been suggested. This can be viewed as a limitation created by the passage of time.

It was also assumed that constituents were open and truthful during the focus group sessions and interviews and that the data represent the true thoughts of these individuals. The rigorous nature of IQA ensures that the data have been represented as accurately as possible.

1.9   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Each stage of qualitative research raises ethical issues (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). These issues are concerned with anonymity, confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Through informed consent individuals are allowed to choose whether they wish to participate in an investigation after first having been informed of the facts that might influence their decision to participate (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Permission must thus be gained from the participants to be a part of a study. The requirements for ethical clearance of the Research Ethics Committee: Humaniora at Stellenbosch University were met (see Addendum 1) and written permission for the research was obtained from all the participants who would take part in the focus group interviews (see Addendum 2). Verbal consent to take part in the individual interviews was obtained from the participants before the interviews took place. All conditions were thus met.

1.10   OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

In the following chapters, relevant leadership theory, as well as the type of leadership that is regarded as being relevant in this context, is explored. The social environment that influences the development of such a framework is sketched. By using activity theory (Engeström, 1987) – also known as cultural historical activity theory or CHAT – as a conceptual framework, the public TVET college sector is located and examined as an activity system that has change and transformation as its key themes. Finally, the study offers an insider's perspective into an envisaged curriculum framework for leadership development. The study concludes with possible implications of such a curriculum framework for the development of the type of leader that the South African DHET envisages for transforming the public TVET college sector.

The dissertation is therefore divided into six parts, namely:

- Orientating the research that was conducted, introducing and clarifying concepts used in the study, and providing an overview of the educational landscape in which the TVET colleges function (Chapter 1);

- Examining the theories of leadership, especially leadership in educational and public sector organisations, with a special focus on the leadership style that is perceived as being ideally the best suited to the public TVET college leader of the future. The reason why leadership development in the TVET college sector is necessary is highlighted and international approaches to leadership development are also explored (Chapter 2);

- Defining curriculum and its associated terms and concepts which influence the design and development of a curriculum framework. The current educational environment influencing curriculum design and development is also sketched. Activity theory is used as a theoretical framework to examine the TVET college as an activity system and to explore concepts affecting the TVET college from an activity theory point of view (Chapter 3);

- Explaining IQA as a methodology for obtaining the data necessary for this study (Chapter 4);

- Describing, analysing and interpreting the data that were obtained by means of the IQA study as well as how this interpretation fits into an activity theory framework (Chapter 5); and

- Forming conclusions and suggesting possible implications with regard to the proposed curriculum framework as the mediating artefact of the activity system of the TVET college envisaged by this study (Chapter 6).

1.11   CONCLUSION

This study thus aimed to develop a context-specific curriculum framework for TVET college leaders in South Africa. This chapter provided an overview of the context within which this study took place. It also described the motivation, research questions, research design and the target population and sample group that were used. It summarised the main assumptions about the study. Ethical considerations were also accounted for in this chapter. This introductory chapter thus provided the background which supports the following chapters, starting with an examination of the various theories of leadership that have evolved over time. The purpose of Chapter 2 is to examine the types of leadership and leadership development which will be appropriate for equipping leaders of the South African TVET colleges with the necessary knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes to enable them to lead these colleges effectively as required of them in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 2

PERSPECTIVES ON LEADERSHIP

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the context of the South African public TVET colleges was described. In times of constant change – as has been experienced in the sector for the past 20 years – leaders in the sector have been faced with many challenges. As research has shown that effective leadership is essential for organisations to succeed so that leaders are produced 'by design rather than by default' (Falk, 2003:202), some form of leadership development in this sector might be helpful.

Leadership is not an easy concept to define as it is best understood in the context of those who practice it (Gleeson & Knights, 2008). A definition could be based on one's personal preference or one's particular situation or experience. Gentry, Eckert, Munusamy, Stawiski and Martin (2014:85) note that leadership competencies can be seen 'as the result of a leader's experience, wisdom and ability to perform effectively on leadership tasks that are presented to him or her in an organisational context'.

Leadership in organisations has become increasingly important as a 'key differentiator for success' (Gentry *et al*., 2014:83) while leadership and leadership development are seen as being increasingly crucial for developing the effectiveness of educational organisations (Muijs *et al*., 2006). Even though the relationship between leadership and leadership development does not automatically imply organisational improvement, it is understandable that leadership development aimed at organisational improvement would be most effective in changing leadership behaviours (Muijs *et* al., 2006). Gentry *et al*. (2014) agree that change management should be at the forefront of leadership development initiatives. The purpose of this study was thus to develop a curriculum framework for effective leadership development of present and future TVET college leaders.

The need for societal and economic change and transformation has resulted in increasing interest in the VET sector internationally. In this chapter, the acronym VET is used when referring to post-school vocational education and training in general, while FE is used to refer to VET specifically in the UK, TAFE to refer to VET in Australia, and TVET to refer to VET in South Africa.

The growing need for responsiveness and flexibility in the VET sector has not only increased the workload of leaders in this sector, but has resulted in challenges that can only be overcome with the relevant knowledge and skills. There appears to be a close relationship

between leadership challenges and leadership competencies in that 'the latter are needed to deal with or master the former' (Gentry *et al.*, 2014:92). It is thus possible that if the challenges that leaders face are known, the content area necessary for leadership development could be narrowed down.

Before focusing on leadership challenges that require specific knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes in VET institutions, this chapter first provides an overview of various leadership theories. Five major leadership theories are outlined, of which three are well established, namely the 'trait' theories, the 'behaviour' theories and the 'contingency' theories of leadership (Falk, 2003:193). A fourth grouping, namely transactional and transformational leadership, which includes charismatic leadership, is also well known. A fifth grouping is what Falk (2003:193) calls 'an emerging theory of enabling leadership', also referred to as participative, distributive, shared or democratic leadership. In this theory of leadership the relationship between subordinates (or followers) and leaders comes to the fore as the role of leadership in this format can and should be shared in an organisation for it to be effective in times of transformation and change. Leadership can thus take place anywhere within an organisation. This type of leadership generally appears to be the most effective for VET institutions (Muijs *et al.*, 2006; Callan, Mitchell, Clayton & Smith, 2007; Eddy, 2010; Nevarez, Wood & Penrose, 2013; Vargas, 2013).

What some researchers (Foley & Conole, 2003; Callan *et al.*, 2007; Quinlan, 2014) have identified as tensions or challenges in the VET sector will be explored since they have a direct bearing on the complexity of the leadership role at TVET colleges. These tensions refer to the dichotomy that leaders face in this unique sector where leaders need to learn to balance a number of contrasting priorities and responsibilities. While leadership practices related to the five historical theoretical groupings of leadership are relevant to the TVET colleges, the often conflicting priorities are also relevant to TVET institutions. Since this study is about leadership in South African public TVET educational institutions, these dichotomies also need to be recognised. Each situation requires a different focus on aspects of leadership which should be recognised when designing a curriculum framework for leaders of public TVET colleges in South Africa since the curriculum cannot be designed to be a one-size-fits-all framework, relevant to all leaders in all contexts.

The chapter concludes by outlining existing development of VET leaders in other parts of the world which may cast some light on what knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes the rest of the world considers relevant to VET leadership development.

As this study focuses on all levels of leadership, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of management and leadership since these terms are used throughout this chapter.

2.2 THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The matter of leadership versus management has been debated since the 1970s and although these debates have remained unresolved (Bass & Stodgill, 1990; Bush, 2007), some distinctions have been made. The main distinction seems to be that a leader is someone who is visionary, inspires followers and has a special obligation to change an organisation's direction and culture, while a manager's work is more task-orientated and operational and concentrates on fulfilling general management functions, like financial or human resource management, amongst many others (Bass & Stodgill, 1990; Tichy & Devanna, 1985; Callan, 2001). This distinction has also been supported by the participants of this study (see Chapter 5). Falk (2003:202) sums the distinction up as follows: [D]esigning is a leadership function, while responding is a management function.' The two roles also seem to overlap functionally and have thus generally been used synonymously since a leader has to manage and a manager also has to lead (Bass & Stodgill, 1990; Morse, 2008; Van Wart, 2001). In this study, the notion that the lines between leadership and management are blurred since leadership happens at any level in the organisation has been supported.

Callan (2001:10) suggests that while management is involved with dealing with 'complexity and the present', leadership is concerned with the establishment of a 'compelling vision, direction and a plan for the future'. Tichy and Devanna (1985) contend that managers maintain the balance of operations in an organisation while leaders are characterised as individuals who create new approaches and imagine new areas to explore. Leaders also plan and maintain order, while managers can also inspire staff in their departments. The two roles blend into one other with subtle differences between the two; therefore overlaps are bound to happen. The terms 'leaders' and 'managers' and 'leadership' and 'management' have thus all been used in this study and a distinction made at the level of leadership, such as top-level leadership or mid-level leadership. Leadership at mid-level management has also been called middle management. This stance is supported within the VET sector, where leadership and management have been recognised as different but overlapping concepts, mostly without distinguishing between the two in a practical sense (Foley & Conole, 2003). This view is consistent with the one taken in the South African TVET college

context where the White Paper refers to 'improving TVET colleges' management and governance' (RSA, 2014:xii) without any mention of leadership development in this context.

Similarly to TAFE institutions (Foley & Conole, 2003:25), South African TVET institutions make a distinction among three levels of leadership and management in the organisation, namely the directorate (Principal/Director/CEO and deputies who make up the executive or top level of leadership), senior and middle management (other formal levels of management according to the organogram) and staff (teaching staff, support staff and administrative officers). Managers in TAFE institutions who have responsibilities at different levels are regarded as having a leadership role which is similar to the South African situation. Falk (2003:196) claims that those 'labelled "leaders" are also required to manage' and it is for this reason that TVET college leaders at different levels of leadership have been included in this study.

The various theories of leadership are examined in the next section.

2.3   LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership theories illustrate how leaders operated in different times and contexts (Eddy, 2010). The history of leadership studies can be divided into a number of periods depending on the dominant philosophy of the time. These periods are described chronologically in this section as the evolution of leadership theory can serve as a backdrop to this study and position South African public TVET colleges in a context that highlights the need for a specific focus of leadership which would be more effective for these colleges. Many of the themes during the chronological periods described below have been integrated at different stages and some disregarded altogether in modern times. There are two distinguishable phases in the chronology of leadership theories, what Collinson and Collinson (2009) refer to as 'heroic' leadership theories and 'post-heroic' leadership theories. This differentiation is used as a basis for positioning the different theoretical leadership theories. Leadership theories that are more suitable to TVET college leaders are examined in 2.3.3.

2.3.1   Heroic Leadership theories

In the 19th century, the notion of the 'Great Man' or 'heroic leader' dominated leadership theory. It was believed that a leader had exceptional characteristics which had an impact on history. The belief was that only a few very rare individuals in any society at any time have unique characteristics which shape history (Van Wart, 2011; Bass & Stodgill, 1990). In the early 20th century, the style of leadership was hierarchical and authoritative. Leadership studies centred on positional leaders who used autocratic rather than democratic approaches but, according to Muijs *et al.* (2006), authoritarian leadership tends not to last. In the early days, the locus of decision-making was directive rather than participative (Bass,

1985). From 1900 to 1950, the trait perspective dominated. It was believed that leaders were born with certain shared traits and characteristics that were typical of leadership. In the trait theory of leadership, the focus is on the leader. This leader was usually visualised as being male and his internal qualities usually reflected stereotypical masculine values such as boldness, strength, vigour and power (Eddy, 2010; Gentry *et al.*, 2014). A list of traits was drawn up, which became quite lengthy over time (Van Wart, 2011). Even though it is no longer believed that leaders are simply born to be great leaders, it is still acknowledged that specific attributes of leaders may be necessary but are not sufficient for effective leadership (Falk, 2003). Leaders today can also learn many of these characteristics through leadership development.

For more than 30 years Kouzes and Posner (2011) conducted research into what qualities were the most sought after in leaders that people throughout the world would be prepared to follow. They found a great deal of consistency in their findings. They narrowed the desirable values (personal traits or characteristics) of a leader down to three broad or meta-categories:

1. Integrity, which includes truthfulness, trustworthiness, having character and convictions;

2. Competence, which refers to being capable, productive and efficient; and

3. Leadership, which includes being inspiring, decisive and providing direction.

Kouzes and Posner's (2011) survey showed that the majority of their respondents looked for and admired leaders who were honest, forward-looking, inspiring and competent. They also found that honesty is the most important of these four competencies. People will follow someone who is truthful, ethical and principled and thus worthy of their trust. It becomes reciprocal as followers are inspired, loyal and committed.

An ethical dimension was only introduced in leadership studies in the 1970s. This approach to leadership implies that leaders should keep the best interests of followers in mind or that authority and influence are derived from 'defensible conceptions of what is right or good' (Bush, 2007:400). Schwella (2013) states that unethical leadership happens when a leader cannot distinguish between right and wrong, putting his or her own needs above the needs of the followers and failing to lead in the interest of the public good. Quinlan (2014) found that personal integrity and trustworthiness are the most valued characteristics of an educational leader. This view is evident in Greenleaf's (1998) servant leadership theory, which is still relevant today. Servant leaders recognise that the people on the ground do valuable work for the organisation and rely on expertise and informational power rather than the power that comes with their positions (Buskey, 2014).

Leadership as a set of behaviours was also mooted during the 1970s. Kouzes and Posner (2011) found that effective leadership behaviours include being visionary, being able to articulate that vision as well as being directional and goal-driven. By being forward-looking, the leader provides future direction for the organisation. Constituents admire and respect a leader who is dynamic, uplifting, enthusiastic, positive and optimistic. Enthusiasm is contagious and sharing the dream is inspiring. A competent leader is someone who is capable and effective. This person can set realistic goals and know how to achieve them. He or she gets things done and develops a winning track record. This leader does not need to have the level of expertise of his or her constituents, but needs to have knowledge of the organisation, how it operates and who its people are before making any changes or decisions. To demonstrate capability, leaders need to be able to inspire, challenge, enable and encourage constituents.

However, the focus of these behaviour characteristics or leadership styles is still on leaders and not on leadership. There does not appear to be a single leadership style that is adequate for meeting all the complex requirements of a VET institution, but it is known that the leadership style of college principals affects the ethos of the organisation, and possibly the performance of the college (Drodge, 2002). Participants of a survey in Australia on how leaders saw their work confirmed the complexity of their work. They equated their leadership roles with 'being a magician' and 'running a small country with several and distinct cultures', to 'being on a roller coaster', 'juggling with lots of balls', 'skating on thin ice' and 'steering a ship that is slowly moving forward because the current is moving very fast' (Coates, Meek, Brown, Friedman, Noonan & Mitchell, 2013:822-824). Leadership courses that rely solely on leadership styles are not adequate for leaders who need to apply strategies for solutions to future challenges (Falk, 2003). A heroic theory of leadership behaviour or style would not be sufficient for coping with such diverse situations.

From 1950, it was acknowledged that context or the situation affects leaders. This led to the development of the contingency perspective, concerning how leaders respond to circumstances they face. Here leadership is always seen as situational and relational where the leader matches his or her leadership style to the situational demands (Falk, 2003). From the time of its introduction, Fiedler's (1966) Contingency Theory of Leadership was at the centre of controversy (Strube & Garcia, 1981; Peters, Hartke & Pohlmann, 1985) as followers appeared to react better in situations where there were autocratic leaders than followers in more democratic environments. Today, it is acknowledged that leadership competencies are affected by many contextual factors, whether they are individual or organisational (Gentry *et al.*, 2014). Greater allowance is made for the significance of context but, with the contingency theory, the focus is still on the leader. These three

leadership theories, the trait, behaviour and contingency theories, have been criticised for being too 'leader-centric' since they focus on the impact the leader's traits or behaviours in various contexts have on the attitudes and behaviours of subordinates or followers. These leadership theories are therefore regarded as unidirectional models of leadership. The fourth dimension of leadership, namely transformational leadership, introduces the post-heroic theories of leadership.

2.3.2   Post-heroic Leadership theories

While Howell and Shamir (2005) agree that the trait, behaviour and contingency theories of leadership focus more on a leader-centric model of leadership with a heroic bias, this bias can be corrected by focusing on the followers' role in leadership. They contend that more research on the follower's influence in the relationship is necessary.

From the late 1970s, transactional and transformational leadership started moving away from the more leader-centric theories of leadership. Transactional or negotiated leadership involves a transaction or exchange between the leader and his or her followers, or those who agree to be led (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). The leader influences followers to act through compliance and transactions (Eddy, 2010). These transactions mean that followers can gain in some way for their efforts. The motivation to perform or act can take the form of promises of rewards and benefits. Transactional leaders rely on certain types of power to reach their goals, namely legitimate reward or punishment. They administer and adjust incentives to motivate constituents to perform well (Van Wart, 2011). However, once the reward has been removed, motivation for compliance may disappear if followers have not identified with the underlying value system of the leader (Eddy, 2010).

Transformational leadership emerged in the late 1970s and is still popular today because it is regarded as being effective especially in educational institutions (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). Transformational leadership has been defined differently over time, but it is usually described as being 'leadership that transforms individuals and organisations through an appeal to values and long-term goals' (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). This theory of leadership focuses on the role that leaders play in promoting both personal and organisational change while focusing on motivation and performance of individual employees or followers.

Burns (1978) was the first person to use the term 'transforming leadership'. He put transactional leadership at one pole of the continuum and transforming leadership at the other (Seltzer & Bass, 1990:695). However, his focus is still mainly on the leader (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Bass (1985) saw transactional leadership as a lower-order skill where followers may change if their need for safety and security has been removed, so that they can raise the level of their needs and wants to, say, safety and security, similar to Maslow's

hierarchy of needs. Bass (1985) saw transformational leadership as more of a high-order skill where followers' concerns may be elevated to a need for recognition and achievement. The lower-order skills develop as a result of leadership dependent on an exchange process or transaction, but higher-order improvement calls for transformational leadership. Transformational leadership may focus on the leader's qualities and behaviours but followers in such a relationship 'are willing to identify with the vision articulated by the leader' (Howell & Shamir, 2005:99).

Bass and Stogdill (1990:53) describe the follower's behaviour with a transformational leader as follows:

> The transformational leader asks followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group, organisation, or society; to consider their longer-term needs to develop themselves, rather than their needs of the moment; and to become more aware of what is really important.

A related school of thought, which also emerged during the 1970s, focuses on the charismatic leader: it emphasises the importance of the leader's force of character and the ability to effect change. Charismatic leadership appears to lean more towards the heroic theories of leadership. The concept of a charismatic leader was initially seen to have religious connotations where the charismatic person was regarded as a magnetic character who emerged during times of crisis and who was endowed with divine grace (Weber, 1947; Bass & Stogdill, 1990). The term thus refers to a heroic leader who has an exceptional gift or ability; with radical ideas, a compelling personality and who is able to prove his or her worth in times of social and economic crisis.

Not everyone agrees that charisma is an essential component of transformational leadership. Yukl (2010) questions this assumption and other researchers like Tichy and Devanna (1986) and Kouzes and Posner (1987) have shown that transformational leadership is not a charismatic characteristic. Howell and Shamir (2005) reject a unidirectional explanation of charismatic leadership as they believe that charismatic leadership is a result of a relationship that is produced by both leaders and followers.

Charismatic leadership can also be an example of leadership gone wrong. Leadership literature has tended to focus on 'good' leadership and to ignore what Higgs (2009:166) refers to as 'bad', 'flawed' or 'dark-side' leadership. What has been found is that 'bad' leadership has an adverse effect on followers as it has an impact on morale and motivation (Higgs, 2009). The reverse can also be true. Yukl (2011:39) maintains that resistance to a leader who uses power to 'influence and overcome resistance' may energise people into making better group decisions.

Tichy and Devanna (1986) believe that transformational leadership was not a development of charismatic leadership even though there is some overlap in the characteristics, skills and behaviours of these leaders. Transforming is more of a behavioural process in search of change that is capable of being learned and managed. Bass (1995) also maintains that leaders can learn how to become more transformational and believes that transformational leaders are critical to organisational success in a dramatically changing environment. Tichy and Devanna (1990:iv) assert that central to global competitiveness is the institution's ability to transform continuously, especially in terms of 'turn-around time and speedier information flow'. In their view, therefore, transformational leadership is about change, innovation and entrepreneurship which has to happen at all levels of the organisation and not only at the top. Bass supports this notion since what can take place at the 'tops of organisations, can also occur in varying degrees at all levels of a complex organisation' (Bass *et al.,* 1987:16*).* Transformational leadership is better able to cope with complex situations if transformational practices reside in all members of an organisation (Muijs *et al.*, 2006).

Fellow theorists of Tichy and Devanna, Kouzes and Posner (2007) took an empirical approach to transformational leadership focused on leader and follower relationships which is similar to Bass's (1985) Full Range Leadership theory. Bass (1985) organised his theory of leadership into four conceptual dimensions or 'factors' (Bass & Stogdill, 1990:218) which are regarded as being transformational:

- *individualised consideration,* similar to Kouzes and Posner's 'encourage the heart' and 'enable others to act';
- *idealised influence* that is similar to charisma and refers to the powerful role model of the leader and akin to Kouzes and Posner's 'model the way';
- *intellectual stimulation,* similar to Kouzes and Posner's 'challenge the process';
- *inspirational leadership* that is similar to Kouzes and Posner's 'inspire a shared vision'.

While these theories of transformational leadership are similar, the differences are that Tichy and Devanna's (1990) theory highlights the need for change management skills while Kouzes and Posner (2007) combine a number of leadership styles in their taxonomy but with a more follower-centred approach. Bass's (1985) theory is the most highly articulated in terms of style but it is also the most integrated.

Yukl (2010) criticises transformational leadership for reflecting the assumptions associated with the old heroic leadership stereotype theories. One of these assumptions is that followers are influenced by the leader to 'make sacrifices and exert exceptional effort' (Yukl, 2010:39). Yukl (2010:33) also warns against dependency on what he calls 'two-factor

models', namely task-orientated versus relations-orientated leadership, autocratic versus participative leadership, leadership versus management, transformational versus transactional leadership and charismatic versus non-charismatic leadership. He points out that by using these broad categories, behaviour in any given situation is ignored. These categories miss the complexity of the process of leadership and the way in which leaders use different styles of leadership in different situations. No single theory can be expected to include all the aspects of leadership behaviour as has been demonstrated above and there is a need to examine more enabling, more inclusive forms of leadership where leaders at other levels in the organisation play a more participative role.

Even though Bass, Avolio and Goodheim (1987) suggest that the behaviours, attitudes and strategies of proven world-class leaders as seen through the eyes of the leader's subordinates could offer additional insights, the general body of leadership research has little to offer in the way of conclusions about world-class leaders. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been calls for approaches to leadership studies that reflect post-modern research trends. The bureaucratic paradigms which shaped leadership models in the previous century are not suited to the knowledge economy. Emerging definitions of leadership focus on relationships between leaders and followers rather than on tasks or the leader's traits, influence and power as articulated in earlier definitions, even though traits are still important. A different type of leader is needed to lead organisations through times characterised by uncertainty and the need for constant change. The context has changed. Technological developments have also enabled people to become more collaborative. These developments have led to global networking since organisations have few boundaries. Technology has cultural implications in terms of speed of communication and the change to a global workforce (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The environment and the community have come to the forefront and leadership should begin to focus more on doing good. Kouzes and Posner (2007) emphasise that leaders who unite and inspire their followers are needed. Leaders need to create a climate within which followers can perform effectively. This move is away from the leader-centric models of leadership to more 'relational' models with a greater focus on developing a greater sense of self-awareness (Higgs, 2009:175).

It is becoming increasingly evident that managers at the different levels of colleges need to carry out the mission and realise the vision for the future (Filan & Seagren, 2003:21). Leadership cannot be the responsibility of a single person in an organisation nor restricted to the outcomes of a single leader's style since a leader will not be able to be effective alone (Falk, 2003; Nevarez *et al.*, 2013; Robertson, 2005. It is therefore vital for a leader of an educational institution to develop the leadership potential of others in the institution.

In the next section, what Falk (2003:193) calls 'an emerging theory of enabling leadership', also referred to as participative, distributive, shared or democratic leadership, or what Collinson and Collinson (2009:365) call 'blended leadership', is examined as being particularly relevant to this study.

2.3.3 Emerging theory of 'blended leadership'

The leadership theories and models discussed above are distinctive but often one-dimensional perspectives on leadership. Collinson and Collinson (2009:365) report that FE employees in the UK often value practices that combine elements of both heroic and post-heroic characteristics of leadership. They call this approach to leadership 'blended leadership'. In South Africa, where the TVET college system is diverse, ranging from successful, well-resourced colleges to poor, under-resourced colleges, it would be unwise to prescribe a universal approach to leadership. It would be advisable rather to equip leaders with a 'tool kit' of skills and knowledge of the various approaches that can be applied in different situations (Bush, 2007:402). The core behaviours should be expanded to include other relevant leadership behaviours.

Leadership should rather be more broadly conceptualised as a 'shared, reciprocal influence process' than an assumption of 'heroic leadership' (Yukl, 2010:46). Shared leadership is a very different conception of leadership to transformational leadership where individuals and teams contribute towards taking the lead in an organisation, rather than focusing on one exceptional leader to perform all the leadership functions. With shared leadership, different people take the lead at different times; the dual role of being a leader and also a follower is recognised. Yukl (2010:42) regards shared or participative leadership as 'relations-orientated behaviour' which differs from 'change-orientated behaviour'.

The promotion of change and dealing with resistance to change has meant that a more democratic, participative, relations-orientated, considerate leadership is now necessary. Yet, depending on the situation, say in an emergency or when followers are inexperienced, a more directional or task orientation may be the more effective way to lead (Bass, 1985:3). The type of leadership can thus be adjusted to suit the situation. There has been a general preference to move the focus away from the leader (who is expected to turn around a failing institution) towards those who are led, proposing a more inclusive, shared or distributed form of leadership (MacFarlane, 2014) as long as distribution means the sharing of power rather than the sharing of operational responsibilities (Gleeson & Knights, 2008).

'Everyone is the leader' suggests a more integrated leadership model (MacFarlane, 2014:3). With shared or distributed leadership, the emphasis falls less on the leader and more on the led. This shared leadership is flatter, more horizontal than vertical. The followers and the

role they play are central. Teams also start becoming important (Van Wart, 2011; Eddy, 2010). The efficacy of hierarchies where senior managers are separated from middle managers and classroom practitioners has been questioned and it has been suggested that a more integrated or distributed type of leadership would be more suitable in VET institutions (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). Gleeson and Knights (2008:52) concur with Blackler (1993) who believes that a failure to position colleges in changing cultural and social conditions of professional practice is a major challenge for those who believe that improved management and leadership is the 'new nirvana' for turning around a 'troubled' public sector.

While it can be acknowledged that the current educational climate in South Africa requires transformational leaders who are able to serve as change agents, this type of leadership does not come naturally. To bring about change, it is not necessary for leaders to provide solutions to situations but they should rather shift the locus of responsibility to the people involved to find their own solutions. Followers must be discouraged from looking up to their leaders to provide answers. Rather than supplying the answers, leaders should rather ask tough questions and expose followers to changing market circumstances and customer demands (Gleeson & Knights, 2008). Leaders should thus be more 'facilitative than directive' (Schwella, 2008:43). Gittens (2008) maintains that there is a critical need to explicitly develop this type of leader but it is a challenge for leaders to create a culture of shared leadership.

One of the major tasks is to change the mindset of individuals who see themselves as operational managers only, attending to the day-to-day activities and roles in their particular areas of responsibility. These include non-educational managers whose focus is on service and support and who need to become more aware that teaching and learning must be seen as the core business, rather than, for example, the financial system of the institution being the core business. Currently, there is a disparity between the educational and non-educational managers; the latter need to start understanding that they cannot exist in isolation from the core business of the institution but ought to become more engaged with bigger questions about the organisation, its objectives and its long-term future. Traditional managers whose mental models have been 'instrumentalist and operational' need to learn to focus on 'the future, strategies and sound business planning where [they] are all engaged in leading [the] organisation' (Callan *et al.*, 2007:18). They need to be prepared to do things differently.

Callan *et al.* (2007:13) define leadership in a VET institution as the capacity at both the individual and institutional levels to identify and define organisational goals and desired outcomes, to develop strategic plans to achieve these goals and deliver the outcomes and to guide the organisation and motivate people to reach these goals. Energy, commitment,

persistence, integrity, intelligence and the capacity to inspire are leadership requirements for this sector. However, to meet all these requirements, VET leaders first have to learn to maintain a fine 'balancing act' between 'strategic priorities and competing responsibilities' (Collinson & Collinson, 2009:376). These priorities and responsibilities, which are not only particular to TVET colleges but are unique to all institutions operating in the VET sector of education internationally, are discussed in the next section. Reference is made to other VET institutions outside of South Africa where relevant.

2.4   COMPETING PRIORITIES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COLLEGES

If VET leaders are expected to maintain a fine 'balancing act' between 'strategic priorities and competing responsibilities' as suggested by Collinson and Collinson (2009:376), it would be helpful first to ascertain what these priorities and responsibilities are. The competing priorities and responsibilities of VET leaders have been divided into six broad categories for the purpose of this study. The first six categories have been based on the findings of Collinson and Collinson (2009). Some of these priorities have also been highlighted by Callan *et al.* (2007), Foley and Conole (2003), Muijs *et al.*, (2006), Quinlan (2014) and Eddy, (2010). A seventh competing priority has been added as it is particularly relevant to the situation in South Africa. It needs to be acknowledged that these priorities are not definitive and that there may be other competing priorities in the FE or VET sector. Many of these responsibilities or priorities selected below overlap, but are listed as follows:

1. Operating across different sectors
2. Dealing with a diverse demography of students
3. Dealing with conflicting internal and external motivations
4. Balancing internal and external roles
5. Facing various competing operational pressures
6. Facing external pressures

A seventh category has been added with specific relevance to TVET colleges:

7. Facing challenges as a newcomer sub-sector to the higher education system.

These broad categories are discussed in the next section.

2.4.1   Operating across different sectors

Since the TVET colleges are located as post-school education and training institutions in the South African public higher education system, the leader of a TVET college is first and foremost an educational leader, but with a vocational rather than a purely academic focus.

What makes the TVET college situation unique, though, is that the TVET colleges, like other VET institutions internationally, operate across sectors rather than focusing on a purely educational system, each with its own requirements and challenges.

Owing to the vocational focus of the college, a VET leader has to consider the strong, often conflicting forces evident in the sector, namely the drive for 'entrepreneurial business development and profitability', the need to demonstrate 'innovative educational leadership in a community driven by strong pedagogical values' and the need to meet the 'objectives, constraints and funding requirements of the bureaucracy that emphasises regulatory compliance and a risk-management approach' (Foley & Conole, 2003:25). In addition, the structures required by the kind of leadership tasked with running a public sector VET institution are also different from conventional commercial or business operations as well as most educational institutions (Gleeson & Knights, 2008). The ability to balance all these factors may be a unique challenge to the leadership of the colleges, especially given the strong financial pressures on the sector.

A major factor driving this increasing complexity is the wide range of stakeholders requiring more flexibility and variety in the delivery of the training at their institutions. A special target of these demands is the teaching staff who are expected to maintain industry currency and closer links with the potential workforce. Tensions arising from this state of affairs can thus be encountered throughout the organisation. Teachers and support staff are increasingly confronted by the interplay of competing priorities and tensions in order to respond to the needs of business and industry. These tensions are drivers of change requiring extensive management and leadership capabilities as well as professional and additional generic skills such as 'strategic thinking skills, how to facilitate business growth and how to build sound management systems and policies to support this growth' (Callan *et al.*, 2007:20), to meet the continued challenges for innovation and change.

Kligyte and Barrie (2014:157) describe the situation in which educational leaders find themselves:

> Leaders work in unfamiliar territory, often with a repertoire of largely historical leadership strategies. They have to respond to external demands with business-like efficiency and accountability, while navigating the maze of diverging cultural norms, narratives and work ethos of academic environments.

It is thus clear that context and setting play an important role in VET leadership. The TVET colleges, like the community colleges in the USA, the Australian TAFE colleges and the FE colleges in the UK, are complex, multidimensional organisations, playing a varied educational and training role (Eddy, 2010; Nevarez *et al., 2013*). They therefore require

leaders who have a number of different competencies that can be applied in different contexts and complex situations.

2.4.2 Dealing with a diverse demography of students

One of the reasons for the complexity of the situation is that at any stage, a VET college has a diverse demographic of learners on its campus, all at different life stages, different educational needs and levels and all with different reasons for being enrolled there. The central challenge is to balance these multiple missions and functions in order to meet the needs of the individual, the community and the state.

As in South Africa, the state in the UK generally has a dual agenda which is to upskill the workforce by widening access to education and enhancing skills through employer engagement (Collinson & Collinson, 2009). Other challenges are to vary teaching methods that may include online learning as well as different timetabling to accommodate flexible learning in terms of time and place, both on- and off-site. Often, these institutions have to provide remedial education to learners who are unprepared for college-level work. Leaders at all levels must therefore be responsive to these ever-changing needs, business demands and learners' aspirations and limitations (Eddy, 2010).

Eddy (2010:3) refers to these strategic priorities as the 'tripartite mission' of the community colleges in the USA when referring to the three types of learning needs that these community colleges are expected to fulfil. Firstly, the colleges need to provide education and training to learners who have chosen a low-cost access route to higher education; secondly, learners who wish to enrol for vocational programmes or apprenticeship training with direct contact with employment, and thirdly, learners who enrol for a variety of programmes that fulfil a community need. This is why she suggests that leaders of these colleges need to maintain a 'delicate balancing act', as referred to by Collinson and Collinson (2009).

Collinson and Collinson (2009) believe that context is especially important for understanding FE leadership dynamics in the UK. FE covers a diverse range of post-school provision with a wide range of courses from basic literacy and numeracy to vocational qualifications. Second-chance learning is also provided to members of the community where these colleges are located. According to these authors' report, a significant proportion of the students are from disadvantaged backgrounds and they operate at the 'leading edge of poverty and deprivation' (Collinson & Collinson, 2009:366). They add that FE colleges are often viewed as the 'poor relations' of the UK education system. Similarly, TVET colleges in South Africa have been referred to as the 'Cinderellas' of the education system (Asmal, 2003; Kraak, 2012).

Like the community colleges in the USA and FE colleges in the UK, South African TVET colleges also cater for a varied learner demography. TVET colleges offer a wide range of education and training opportunities to school-leavers, providing them with a second chance of finishing the final school-leaving certificate or senior certificate by means of different programmes or by offering bridging programmes providing access to universities. The colleges also offer a range of vocational programmes for school leavers aimed at the job market. They also provide upskilling and reskilling for working or adult learners and offer contextually relevant and personally enriching learning possibilities to local communities (HESA PSE, 2011). Having such a diverse student body complicates education and training at these institutions.

2.4.3   Dealing with conflicting internal and external motivations

Since education is the TVET colleges' core business, it should be the main focus of these colleges. According to Robertson (2005:40), educational leadership is about 'informed actions that influence the continuous improvement of learning and teaching'. The emphasis should thus be placed on actions relating to learning and teaching since the relationship between actions being taken to improve learning and teaching is what educational leadership is all about. The key task remains managing teaching and learning rather than leaving it to educators (Bush, 2007). Gleeson and Knights (2008:57) support this view and state that cries for FE reform in the UK are 'rhetorical and remain locked in a restricted audit and target-driven framework'. They refer to a UK government report that mentions that there is externally-driven pressure to improve teaching, learning and management in FE by concerns other than the nature of teaching and learning. Leaders are too distracted from the core purpose of their work, which is to improve teaching and learning in FE. This situation appears to echo the TVET college situation.

Quinlan (2014) agrees that the focus of educational leadership essentially has to be on processes of learning such as the holistic development of the learner. Educational leaders thus have to be aware of creating supportive and nurturing environments for learners in which they can grow holistically. Robertson (2005) elaborates by stating that a job description may list leadership as a responsibility, but leadership is not located in the position that is held but in the actions that are taken to improve opportunities for teaching and learning. This relates to what Juntrasook (2014) calls leadership as performance, which is explained in more detail in 2.3.7 below.

Since service values in the VET sector remain strong despite the move towards a more businesslike management environment (Muijs *et al.*, 2006), tension occurs between internal and external motivations. Falk (2003:197) maintains that effective leadership in VET

organisations is 'a process of enabling interactions between internal, external and individual domains of activity'.

Callan *et al.* (2007) and Foley and Conole (2003) also identified the tensions referred to by Quinlan (2014) in the TAFE sector in Australia: the competing priorities that leaders have to face in VET institutions.   Choices have to be made between 'business strategy and education, national policy and local reality, entrepreneurship and accountability, managerialism and professionalism' (Callan *et al.*, 2007:10) which results in tension.   A major tension is the concern with developing a new generation of management that 'can combine educational leadership qualities with both generic organisational leadership qualities and strong business and commercial capabilities' (Foley & Conole, 2003:10). Callan *et al.* (2007) concur with Foley and Conole's (2003) view that there is a need for managers and leaders with broader management skills, vocational competence and pedagogic knowledge, to replace the traditional academic or educational leaders.   Coates *et al.* (2013:819) share this view and suggest that although VET leaders' focus is education, 'they now need new capabilities to respond to internal and external developments'.

2.4.4   Balancing internal and external roles

Leaders of VET institutional leaders are expected to balance clear external and internal roles.   They are expected to develop an external presence by becoming the face or 'figurehead' of the college (Lambert, 2013:27). Principals have to present the interests of the college to business as well as to the local community, often playing a ceremonial role by handing out certificates and diplomas, thus stepping into the perceived role of the academic leader at functions.   This role should not be at the cost of internal college matters, namely the role of strategic thinker, developing the vision and mission of the organisation jointly with the deputies and board members and ensuring that these become translated into strategic plans for the college.

A leader must be a visible presence to staff and students who not only see the leader as the custodian of academic standards but as the business leader who has to secure the financial stability and viability of the college (Lambert, 2013). The leader's role is thus a constant balancing act which is regarded as a key aspect of effective VET leadership (Collinson & Collinson, 2009; Eddy, 2010; Lambert, 2013). While Lambert (2013:41) suggests that all the changes in FE in the UK have not necessarily been to the benefit of the students or that leaders have not always acted effectively or with integrity, he acknowledges that the role has evolved significantly from a 'chief academic officer' to one that combines the academic responsibility with that of being the 'chief executive of a multimillion pound business'. The parallels with TVET college leaders are noteworthy.

2.4.5　　　Facing various competing operational pressures

Public higher education faces many challenges as it is required to provide evidence of its effectiveness during times when educational leaders' work is dominated by management matters rather than efforts to improve teaching and learning (Dempster, 2009). There is an increased call for accountability at a number of different levels such as use of resources, human, physical and financial. Employers also assert that learners are not being prepared for the workplace and lack the necessary employability skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and written communication skills (Gittens, 2008).

There is some belief that leadership is a 'vital ingredient' in modernising public sector organisations that have consistently shown a resistance to change (Gleeson & Knights, 2008:51). Leaders have to respond swiftly to change and have to accomplish a variety of tasks which are unrelated to education and are not always simple and straightforward. They tend to feel their positions of authority dwindling while their responsibilities increase as they are expected to find funding, manage financial matters and be responsible for managing staff and maintaining physical resources. At the same time, they need to be available to their staff and communities. Most leaders can only manage these facets of their work by putting in long hours, mainly in their own time. They struggle to cope with increasing demands made on them by centrally-imposed policies, innovations and practices, most of which are at odds with education and for which they have not always been adequately trained.

Owing to the complexity of their environment, educational leaders are continually in a 'reactive mode' since they have to try to balance the administrative aspects of their roles with the educational aspects (Robertson, 2005:45). Many leaders feel that they are 'middle managers implementing, at the behest of others, policies for which they feel no ownership' (Robertson, 2005:45). Many educational leaders lament the fact that they have had to become experts in fiscal and human resource management, public relations, collective bargaining and politics for which few are trained or experienced even though they have to take responsibility for them (Robertson, 2005). It is these practices that are in danger of undermining the purpose of education (Lambert, 2013).

Quinlan (2014) says that in being an educational leader, a number of tensions come into play: the leader must meet government mandates, respond to many demands and is held more and more accountable while cost pressures create conflict with more altruistic values.

2.4.6　　　Facing external pressures

As in South Africa, the funding of FE colleges is complex, determined by policy and subjected to financial audits. In the UK, FE colleges are tightly regulated and have to

account to a number of oversight, inspection and accreditation bodies. Collinson and Collinson (2009:374) believe that the FE colleges have become 'over-regulated' and that the many targets and audits that govern their operations have now become 'excessive and counter-productive', many of the targets being either 'unrealistic, inconsistent and/or contradictory'.

Lambert (2013:39) refers to external pressures such as nationally imposed funding methodology and increases in inspection and audit requiring specialist managers like 'directors of finance, quality and performance to lead these institutions in this new environment'. This dichotomy, he adds, is a clash between 'student-centred pedagogic culture' and 'the managerial culture of managers'. The role of the principal has to evolve to respond to the competing requirements of education and business.

FE leaders are seen to be effective if they are able to manage this 'balancing act' (Collinson & Collinson, 2009:376; Eddy, 2010:3). Collinson and Collinson (2009:376) go on to say that on the one hand, these leaders are expected to be flexible but, on the other, they have to deal with 'multiple, shifting and sometimes contradictory (auditing) pressures in which colleges operate'. The way in which these leaders have to 'mediate tensions between policy and practice in everyday situations with their clients' or students often has to depend on tacit knowledge (Collinson & Collinson, 2009:53). Many TVET college leaders are also frustrated by the perpetual changes they perceive in government education policies. FE college leaders speak about being 'required to adhere closely to government policy, rather than as leaders designing and implementing a strategic vision for their college' (Collinson & Collinson, 2009:375). This could be seen as the crux of the matter for VET institutions.

Collinson and Collinson's (2009) research warns that 'while formalised processes are designed to raise standards by increasing accountability and transparency, an excessive audit culture can have unintended and counter-productive effects that may erode the potential for effective leadership, reproducing a recurrent tension between (internal) approachability and (external) accountability'. Their view echoes that of Gleeson and Knights (2008:50) who label these audits 'invasive'.

In a survey of community college presidents in the USA to determine what they regard as the challenges they face and what knowledge and skills future leaders need to possess, the overarching theme that emerged was the political nature of the colleges and leadership (Vargas, 2013). This theme made all the other themes secondary to the leader having to become knowledgeable and skilled at being a political being. What these leaders have been trained for is education, and this seems to have been shifted into the background to allow them to attend to other more pressing matters. A second theme that emerged was 'multiple

levels of communication skills associated with people (interpersonal, mediation, negotiation, listening, motivational and public speaking)' (Vargas, 2013:486) which links closely to these leaders' internal and external roles described in 2.3.4 above.

2.4.7 Technical and vocational education and training colleges as higher education institutions

Much has been written about higher education to highlight how academic leadership, particularly in universities, differs from other organisational contexts. As was pointed out in Chapter 1, it is only recently that the TVET colleges in South Africa have been included as higher education institutions. TVET colleges thus have to learn how to function in this new sector which they share with other educational institutions such as universities and universities of technology. At universities, decentralisation and the 'culture of collegiality and autonomy underpinning academic work' (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014:157) indicate that higher education needs a different kind of leadership to private organisations. Even though public institutions of higher education (universities as well as TVET colleges) are very much part of the public service, they are rarely treated as such (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014).

The concept of collegiality, which is at the very heart of a university, also distinguishes a university from other higher education institutions (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014). It sets universities apart from TVET colleges even though they share the same higher education system. This offers further challenges to TVET college leaders who have to comingle at the same level as leaders from universities despite the difference in qualifications, experience, working conditions and frames of reference.

Juntrasook (2014) came up with four meanings of leadership at a higher education institution which have some relevance to TVET colleges. The first of these meanings is that leadership is a position to which someone is appointed. This appointment legitimises the position. An institution should entrench this notion by being prepared to invest in such as person and leadership development should be available to these leaders exclusively. The second meaning is that leadership is performance for which competency must be demonstrated. This meaning focuses on the work that the person does according to institutional policy. This type of leadership is observable and measurable and, in order to be promoted, the leader must demonstrate the required level of performance which is assessed or appraised. The third meaning is that leadership is practice. It is not always clear what this practice entails, but it could include attending meetings and conferences and serving on committees. The fourth and last meaning is that leadership is being a professional role model, which refers to the way the leader thinks, talks and behaves.

The first two meanings, leadership being a position or a performance, underline the hierarchical nature of educational leadership at a university as well as at TVET colleges and how this leadership is recognised publicly. The second two, leadership as practice and being a professional role model, underline the everyday context of a higher education institution since it relates to what the leader does every day and how the leader is in a professional context. It would be very difficult to measure the last two. According to Schwella (2008), it should also be borne in mind that decisions are made in a non-market environment and performance measures cannot be based on notions of profit or productivity. In Juntrasook's (2014) survey of university staff, leaders put more emphasis on the latter two meanings although only the first two are officially recognised by the institutional policy. There is, therefore, a difference between how an educational institution sees leadership and an individual understanding of leadership at the institution. Buskey (2014) asserts that leadership is not a position and people in leadership positions are not necessarily leaders. They have positional power but they may or may not have leadership capacity. Anyone has the potential of being a leader. Leadership is 'what we do regardless of who we are or what position we occupy' (Buskey, 2014:125).

Just like the corporate world, the academic system, whether it is a school, a college or a university, is in a time of significant change. In fact, the only constant in education is change (Robertson, 2005). The purpose of higher education is constantly being redefined to serve the needs of the market, with the emphasis falling on acquiring employment-related skills. Yet, leaders still tend to see the purpose of their institutions as far nobler (O'Connor, Carvalho & White, 2014). Leaders at universities and colleges recognise the need for change but many feel reluctant and even ill-equipped to bring about change or transformation at their institutions in the way in which it could serve the requirements of legislation. In South Africa, 'transformation' also has a special meaning linked to the need to convert and restructure the previous divided educational system into a single, unified, seamless education and training system with the emphasis on equity and redress. Real transformation is thus dependent on the nature and quality of educational leadership (Bush, 2007).

There are numerous strategic changes facing educational leaders, few of which can be brought about without professional development (Kezar, 2014). Leaders tend to think of change as a linear exercise, namely to develop a goal, expand it into a vision, implement it and then assess and revise it. However, there is no recipe for dealing with change since the circumstances and environment are never the same; therefore, professional development should be a lifelong process through different stages of a leader's career in order to renew,

refresh and redirect leadership practice. All leaders have the responsibility to keep learning throughout their careers (Robertson, 2005).

2.5 THE INCREASING NEED FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

There has been a strong increase in the interest in leadership development internationally, especially in the VET education sector, but little research has been reported on the relationship between leadership development and actual leadership behaviours in the sector (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). As leadership development has become prevalent throughout the world (Gentry *et al.*, 2014; Muijs *et al.*, 2006), governments worldwide are moving towards a national policy for leadership development in various sectors of education (Robertson, 2005). A number of educational organisations have included the word 'leadership' in their names, for example BELMAS (the British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society), NZEALS (the New Zealand Administration and Leadership Society) and ACEL (the Australian Council for Educational Leaders). This inclusion underlines the importance of leadership in education. All these organisations state that they are interested in developing leadership in all educational sectors and do not specialise in only one sector as they did in the past. This is unlike the situation in South Africa where development of TVET college leaders is not a special focus.

Management and leadership development is ideally a deliberate and planned activity which is driven by strategic and organisational objectives.   Yet, most leadership training programmes in the sector are often fragmentary and of short duration, with considerable duplication, offered on an ad hoc basis and not forming part of a longer strategic developmental goal or strategy at a policy level, even though the need has been recognised (Callan *et al.*, 2007; Foley & Conole, 2004; Falk, 2003;). Consequently these courses are not attended by busy people, which may be an apt description of most leaders in the sector. It also means that the courses are not long enough to change attitudes or behaviour. Falk (2003) suggests that leadership development should take place over a long period of time, with regular interactions. What is also evident in the VET sector in the UK, where leadership development does take place, is a growing dissatisfaction with traditional models of professional development such as generic courses and once-off in-service training events delivered by external organisations. Besides the fact that more VET-specific leadership development programmes would be appreciated, more experiential forms of training, which include mentoring, job shadowing and secondments, are perceived to be more effective (Muijs *et al.*, 2006).

Callan *et al.* (2007) advocate leadership development as an investment since it does not only provide necessary knowledge and skills to leaders to assist the organisation with achieving its strategic intentions; improved capability and learning on the part of leaders also brings about positive change and innovation.

There are three main reasons why deliberate strategies for leadership development have become necessary. Firstly, there is the question of succession planning as it has been reported (Shults, 2001; Eddy, 2010; Simon & Bonnici, 2011; Sullivan & Palmer, 2014 among others) that many leaders in the VET sector internationally are nearing retirement age. Secondly, for leadership development to be goal- and purpose-driven, there should be career paths for leaders in the VET sector with specific training programmes aimed at developing leaders at every level. Thirdly, it is imperative to continuously identify the necessary skills and capabilities required by leaders in the complex VET environment for leadership development programmes to remain current. These three issues are discussed in more detail below.

Firstly, in the light of the previously mentioned leadership crisis at community colleges in the USA reported by Shults (2001), who predicted that 84% of the present leaders of community colleges would be retiring by 2011, Eddy (2010:1) believes that a new skills set and life experiences different to those in the past are needed to navigate the challenges of the 21st century successfully. The retirements can therefore be seen as an opportunity rather than a crisis. This sentiment is echoed by Hagedorn and Purnamasari (2014), who established that change happens when leadership changes and demographics shifts. With college presidents retiring in record numbers, this should be seen as an opportunity to attract a more diverse and representative set of leaders. It is clear that there are insufficient numbers in the 'leadership pipeline' (Sullivan & Palmer, 2014; Shults, 2001; Filan & Seagren, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Collinson & Collinson, 2009; Lambert, 2013). Sullivan and Palmer (2014) see the anticipated generational turnover in leadership at community colleges in the USA, referring to the Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) who are beginning to retire as administrators and departmental leaders, as an opportunity to identify new leaders who have expanded skillsets which could equip them better for coping with contemporary challenges. The new leaders may also come from different population groups to better reflect the diversity of populations served by these colleges.

The large number of retiring leaders at community colleges in the USA is mirrored in Australian VET college statistics where the average age of principals in 2011 was between 50 and 59, with 7% of the principals being 60 or over (Simon & Bonnici, 2011). Simon and Bonnici (2011) emphasise that leadership development is a matter of urgency to fill the anticipated gap. Coates *et al.* (2013) have also stressed that strategies are needed to

manage the succession crisis in the UK. Leadership development programmes have thus become a priority for leaders in the VET sector internationally.

Secondly, there should also be pathways in leadership development. Unlike countries like the USA, for example, in South Africa there is no clear career path for leaders in the TVET college sector. No research is available to indicate where the present leaders have come from. Eddy (2010) points out that in the USA, for example, community college leaders take on the position of leader via a number of different routes but mainly come from within community college teaching staff. Likewise in the UK, the majority (87%) come from the ranks of FE teaching staff. It has become important to re-think the career path of community college leaders so that a greater number of teaching staff members can be exposed to leader development.   At least in the USA, there are formal leadership development programmes available for aspirant leaders, which is not the case in South Africa. Yet Eddy (2010) contends that most of the training of community college leaders focuses on the acquisition of skills which is not adequate for leaders of these complex and multidimensional colleges. Future leaders need to know how to make 'tough, ethical choices' with regard to access, programmes and in making decisions about resources while supporting the culture, vision and mission of the colleges (Eddy, 2010:22).

Thirdly, it is imperative to continuously identify the necessary skills and capabilities required by leaders in the complex VET environment for leadership development programmes to remain current. Hagedorn and Purnamasari (2014) suggest the establishment of possible standards or guidelines for the development of these programmes in order to gauge the quality of the programmes, bringing greater coherence and curricular quality to the programmes. Programmes also need to keep pace with the 'constant state of flux and development' in the sector instead of remaining static (Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2014:170). To remain current and responsive to change in the environment, the programmes need to change and close and new programmes open.

Eddy's (2010) call for leadership development is echoed by Nevarez *et al.* (2013) who both state that to be an effective leader, there is a need to acquire specialised knowledge, an understanding of change and leadership theories which can be applied in different situations. Leaders need to be given leadership development opportunities to enable them to develop into visionary leaders who understand the challenges to quality institutional growth.

Before determining what sort of leadership development would be necessary in the sector, it is important to understand the dynamics of the changing VET colleges, what the current understanding of leadership in the sector is and what types of management and leadership

capabilities are required for the present and for the future. It is necessary to gain insight into what leadership involves in the 'unique operating context of VET', what the leaders do, what influences determine the work that they do and what the defining characteristics of effective leadership in the sector are (Coates *et al.*, 2013:820). It is important to identify the necessary skills needed to lead the colleges in the 21st century and then design training programmes to teach these skills (Sullivan & Palmer, 2014). Leadership training programmes need to target the capabilities that are essential for effective leadership (Coates *et al.*, 2013). Capable leaders are confident and effective in dealing with complex and demanding jobs. Effective leadership leads to job satisfaction and commitment. Organisations that are committed to leadership development are assured of positive returns in terms of productivity and continuous improvement, quality and customer service. These benefits extend beyond the organisation into the broader community (Callan *et al.*, 2007).

For leadership development to be beneficial, an important aspect of leadership development is to ensure that leadership training programmes have 'currency' and that the focus is on 'more authentic and active modes of learning' (Coates *et al.*, 2013:833). Leaders must be able to apply the theory in the workplace after completing the course otherwise the course content will be seen as being 'meaningless and irrelevant' (Gentry *et* al., 2014:85). It would be useful to determine the nature and scale of the leaders' work by asking the leaders themselves to provide this information based on their own experience. Gentry *et al.* (2014) agree that leadership development programmes should correspond better with what the participants think they need.

Muijs *et al.* (2006:94) suggest that focus group research is well suited to 'collect collective perceptions and views of leadership'. They note that separating focus groups by position could prevent a possible problem arising because of groups being 'hampered by strong differences in status' (2006:94). The IQA methodology, which is explained in Chapter 4, makes use of focus group interviews to find out from participants themselves what they think should be included in a proposed curriculum framework for leadership development. The focus groups are divided into two groups, where senior leaders form the one group or constituency and mid-level leaders the other. In this way, a possible problem arising because of the different status of the groups is avoided.

Nevarez *et al.* (2013) believe that by using a case study approach together with theory, leaders will be given the tools with which to interrogate and inform the decision-making process. This approach is in keeping with Gentry *et al.*'s (2014) view that by knowing the challenges, the topics for a leadership development programme can be determined, The case studies need to reflect actual situations confronting today's TVET college leaders (such as learner enrolment, human resource issues such as hiring staff or internal staff issues,

financial and budgetary issues, political pressures) and by analysing these case studies, the next generations of leaders will gain valuable insights which would otherwise have been learnt through practice. The case studies should be representative of the complexity of issues and should require leaders to make use of advanced skills such as critical and conceptual thinking as well as problem-solving capabilities to guide the decision-making process.

Nevarez *et al.* (2013) suggest that in addition to using case studies to learn skills like decision-making, the leader as learner must continually reflect critically on the process once the information has been considered and analysed, decisions made and actions taken. The case study serves as a roadmap which guides the leader as learner to address the multidimensional issues facing colleges.

Since there are no examples of context-specific leadership development of VET educational institutions in South Africa, it was deemed useful for this study to take note of what is being done in the rest of the world to develop leaders of VET institutions.

2.6   AN OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL VOCATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

It is easy to find evidence of leadership development in private or corporate organisations. It is also easy to find evidence of leadership development of school principals. However, despite international recognition of how important the VET sector has become in today's rapidly changing world, it is difficult to find evidence of custom-designed leadership development programmes specifically for leaders of these institutions in countries other than the USA, Australia and the UK, even though they may exist. Since these three countries appear to have a more developed VET sector, VET in these countries will be discussed in more detail to provide the impetus for introducing similar leadership development initiatives in South Africa. These countries also share a similarity with the TVET sector in South Africa in that they are predominately English-speaking countries.

Even though VET leaders are making valuable contributions to learners, industry and society, there is limited research on the work that they do (Muijs *et* al., 2006; Coates *et al*, 2013). This makes it difficult to frame evidence-based capacity development of VET leaders (Coates *et al.*, 2013) even though there is evidence that the recognition of the importance of leadership development in all educational sectors is growing.

In this section, efforts made to develop VET leaders in Australia, the UK and the USA are examined in detail, followed by a brief mention of what is being done for VET leaders in New

Zealand, Canada, Ghana, Thailand and China. The status of TVET leadership development in South Africa will then be interrogated.

2.6.1   Leadership development in Australia

From the turn of the century, attention was given to the need for leadership development of the VET sector in Australia. In a leadership and management development survey of TAFE college leaders in Australia it was pointed out that there is an urgent need to develop leadership in the sector to guarantee both current and future success of these organisations (Callan *et al.*, 2007).

Callan (2001) proposed a capability framework for leaders of VET at TAFE colleges which defines what attributes are expected of these leaders at various levels of the organisation. He identified six leadership capabilities in areas of corporate vision and direction (which includes being able to communicate the vision, building successful teams and inspiring people to make a commitment), strategic thinking and planning, change leadership, communication that influences, business and entrepreneurial skills and the advancement of the interests of VET. All these core capabilities are also similar to those advocated by the UK's Management and Leadership National Occupation Standards (Coates *et al.*, 2013). 'Capability' does not only refer to current knowledge, skills, qualities and understanding, but also to an individual's potential in these areas (Callan *et al.*, 2007). Callan's (2001) initial framework was revisited in 2007. Perceptions of effective VET leadership did not appear to have changed but Callan *et al.* (2007) found that a more systematic approach to leadership development was necessary and that a leadership capability framework was still helpful.

In a different study, Foley and Conole (2003) identified ten leadership capabilities where innovation and growing the core business, risk-taking, customer focus, working as a team, developing and empowering people, self-efficacy and personal integrity were regarded as important, as well as an additional three specific contextual leadership capabilities, namely educational leadership, understanding how to work with industry and the community and working with the VET system. Callan *et al.*'s (2007) later survey confirms many of these capabilities. However, the core capabilities in the 2007 survey include those related to transformational qualities such as being able to communicate a vision, successful team-building and inspiring staff to commit to change. Also included are sound strategic thinking and planning skills and 'an ability to be business-like in approach' (Callan *et al.,* 2007). The 2007 survey also encourages specific leadership and management training that is designed to meet the needs of a particular VET organisation, thus custom-designed programmes, supported by on-the-job learning and training (Callan *et al.,* 2007). While it is recognised that the development of a leadership capability framework alone does not guarantee

effective leadership, it is useful if it is supported with practical and appropriate development opportunities for leaders to become practised in their leadership skills (Foley & Conole, 2003).

A theme that emerged during the 2007 survey into management and leadership capabilities in the TAFE sector was the perception that a 'considerable amount of management activity was targeted towards meeting compliance needs' (Callan *et al.*, 2007:19). The TAFE system was described as being dictated by centrally driven policies and procedures which put a constraint on genuine leadership and usurped good management. There is constant pressure on leaders to be more responsive to the increasing expectations of government, the growing needs of industry and the diverse needs of individuals and communities. VET has been recognised as the key vehicle for 'national workforce development and productivity' (Coates *et al.*, 2013:820) which has increased commercial pressures on the colleges.

During the 2007 survey of TAFE colleges, the need was established for a more transformational style of leadership to help leaders deal with the challenges facing the sector. This style of leadership would help leaders define organisational goals involving structural and cultural change. Even though respondents in this survey indicated that they perceived the leader's role as one that gives a sense of direction to the organisation, clarifying a future vision and getting staff on board, they preferred a participative, collaborative and a shared style of leadership to develop strategies and plans to achieve these goals. They identified leadership qualities based on the concept of emotional intelligence as being suitable, and communication skills, self-awareness, empathy and tolerance 'of ambiguity and change' as necessary 'capabilities' for leaders in the sector (Callan *et al.*, 2007:7). Other aspects affecting leadership, such as ethical, gender and cross-cultural matters also deserve more attention (Falk, 2003).

Callan (2001) noted that the training needs of leaders at TAFE colleges were broadly similar across the states of Australia and national training programmes could easily be developed based on this finding. His preliminary analysis suggests that the areas of greatest demand on VET managers and leaders, particularly in the public sector, are strategic and financial management and change leadership to support their expanding roles. Callan *et al.* (2007:23) suggest that a national leadership development programme in Australia offers the opportunity to 'share best practice, for benchmarking and the potential for building national training alliances and partnerships'.

Coates *et al.* (2013:819) found that VET leaders have expressed a strong preference for 'practice-based and self-managed' forms of professional learning rather than formal

programmes. They maintain that professional learning is not essential for leadership since many leaders of the TAFE colleges have little formal leadership training before being appointed as leaders, yet manage to do well.

In Australia, there are various bodies, such as the Victorian TAFE Development Centre, that advocate and advance leadership development of VET leaders and managers. This centre's TAFE Leadership Scheme provides financial support for the planning and implementation of leadership development programmes. The TAFE Development Centre also organises educational events. Various professional associations also play an important role: the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) supports research projects on leadership in VET and the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is a professional and independent body in Australia, responsible for researching vocational education and training and publishing the findings. The VET Development Centre in Australia offers customised professional development services and programmes aimed at TAFE college leaders (whom they call chief executive officers or CEOs as they do at some TVET colleges in South Africa) by building a professional learning framework through seminars, workshops, networking and webinars.

The Australian College of Educators (ACE), funded by the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEF), developed the Australian College of Educators Leadership (ACEL) Capability Framework discussed in detail above, which sets out the capabilities needed for effective and successful practice to be used as a learning resource. Research into the Capability Framework is ongoing. This learning map was developed on the premise that leadership can be learned and that a concept-based approach enables deep learning and understanding, making learning clear and concise. It also maintains that there is no one formula for leadership, which is dynamic, situational and unpredictable. Leadership is an influence relationship and leaders in educational systems work and learn within spheres of influence.

A survey of educator qualifications in the TAFE sector was undertaken in 2011, and it was found that overwhelmingly, educators said that they needed tertiary-level teaching qualifications to do their jobs effectively. Since principals of TAFE colleges hold the most critical positions in which they fulfil both leadership and management roles, they reported in the same survey that they were not recognised or appreciated in their roles. Most of these leaders had more than one educational degree, with only two who did not have a graduate qualification. Post-graduate qualifications were held by 62.6% of the leaders who participated in the survey. Sixty-one percent of the principals surveyed said that educational qualifications were not sufficient for leadership roles in VET colleges and that they needed training in HR management, team management skills, planning and project management

skills, marketing, computer skills, managing finances and resources. None of these are educational skills. A 'special programme tailor made' for VET college leaders incorporating the skills and knowledge needed by VET leaders, such as 'business skills, management skills, financial planning, budgets, people skills', would be preferred (Simon & Bonnici, 2011:3).

2.6.2 Leadership development in the United Kingdom

In the UK, leadership is high on the policy agenda. Improved leadership, learning and professional development, coupled with 'a closer realignment of further education with its employment-related roots are at the heart of Further Education' (Gleeson & Knights, 2008:56). It has already been pointed out in 2.6.1 that Callan's (2001) core capabilities as listed in his capability framework for leaders of VET at TAFE colleges are similar to those advocated by the UK's Management and Leadership National Occupation Standards (Coates *et al.*, 2013) and they will not be listed in this section again. Leadership development programmes for leaders in the FE sector also address these core competencies.

The Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) has developed the FE Senior Leadership programme that prepares senior managers in FE colleges for principalship. The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) was established. It has since changed its name to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) since it purports to address leadership development in other sectors of education besides focusing on schools only. The Association of Colleges (AOC) is also interested in professional development and represents the voice of FE in the UK. The importance of leadership has received strong governmental support in the UK as evidenced by the formation of the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL), tasked with developing leadership in the VET sector (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). The 157 Group represents 157 FE colleges in the UK that have started what they call a 'leadership conversation' which aims to establish a knowledge base from which the Education and Training Foundation can develop a professional and career framework for leadership and management in the education and training sector.

BELMAS has recently organised a seminar titled *FE: Is it time for Cinderella to go to the ball*? This title suggests that VET has also been a neglected area in the past as it has been in South Africa, but that it is now coming in from the cold.

2.6.3 Leadership development in the United States of America

The first Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) specifically designed for community college leaders in the USA was introduced in 1944 (Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2014). A significant boost to the number of programmes occurred in the 1960s. Since then,

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there has been a proliferation of custom-designed leadership training qualifications and programmes. In 1990, the first stand-alone CCLP, separated from the higher education programme of which it was part, was recognised as a state-level programme. A Community College Leadership Development Institute (CCLDI) has been established in the USA to promote leadership development in this sector (Romero & Purdy, 2004).

In the absence of a standard definition, Hagedorn and Purnamasari (2014) define CCLPs as graduate-level university programmes, typically at doctoral level, to prepare senior professionals to serve in leadership roles in the colleges. Many CCLPs are offered traditionally, but the more untraditional modes of delivery, such as part-time or online, seem to be favoured by working professionals. Some programmes are at the master's degree level. A graduate certificate in community college leadership, which forms part of another graduate degree or is designed to stand alone, is also available. Hagedorn and Purnamasari (2014) do not believe that by adding an elective course to an established degree one can call it a CCLP.

In 2005, the Association of American Community Colleges (AACC) published a list of six leadership competencies that were regarded as imperative for community college leaders. They are organisational strategies, resource management skills, communication skills, willingness to collaborate, advocacy skills and professionalism (Eddy, 2010; Nevarez *et al.*, 2013). Surveys funded by the AACC indicated that these competencies should form the basis of any leadership development programme for community college leaders. The many challenges facing community colleges show the need for a different type of leader, using a collaborative approach to leadership which will empower staff to assist in bringing about change. Eddy (2010) and Nevarez *et al.* (2013) both support the idea of a shared leadership model. Leaders should become lifelong learners and ensure that other campus staff are also developed. It is necessary for them to 'think in complex ways' and to 'use multiple frames of reference' (Eddy, 2010:19). Central to leadership at community colleges is contextual competence as the circumstances at each college are different and require an understanding of the environment in which the college operates in order to determine the needs of the campus and how best these needs can be met (Eddy, 2010). Therefore, in the USA, there are a number of existing community college leadership programmes with new ones emerging every year with differing delivery formats which take a working adult's needs into consideration (Amey, 2006). These courses also focus on critical issues such as funding, fundraising, decision-making, ethics and maintaining good health and a balanced life (Vargas, 2013).

Since it was the purpose of this study to design a curriculum framework for such a training programme, Eddy's (2010) USA community college model of VET leadership development

was examined since it has a bearing on the kind of leadership development that could be effective in South Africa

Eddy's (2010) research identified a number of challenges that face leaders at community colleges and which are similar to the challenges at TVET colleges in South Africa. First and foremost was finance. There was an urgency to find alternative methods of funding as funding had become critical and had led to the need to form partnerships, linkages and alliances. There was also a need to upgrade community colleges' infrastructure and buildings and a need to recruit and retain suitable personnel, particularly for the hard sciences like mathematics, engineering and physical science, and especially in the rural areas. Finally, the students' different needs had to be met. Enrolments of students had increased substantially and the type of student had changed. There was a real urgency to meet the needs of non-traditional students who especially needed refresher courses in mathematics and English. There was also a need for remedial education as students were exiting school unprepared for the rigours of college. All these challenges should be addressed in a leadership development programme to prepare leaders for such an environment.

Eddy (2010) proposed a multidimensional model for leading change at community colleges. The foundation for her multidimensional model of leadership is built from five basic propositions. The first proposition is that 'there is no universal model for leadership' as there is 'no single right way to lead' (Eddy, 2010:33). Her second proposition is that 'multi-dimensional leadership is necessary in complex organisations' (Eddy, 2010:33-34). By this she means that leaders need to become more flexible and adaptable in unpredictable times. Leaders will need an expanded skills and knowledge base so that they can adapt strategies and meet new challenges. Leaders must be good at relationship-building, communicating openly, understanding finance, building teams and they must have negotiation skills and decision-making skills.

Her third proposition is that 'leaders rely on their underlying cognitive schema in making leadership decisions' (Eddy, 2010:34). All leaders have their own way of seeing the world, which will guide their thinking and behaviour; however, this could be a disadvantage as the person may misinterpret a situation based on prior experience. It is also difficult to change one's personal mindmap. Most leaders base their experience of leadership on those that they experienced when they were followers. Since educational leadership has always been hierarchical, their idea of leadership could be a top-down model. Once the leader has learnt to break through this mental map and see a situation differently, change becomes possible.

Her fourth proposition is that 'leaders often adhere to their core belief structure' (Eddy, 2010:35). Leaders' 'underlying schemas … are built on … core belief structures, identity and basic convictions' (Eddy, 2010:35). Past experience guides leaders' actions, influencing the way in which the person sees things and makes decisions. Through leadership development, leaders can expand their frame of reference. It is clear, therefore, that the fifth proposition, that 'leaders are learners' (Eddy, 2010:35), is very important. The underlying assumption of the AACC's competencies is that leaders have to keep on learning new ways of leading. Leaders need to question and reflect on their actions as well as what effect their actions have on others. The role of the leader should change from being at the top of a hierarchical structure to facilitating teamwork. Central to the leader-as-learner proposition is to recognise that leaders are adult learners. The needs of an adult learner must be taken into account in the design of a curriculum framework for leader development.

Eddy (2010) proposes that each leader's model should be different since it is a personal and individual reflection of a particular leader's worldview, core beliefs, experiences, skills and leadership style. This model is not static: it evolves as leaders experience new situations and adjust their leadership philosophies and actions. She believes that all these models are composed of similar elements, namely 'the leader's underlying cognitive schema, core beliefs, communication skills, relationships, learning styles, decision-making approaches, gender-based understanding of leadership, ways of knowing and responding to an organisation's culture and climate, and so forth' (Eddy, 2010:36).

2.6.4 Further international vocational leadership development initiatives

New Zealand and Canada are among the countries that have advanced leadership development programmes. In New Zealand, it has been acknowledged that the country needs leaders who can build strong relationships and partners. They also need to understand the change process and see the importance of finding new approaches to 'doing and being' (Robertson, 2005:25). Differentiated strategies for leadership development are needed as leadership cannot be developed devoid of local context. The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) emphasises the importance of mentoring for future leaders. They offer a range of activities for leadership development.

In Ghana, public TVET colleges are under public scrutiny in an evolving political landscape that demands institutional change and increased accountability. Leaders are expected to ensure learner success, promote workforce transfer, foster economic development and serve the needs of the community the college serves (Nevarez *et al.*, 2013). There is a need for the restructuring of vocational and technical educational leadership development and the

VET sector in Ghana (Boateng, 2012). The Ghanaian government has also recognised that it would be unrealistic to expect current and future leadership at the public TVET colleges to do what is expected of them without some form of leader development and there is talk of leadership development for this reason.

Thailand's Education Ministry developed a nine-day customised training programme in 2009 and some 400 VET leaders completed the course. These leaders were expected to formulate action plans for transforming their institutions and then share their insights with other leaders by means of workshops.

In China, a five-year international VET leadership training programme has been developed by the China Ministry of Education, funded by the Ministry of Finance. Between 2008 and 2013, 125 leaders were sent to the USA, Germany and Australia to witness diverse practices in VET in other countries. The purpose of this programme is for China's VET college leaders to learn from best practice so that they too can be innovative in the sector.

There is thus evidence that a great deal is being done to develop leaders of VET internationally.

2.6.5   Leadership development in South Africa

In South Africa, the South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) was recently established and provided with an operating mandate in the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (RSA, 2014) to provide necessary and appropriate support to the TVET college sector but there is no specific mention of leadership development as a priority as is the practice of similar institutes in many other countries. As has already been mentioned, no specific, custom-designed leadership training programme for TVET college leaders exists in South Africa, even though the need for such a programme was articulated in two Green Papers (RSA, 1998; RSA, 2012). This need, however, is not mentioned in the White Paper (RSA, 2014).

Even though there are no qualifications available specifically for TVET college leadership, leadership development of TVET college leaders has sometimes taken place on an ad hoc basis or according to demand and includes training in a variety of areas such as strategic management, management information systems, business writing skills, mentorship, project management and communication in a business environment. Some training has also taken place in fund-raising and partnerships. None of this training has been pitched exclusively at leaders of the TVET colleges.

At the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape, there have been some short programmes attended by staff from TVET colleges, such

as the Management Enhancement Programme (MEP, Level 5) which can articulate into a Foundational Leadership or an Intermediate Leadership Programme, the latter two both being non-credit-bearing programmes offered at the university. One of the programmes at NMMU may be taken on a part-time basis such as the Management Development Programme (Level 6) which articulates into the National Diploma in Business Administration which is a formal qualification.

In other cases, TVET college leaders have been encouraged to enrol for existing post-graduate programmes such as a Master of Business Administration (MBA) or a Master of Public Administration (MPA) which may cover some relevant aspects of leadership. However, there is very little that is context-specific, focusing on the work that has to be done, the former being more suitable for a corporate leader and the latter for a leader in the public service like a municipality or public health organisation. There is therefore a real gap for leadership development in the TVET college sector.

2.7   Conclusion

In this chapter, by means of a review of the literature, the terms, concepts and theoretical underpinnings of leadership and leader development were clarified and contextualised through an examination of the major theories and styles of leadership with special attention given to transformational leadership since it has relevance to the study. It was also pointed out that TVET straddles three different fields, namely the corporate or executive, educational and public service arenas. Leadership in the sector should therefore not be treated as belonging exclusively to any one of those three fields but requires a synthesised approach to leadership development.

Based on the literature described above, leaders in the TVET college sector would be ill-advised to accept the status quo but need to continually find ways of making the colleges more effective. They need to know and understand the specific context of their colleges and grasp the social and political environmental influences that have an impact on them since the context will inform what leadership behaviours will be appropriate at their colleges. They need to see the importance of having to be transformative and innovative, which will entail considered risk-taking on behalf of themselves and their colleagues (Nevarez *et al.*, 2013).

For effective transformation, not only of their colleagues and the college, but also of themselves, leaders in the TVET college sector need to embrace a more collaborative and integrated leadership style as envisaged by current theories about shared leadership as they will not be able to function effectively on their own. They need to build relationships, internally and externally, which also means that they will have to develop good people and communication skills. In order to gain the trust and loyalty of their colleagues so that they

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will be prepared to 'perform beyond expectations' (Bass, 1985) in their quest to support a common vision for the college, leaders will have to become inspirational, motivational, enthusiastic and energetic. They will need to have a strong set of values and beliefs that focus on social justice. They need to lead by example and value diversity, thereby building a strong, inclusive culture within the organisation. They will thus have to develop the ability to reflect critically and develop this skill in others.

No single theory or model of leadership would be appropriate for leader development in the public TVET college sector, but a combination of transformational theories of leadership as well as various approaches suggested in this chapter. The challenges in the sector need to inform the content of any training programme for TVET college leaders.

This chapter concluded with an international glimpse at what was being done with regard to leadership development in other countries, mainly with the objective of pointing out that the need for leadership development in the VET sector has been recognised worldwide and given priority focus. Leadership development should also be prioritised in South Africa's TVET college sector.

Since the purpose of this study was to design a curriculum framework for leadership development in the TVET college sector, concepts and contexts of curriculum were explored. They are discussed in detail in the next chapter, especially within the theoretical framework of activity theory as a way of 'synthesising and developing relevant notions' of knowledge, organisation and management (Blackler, 1993:863).

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTS AND CONTEXTS OF CURRICULUM

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the past and present institutional landscape of TVET colleges (formerly known as FET colleges) was described in detail. Two dominant themes emerged, namely the need for change and the need for transformation in the sector. It was made clear that, in order to bring about change in education and training in South Africa, the TVET college sector would have to transform. The White Paper on Post-school Education and Training (RSA, 2014) acknowledges that this transformation will require strong leadership in the sector. It is therefore incumbent upon the existing and future leadership of these colleges to bring about such change in order to meet the long-term goal of transforming the post-schooling system in South Africa.

Leaders in this sector thus need to be empowered to bring about the required institutional change. It has also been made clear that the need for leadership development is of the utmost importance. This need has been recognised at policy level in South Africa yet, to date, no context-specific training programme or qualification exists, even though there are training programmes available elsewhere in the world, especially in the USA where community colleges have also been in the educational limelight for the same reasons as the TVET colleges in South Africa. This study sought to fill this gap in South Africa through the development of a custom-designed curriculum framework for a post-graduate qualification for TVET college leaders in South Africa. Even though the main focus of this study was on the development of a curriculum framework rather than on curriculum itself, it was necessary to explore the definitions and concepts relating to curriculum and curriculum development further. The relevant concepts are defined and discussed in this chapter.

There is also an increasing emphasis on the transition from institutional learning (theoretical) to learning in the workplace (practical application of theory) in the vocational college context, where the institution and the workplace are seen as two different activity systems in recent research. This view is relevant to this study since the participant in the proposed leadership development will be a leader or aspirant leader at a TVET college (the workplace), applying the theory provided by the curriculum at a university (learning institution). In this context, this person can be seen as a leader as learner.

It has become increasingly evident that learning is influenced by history and culture. The history of the development of the TVET college sector in South African society will have an influence on the development of the curriculum framework. Activity theory focuses on

current practices in society concerning learning and development in the vocational sector (Engeström, 2009), which made it an appropriate theoretical point of departure for this study. Activity theory, which is explained more thoroughly in 3.5, is principally a theory that examines the nature of 'practical activities, their social origins and the nature of the "activity systems" within which people collaborate' (Blackler, 1993:863). Activity theory is also concerned with improving and transforming practice (Garraway, 2011), which have already been indicated as being essential to this study. Activity theory is useful as a conceptual framework, situating human practice in context with the focus on interactions that happen within the activity. Engeström's (1987) third generation version of activity theory was a useful tool to use to analyse the TVET college as an activity system for the purposes of this study, starting with an exploration of the present environment influencing the development of a curriculum framework for TVET college leaders. In Chapter 6, the proposed curriculum framework which will provide the tools or artefacts needed by TVET college leaders to do the work that is expected of them in the new educational landscape envisaged for the post-school sector is described.

In the next section, the concept and contexts of curriculum, curriculum design and development are explored as a backdrop influencing the design of a curriculum framework.

3.2   CURRICULUM VERSUS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

For years, the terms 'syllabus' and 'curriculum' have been used interchangeably but since 1998, with the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in South Africa, the use of 'curriculum' has been favoured. In the White Paper (RSA, 2014), the term 'curriculum' is also used for TVET colleges. SAQA (2005) takes a broad view of curriculum, seeing it as more than a syllabus: a curriculum refers to all of the teaching and learning opportunities that take place in learning institutions.

It is not easy to define curriculum as there does not seem to be a common understanding of the concept. Going back to its origins, the word 'curriculum' is derived from the Latin infinitive, *currere*, which means 'to run' or *curro*, which means 'I run'. The word refers to a race, a racecourse or racetrack (Du Toit, 2011), which today would metaphorically represent an education track along which the learner moves under guidance of the teacher on his or her way to maturity. A 'curriculum' is thus preparation for life since they both have a starting place, a route to be followed and a finishing point that has to be reached (Carl, 2012).

Broadly, a 'curriculum' can mean different things to different people and the way in which it is used adds to the lack of precision in defining the term (Carl, 2012). Barnett and Coate (2003:51) describe the term 'curriculum' as 'fuzzy' because it refers to different things. Geyser (2004) and Scott (2008) point out that a curriculum could refer to a system (national

curriculum) which describes the full range of learning experiences, provision at an institution (such as a school, college or university curriculum), or even to a specific programme, a module or a single leaning experience. Carl (2012) agrees that there is both a narrow and a wider meaning of 'curriculum', where the narrower meaning refers to a set of subjects or what is taught and experienced in a class, while the wider meaning refers to all learning experiences, depending on the context in which it is used. Barnett and Coate (2003:5) describe curriculum as an organised 'set of educational experiences' and pedagogy as the act of teaching brought about by the curriculum. Koen (2011:26) refers to a curriculum as a 'plan of action' that organises learning activities. The term 'curriculum' thus cannot be viewed as having only one meaning. It is evident that 'curriculum' is a multidimensional concept (Bitzer, 2009).

Ragland and Rosenstein (2014) suggest that the difference between a curriculum and a curriculum framework is that a framework is a looser structure consisting of elements which can only guide the construction of a curriculum, namely why students learn about certain aspects of the subject and what should be included in the curriculum. A curriculum framework is part of the planning or design phase of a curriculum. It provides a plan (Wiigens & Tighe, 2010) and structure for organising a curriculum (Alan *et al.,* 2004); therefore, a curriculum framework constitutes the plan of what learners should be able to do. A curriculum framework thus provides the contextualisation and categorical framing of a curriculum. It was the purpose of this study to develop a curriculum framework to guide the construction of a curriculum for the development of TVET college leaders.

3.3   KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING THEORIES

If a curriculum is preparation for life as Carl (2012) suggests, or if it refers to what knowledge is to be included or excluded in learning and how that knowledge is to be organised by the institution as suggested by Le Grange (2011), it would be helpful to explain what knowledge is, what knowledge would be appropriate for a leader in a vocational education context to acquire and how that knowledge could be learnt by this category of learner.

During the last 15 years, learning has become a key topic because of the advanced requirements of the knowledge society and the broader international demands brought about by globalisation. An ultimate goal for an organisation is to ensure that all knowledge relating to an organisation should become a part of that organisation and that such organisational knowledge be developed into a set of practices which is then stored for future use and shared or disseminated within the organisation with the objective of improving services and outcomes (Kiran *et al.,* 2013).

Learning is, however, complex and no generally accepted definition thereof exists. The acquisition of learning used to be regarded traditionally as the acquisition of knowledge and skills but today, the concept covers a much larger field that includes the emotional, social and societal dimensions (Illeris 2009). For the purpose of this study, the emotional, social and societal dimensions, as well as the development of what Edwards (2011:34) calls 'common knowledge' which is shared and which could be used to bring about organisational change, is of interest.

As societies and knowledge production change, so must learning (Bitzer, 2011). Barnett and Coate (2005) believe that change should be reflected in curricula. Understanding how knowledge is produced has undergone significant change over time because, as indicated above, the nature and the needs of the world have changed (Beets, 2009). In Scott's (2008:79) words, '[k]nowledge is the WHAT that needs to be learned or discovered and is central to the curriculum. Effective learning is the answer to the HOW question regarding learning.'

With professional development, everything that is learnt is made relevant to the individual's professional context. It also incorporates values and attitudes that define the person's professional identity, going beyond simply having to learn knowledge and skills (Frick & Kapp, 2009). New forms of curricular organisation such as modular programmes, credit accumulation and transfer schemes, as well as outcomes-based assessment, have become necessary. Programmes are not bound by the traditional academic year at an institution, but have a number of entry and exit points. In a number of countries (the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) these principles have been unified and institutionalised in what South Africa calls a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (Kraak, 2000). This framework supports the philosophy of lifelong learning that ensures that learning is flexible in terms of time and place with multiple modes of delivery to suit learner needs. Learning should have both an academic and vocational focus so that, when they are combined in a qualification, the graduate emerges with a more career-orientated qualification which ensures that he or she has been trained for employability in the world of work.

The TVET college leader is an adult learner. According to Knowles (1984:xvi), who first used the word 'andragogy' which refers to adult learning as being different to pedagogy or traditional learning, adults are self-directing and take responsibility for their own learning. They also have a great deal of life experience which they bring to the learning situation. They are internally motivated to learn and need to know the reason why they are learning what they are learning. The TVET college leader as learner may not always be academically qualified for the post but the wealth of experiential learning that comes with him or her is of inestimable value. Both theoretical and practical learning are important as these

leaders as learners move from the one activity system, the college, into another, the university.

At post-graduate level, where the focus of this study lies, transformative learning principles must apply, incorporating factors such as the development of alternative perspectives, critical thinking and reflection, a learner-centred approach which would include peer review, collaboration, reflective dialogue and self-assessment (Madsen & Bell, 2012). Transformational or transformative learning is about change in the way we see ourselves and the world in which we live. Mezirow (2000:7) describes transformational or transformative learning as the 'process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind and mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action.' Madsen and Bell (2012:46) view transformational learning as a core competency which should be incorporated in a curriculum where learners can critique their own practices, 'uncovering unquestioned assumptions and use each other's experiences to construct a new collective understanding'.

Mezirow's (2000) three key concepts of transformational learning are experience, which is integral to learning, critical reflection, where we think about our experience and examine our underlying beliefs and assumptions, and development, which is the outcome of learning.

For centuries, curriculum has been developed from a Western perspective. The knowledge base that has developed around adult learning has been shaped by what can be considered knowledge in a Western paradigm (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). Recently, however, in countries such as the USA, South Africa and New Zealand, there has been an increasing need to examine 'whose knowledge' is dominant (Grant, 2011). One needs to consider other major systems of thought and beliefs embedded in entirely different cultural values and epistemological systems (Merriam *et al.,* 2007; Botha, 2011*)* and incorporate these into the development of a curriculum in South Africa with its diverse population. The curriculum thus needs to be responsive to the African context (Le Grange, 2011) and not only reflect Western views.

It remains a challenge to determine what knowledge should be included in a higher education programme and 'how knowledge might be constructed, facilitated, mediated and learnt' (Bitzer, 2011:33). Botha (2011) suggests that one needs to learn about other cultures to develop one's own cultural identity in order to understand theirs. The university has to respond to the external and internal forces which have bearing on curriculum development and, therefore, cannot be removed from societal and cultural transformation (Hay & Marais,

2011). The profile of the learners enrolling at learning institutions is changing, and many of these learners come with a wealth of experience which also needs to be taken into consideration when developing a curriculum framework, which was the focus of this study.

As has been pointed out before, the focus of this study was not on curriculum as such, but on developing a curriculum framework. In the next section, curriculum design and development are briefly explained to serve as the background against which a curriculum framework can be designed.

3.4 UNDERPINNING GUIDELINES TO DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this study was to design a curriculum framework that will form the basis of a leadership development programme for TVET college leaders at post-graduate level. The framework should also provide a sound basis for what should be included in the curriculum at the macro-level (Madiba, 2011), which Carl (2012) describes as occurring through educational legislation and falling within the boundaries of educational policy, and which will respond to the requirements of the White Paper (RSA, 2014).

Deciding what should be included in or excluded from a curriculum can be influenced by the type of philosophy prevailing at the time and which often reflects a particular paradigm or view of life. Since curriculum design is subject to historical, political, cultural and social pressures, the same applies to the design of a curriculum framework. Such pressures influence the prioritisation of what should be included or excluded from the curriculum. Scott (2008:3) contends that decisions about what should be included or excluded from a curriculum are 'embedded in socio-political processes'. He suggests that reasons should be given for the inclusion or exclusion of items, which would flag these choices for further examination.

Du Toit (2011:59) poses three questions which should be considered when designing a new curriculum and which could also apply to designing a curriculum framework on which the curriculum can be based: '**What** can be taught and learnt? **Why** should we teach and learn in a particular way? **How** can we teach and learn?' (Du Toit's emphasis).

There seems to be no fixed recipe or blueprint for successful curriculum design (Barnett & Coate, 2005:147; Carl, 2012:67) because a curriculum, like leadership, is always changing to adapt to a changing world. Curriculum design should, therefore, be a flexible process. Carl (2012:66) links curriculum design to decision-making with respect to what content should be included, how the curriculum should be presented and how it should be evaluated. It is the planning stage in curriculum development.

According to Barnett and Coate (2005:149), curriculum design has to be understood as the structured design of 'educational spaces'. They propose three building blocks to curriculum design: knowledge (or what they call epistemological space), acting (or practical space) and being (or ontological space). These are their key dimensions of curricula. Learners need to acquire a deep, informed understanding of the underlying knowledge base associated with their area of study. They then need to be able to put this knowledge into practice in the form of carefully selected activities or the acquisition of relevant skills but it cannot be done successfully if the learners have not developed their inner selves. 'Being' therefore refers to the self-development of the learner as a person who can engage meaningfully with a changing world. In the design of a curriculum, 'being' must be a central consideration. This means that the learner must not only acquire specific knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes, but must be able to understand the knowledge and be critical of it. Barnett and Coate (2005) also believe that the learner should be involved in curriculum design. Learners therefore have to be engaged in curriculum design as 'knowers, as actors and as human beings' (Barnett & Coate, 2005:137). IQA also supports this view as will be evident in the following chapter.

In summary, Barnett and Coate's general schema has been adapted in Figure 3.1:
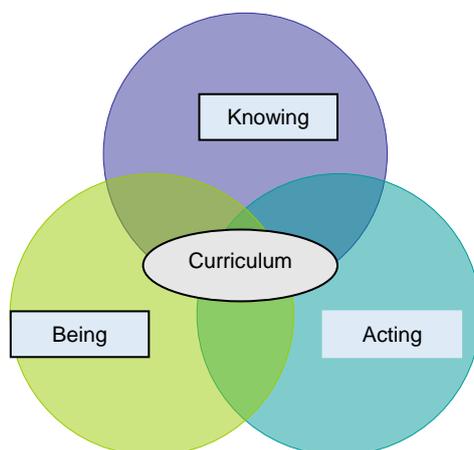
Figure 3.1   Building blocks for curriculum design (adapted from Barnett & Coate, 2005)

Knowing, acting and being are clustered around the central concept of curriculum, but the three domains need to be more or less of equal importance, depending on the field of study, and they need to overlap with one another to some extent. The domain of self ('being') is the most important as the other two depend on it for success. These domains can therefore not be viewed narrowly where knowledge and skills are acquired without much understanding. Curricula have the potential of changing people for life as they change learners as people. Through self-belief, learners learn to look at the world differently and behave differently. In order to become transformed and transformational, TVET college leaders should benefit from Barnett and Coate's (2005) approach to curriculum design as a 'dynamic interplay among knowing, doing, being and becoming' (Steketee, Lee, Moran & Rogers, 2013:68).

This approach moves away from classical models of curriculum development which often follow a linear approach that focuses on 'the articulation of competencies' (Steketee *et al.*, 2013) which are often expressed as objectives and outcomes. For this study, a more dynamic, multidimensional and integrated model representing the proposed curriculum framework was proposed. It is illustrated in Chapter 6. This model has been adapted from the four-dimensional framework for curriculum development proposed by Steketee *et al.* (2013:71) in which they suggest that their framework recognises the need to connect with the larger political, social and economic issues as is the case with this study in accordance with an activity theory lens that is explained in the next section. Therefore, the curriculum framework presented in this study does not refer to the development of written syllabi with learning objectives, activities and assessments but more broadly to the needs of the TVET

Figure 3.6   Adapted from Barnett and Coate's (2005:70) general schema

that the term 'curriculum' is used inconsistently, with a range of meanings from its original description of only the 'content' of a course (referring to the racetrack analogy in 1.5.4) to its more contemporary meaning of how content is to be learnt (as explored in 3.2), the pedagogy employed by the teacher, the resources and assessment methods to be used and finally the evaluation of its effectiveness.

This broader conceptualisation of curriculum focuses on knowledge, action and identity which are all influenced by social, political and economic factors in the TVET college environment (as explained in Chapter 1) in which globalisation and internationalisation play a role. Steketee *et al.* (2013:69) suggest that a way of linking a curriculum framework to the 'bigger picture' is to view it from four interlinking, dependent dimensions. Each dimension or element conveys a message about the 'what', 'why' and the 'how' referred to by Du Toit (2011:59) in 3.4. These four dimensions are described in Chapter 6, where the curriculum framework for this study has been illustrated and described.

Since IQA was used as the methodology for this study, the participants themselves were able to determine what knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes should be included in the curriculum framework envisaged by this study to enable them to lead change in their organisations. Most of these leaders have a great deal of experience in the sector. The learner also needs to undergo a process of learning and understanding as an individual. Through a learner-centred approach, the leaders as learners should not only acquire the knowledge required by the curriculum framework, but they must be able to apply this learning in the TVET college's social, political and economic environment and thereby play a transformational role as leaders in the sector.

Garraway (2011:195) claims that '[a]ctivity theory is fundamentally a theory of transforming and improving practice, whether in a work organisation or in education'. It therefore made sense to use activity theory as the conceptual framework of this study since the aim of the proposed curriculum framework is not only to prepare a leader in the TVET college environment to improve and therefore transform the institution during periods of societal change, but to help such a person undergo individual transformation so that he or she can lead by example, bringing about real change which improves the way in which the college operates.

In the next section, learning theory is examined from a cultural-historical perspective.

3.5 LEARNING THEORY FROM AN ACTIVITY THEORY PERSPECTIVE

3.5.1 Introduction

Activity theory is a useful theoretical framework for analysing human practices as developmental processes at both the individual and the social level. Activity, or what people do, is reflected by people's actions as they interact with their environment (Mwanza, 2001). People express their knowledge through actions (Blackler, 1993). Activity theory has been used in widely diverse interdisciplinary fields to provide new ways of understanding the social, historical and contextual nature of learning, thinking and practice evident in human activity, whether it is in the classroom, the workplace, in social interactions or other activities. It is especially useful for analysing activity in educational settings. Activity theory helps us to understand how learning occurs successfully, no matter where it happens, bringing about necessary change and possibly even transformation (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999). It is here that activity theory could be so useful when considering it in relation to TVET colleges.

In this dissertation, the term 'activity theory' is used as a descriptive tool to explain what happens in an activity system (a TVET college) and to demonstrate the way in which it could be used to guide aspects of the curriculum design process.

3.5.2 Origins of activity theory

Engeström (1999b) suggests that one can distinguish between three theoretical generations of cultural-historical activity theory. Firstly, Vygotsky (1981), with his concept of tool mediation, provided the Marxist-inspired foundational or first generation of work on activity theory. Secondly, Leont'ev (1981) linked activity to the Marxist-inspired concept of division of labour. In the third generation, Engeström (1987) elaborated activity further by moving away from the focus on the individual or his or her predecessors, to focus on the collective. For the sake of clarity, the origins of activity theory are first explored before concentrating on Engeström's (1987) version of activity theory which was used for this study.

3.5.3 First generation activity theory: Vygotsky

It is in the words of others that the threads of Vygotskian views on first generation activity theory are pulled together to form a clear picture. Daniels, Cole and Wertsch (2007) asserted that Vygotsky maintained that people shape and are shaped by historical, social and cultural conditions. Learners actively construct meaning as a social activity. Through the mediated use of social tools and signs (symbols or language), humans interact with their environment (Mwanza, 2001). This forms the basis of a constructivist viewpoint of learning as held by Vygotsky. Assisting learners to learn and knowing how to use the most relevant knowledge that they could access were central to Vygotsky's educational psychology (Edwards, 2014). In a learning environment, the learner interacts with other learners, learning in a social situation rather than learning alone. The external environment thus results in a number of internal developmental processes (Bitzer, 2009:46).

3.5.3.1 Mediation

Vygotsky (1981) saw mediation as being developmental and his focus was on how cultural tools or artefacts could be used to bring about qualitative transformation. From this perspective, he believed that the purpose of instruction was to assist learners in learning to use artefacts efficiently. The artefact for this study is a context-specific curriculum framework for TVET college leaders. Vygotsky believed that the learner is the true object in teaching. Since learners are not identical, methods of teaching or learning cannot be uniform; therefore he suggested that in order to respond to this diversity, a curriculum should be 'dynamic and responsive' (Daniels, 2007:316).

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A core issue of activity theory is the transformation of individuals and communities and this is why it is of so much interest to this study. The curriculum framework must therefore include elements that bring about transformation of the individual and the community in which the individual functions. People do not only respond blindly to what happens in their lives, but are able to change the conditions that 'mediate their activities' (Roth, 2004:2). The term 'mediate' is a theme that runs through Vygotsky's work to mean the use of tools or artefacts[1] to interact in an indirect way with the world. Through mediation, the separation between mind, culture and society is broken down. Vygotsky believed that individuals control behaviour from the outside and not the inside by using and creating artefacts which they learn to control and thus have control over their future (Engeström, 1999b). Mediation thus builds a link between historical and social processes and the individual's mental processes. Cultural and historical forces provide forms of mediation that humans internalise. Their mental functioning is thus socio-historic (Wertsch, 2007). Mediation, which is central to activity theory, can therefore not be separated from culture (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007; Engeström & Miettinen, 1999).

Mediation has been illustrated by Vygotsky's (1978) simple triangle, which contains a subject (in different versions called S or A), object (R or B) and mediating artefact (X), as shown in Figure 3.2.

Direct conditional reflex

Stimulus S   Result/response R

Artificial memory   Artificial memory (a product of historical development)

X

Mediated by psychological tool or instrument X
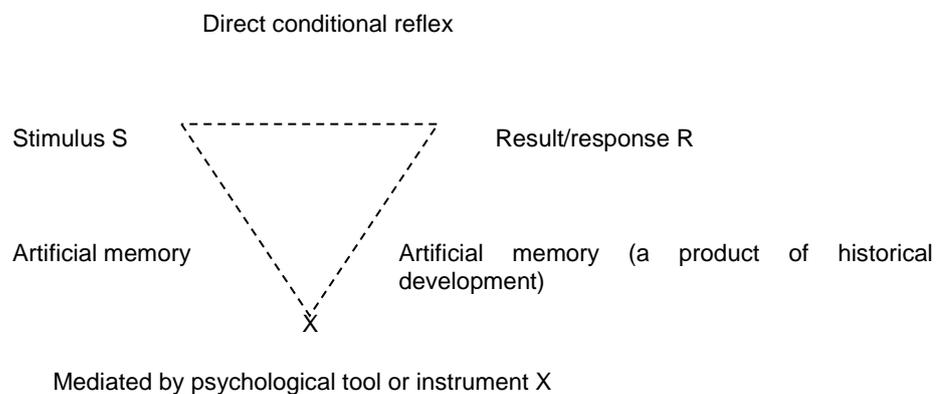
Figure 3.2   Vygotsky's structure of a mediated act (adapted from Vygotsky, 1978:40, Vygotsky, 1981:138, cited in Engeström, 1987:59)

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[1]The British-spelt word 'artefact' is used instead of the American-spelt word 'artifact' as used by Engeström and many others writing about activity theory.

3.5.3.2   Zone of proximal development (ZPD)

One of Vygotsky's most meaningful contributions to the learning phenomenon is his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the main portal through which development proceeds (Stetsenko, 1999). According to this concept, learning generally takes place by means of someone whose knowledge is more advanced than that of the learner. Vygotsky refers to these people as 'more capable peers' (Vygotsky 1978:86, cited in Engeström, 1987:169), 'the more knowledgeable other' (Bitzer, 2004:47) or the 'more capable partner' (Daniels, 2007:318). The learning could take place in a theoretical situation (at an institution of learning), practical situation (in the workplace) or through social interaction. Social interaction is thus the main source of mental processes, according to Vygotsky (1981). The zone represents the difference between what the learner learns to do from 'the more knowledgeable other' and what can then be done on his or her own. The learner develops higher mental functions as he or she progresses, away from the possible limitations of simply being able to understand the initial concepts to being able to make meaning of them and apply them to other situations on his or her own. This illustrates not only the social and co-operative nature of learning, but also that learning is usually developmental (Daniels, 2007). There is thus a relation between instruction (or teaching) and development (or learning).

From the perspective of the TVET college leader as learner, some of the theoretical learning may take place at the university under the guidance of a lecturer but the rest of the learning will have to take place at the college itself where the theory should be applied to practice. The curriculum framework developed in this study is intended to provide the tools that will enable leaders as learners to apply the learning back at work on their own in their ZPD. The view of learning which moves from a locus where learners construct meaning from an initial understanding of a topic to applying it to something more abstract (Garraway, 2011) is not only a Vygotskian view of learning, but is also a central concept in Piaget's view of learning (Bitzer, 2004:47).

With first generation activity theory, the unit of analysis remained focused on the individual as agent (Illeris, 2009:54). If activity is to be reduced to an individual, it removes the cultural and societal nature of activity which the subject-relatedness in activity theory emphasises (Engeström, 1999b). The concept of social practice can be interpreted as activity, which is located in different institutions. In their lifetimes, people participate in many different activities in different institutions which lead to conceptual differences and different capabilities of people from different cultural traditions. These differences influence a person's mode of thinking. People appropriate different capabilities by being involved with activities in different institutions, such as the home, school, college/university and the

workplace (Chaiklin, Hedegaard & Jensen, 1999). The cultural tools required in each setting are different. Conflicts can arise between different institutional practices because of these differences in culture and thinking. In the case of the TVET college leader as learner, some of the learning is obtained under the guidance of the university by means of new, more efficient cultural tools through interactions with the 'more knowledgeable other' (Bitzer, 2004:47). Once the new actions that can be performed through the use of these tools have been internalised by the leader as learner, he or she is then capable of performing more complex tasks independently in the workplace.

Vygotsky's cultural-historical approach to learning was developed further when Leont'ev, one of his first learners and the main theoretician who followed up his work, developed a coherent and integrated framework for activity theory (Wertsch, 1981). Leont'ev introduced the concept of the division of labour, which moved the focus away from the individual to the collective (Leont'ev, 1981). This became known as the second generation of activity theory (Engeström, 1999b).

3.5.4   Second generation activity theory: Leont'ev

When Leont'ev formulated his concept of activity, he used Marx's concept of labour (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999). According to Marx, human activity begins with labour. Roth (2009) suggests that we are what we do. The use and the making of tools are regarded as essential to labour. History determines which tools are necessary at the time. What makes us human is the collective nature of labour. The manifestation of the collective nature of activity is the division of labour. An individual does not satisfy his or her own needs by carrying out an activity on his or her own, but only enacts a few actions that form part of the activity (Davydov, 1999a). Leont'ev saw activity as a system of relationships, not of characteristics (Fichtner, 1999). Each action is goal-directed, but the activity is distinguished according to its motive or the object toward which it is orientated. The structure of social interaction in labour changes over history, which results in changes in human thinking.

Leont'ev (1981) also argues that one action involved in an activity in one situation can be regarded as an activity in another situation. It is evident from the organogram of the TVET college, for instance, that no one person can perform a function in isolation. For example, each of the support functions such as human relations development, finance and operational management at the TVET college, can be regarded as activities in themselves, but they cannot function in isolation of each other.

This interdependence is well illustrated in Leont'ev's famous 'primeval collective hunt' analogy (Leont'ev, 1981). Leont'ev singled out the beater, who drove the prey towards his fellow hunters, who were waiting to make the kill. After the kill, they all shared in the spoils

of the hunt. Frightening the animals was an action aimed at a specific goal, but the hunt was an activity that involved others to complete the kill which provided food or materials for clothing (Leont'ev, 1981:210). Where Vygotsky's cultural historical unit of analysis was simply 'object-oriented action mediated by cultural tools and signs' (Vygotsky, 1978:40, cited in Engeström & Miettinen, 1999), Leont'ev made the first breakthrough in the concept of activity by introducing mediation by other human beings (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999). Even though Leont'ev never graphically illustrated Vygotsky's model, this was still a major step forward as it expanded activity theory to include complex relations between the individual and his or her community (Engeström, 1999b). This distinction between action and activity forms the basis of Leont'ev's three-level model of activity.

In Leont'ev's (1981) seminal writings on activity, he proposed his three-tiered scheme with its corresponding meanings indicated in brackets afterwards:

- Activity (Motive)

- Action (Goal)

- Operations (Instrumental Conditions) (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999:23).

These three tiers serve to extend the sphere of analysis towards the transformation which occurs between the different levels. Zinchenko and Gordon (1981:74) explain Leont'ev's three-tiered scheme further as:

- motive – the object which directs the activity towards a goal;

- goal – the result of the action or the task of the activity which is embedded in the third component; and

- objective conditions – the resources used to reach the goal.

Zinchenko and Gordon (1981:74) continue to explain as follows:

> The relationships among the components of activity are mobile and changeable. […] The mobility of these relationships can also be seen in the fact that one and the same goal can be attained by various means just as one and the same set of means can be used to reach different goals.

3.5.4.1   Action versus activity: a clarification

Most learning consists of actions which are embedded in activities. The motive may not be learning as such (Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2008). Leont'ev distinguished between actions, which are goal-orientated, activities which have a collective motive or object, and operations, which are the conditions within which actions are carried out (Wertsch, 1981). If individuals perform actions but the activity rests with the collective, it is necessary to clarify

the difference between action and activity at this point. An action is goal-orientated and performed by an individual. It is not 'fully predictable, rational and machine-like' (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999:32) and is difficult to explain or rationalise since it is prone to unplanned disruption or failure, or may even lead to innovation. An activity refers to an entire system, which includes individual action. It would take an analysis of the activity system to see the inner contradictions, called a *double bind* by Engeström (Engeström, Miettinen & Punamäki, 1999; Blackler, 1993:872), which cause these unpredictable failures or disruptions (Engeström *et al*, 1999).

There is also a qualitative time difference between actions and activities. An action is linear which starts with an activity and ends when the goal has been reached. History divides time up into periods and each historical event has a particular effect on the type of actions enacted at that time. The effect of the political-social conditions over time on the TVET college sector was illustrated in the previous chapter. Activity time is 'recurrent and cyclic' (Engeström *et al.*, 1999:33). Engeström (1987) refers to this as an expansive cycle which he describes as a developmental process which first starts as internalisation. Internalisation is the stage that is reached when external processes are transformed into mental processes. Creative externalisation happens through social interaction or training. Learning therefore involves internalisation (the use of information), as well as externalisation (the acquisition of information) which leads to further development. The expansive cycle is explained in more detail below.

A simple triangle, with the individual shown as an object using tools to mediate the subject, as depicted by Vygotsky (Figure 3.2), does not do justice to the different components and internal relations prevalent in an activity system. It does not explain the societal and collaborative nature of the actions of the individual. Actions as events in a collective activity system are also not clear. An activity which is carried out by a subject must include 'goals, means, the process of moulding the object and the results. In fulfilling the activity, the subjects also change and develop themselves' (Davydov, 1999a:39). Davydov (1999a) states that the transforming nature of the activity allows the subject to step away from a given situation in order to view it in a wider social and historical context, thus giving the subject the means to go even beyond the given possibilities. This expansion of the original theory led to the development of the third generation of activity theory.

3.5.5 Third generation activity theory: Engeström

Engeström (1987) did not refute his predecessors' ideas but assimilated many of them so that systems of activity could be examined at the macro-level of the collective rather than the micro-level of the individual operating tools (Davydov, 1999b; Warmington *et al.*, 2004).

Engeström (1987) extended Vygotsky's (1981) conceptualisation of the mediated relationship between the subject and the object by incorporating Leont'ev's (1981) social and cultural aspects of human activity such as rules, community and division of labour, while emphasising the importance of analysing the interactions among the various elements.

Engeström's model of activity theory is depicted by a triangular structure (Figure 3.3). Since his interest is in the system rather than the individual, his heuristic model of the triangle is seldom a single triangle, but can consist of a minimum of two intersecting triangles sharing a common object. The purpose of the model is to encapsulate the systemic whole rather than the separate connections, so that the many different perspectives, which Engeström (1987) refers to as multiplicity or multivoicedness of the relations can be analysed. Multiplicity and multivoicedness as used in activity theory refer to the many different perspectives or voices of the participants in the activity system.

Engeström regards the activity system as being the smallest unit for describing human activity.
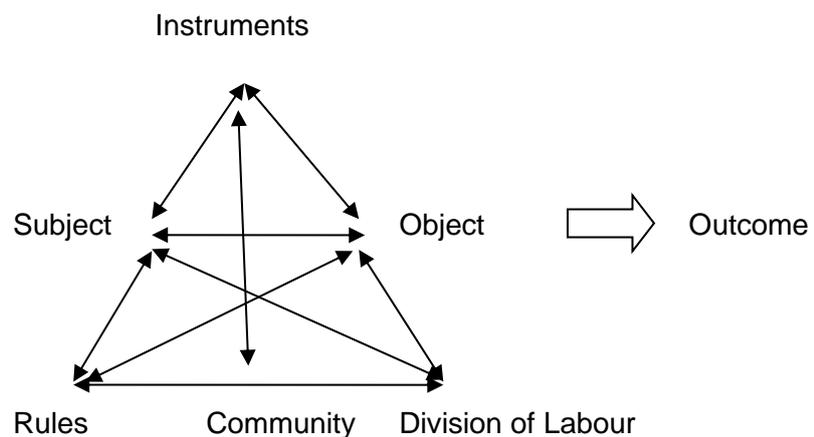
Figure 3.3   The structure of human activity (adapted from Engeström, 1987:78)

The six components or elements of the activity system incorporate the 'Subject, Object and Community components', as well as the 'mediators of human activity, namely, tools, rules and the division of labour' (Mwanza, 2001:2). These components are discussed below.

1. The subject is the individual or the actors in the activity system who collaborate with others in a social setting to satisfy the shared objective.

2. The object of activity is the motivational or purposeful nature of human activity that allows humans to control their own behaviour while in the process of satisfying their identified objectives (Mwanza, 2001). The object must not be confused with an objective as the objectives are the outcomes in activity theory terms.

3. Instruments, artefacts or tools can be material or physical (resources) or conceptual in nature. The subject uses them to mediate the relationship between the subject and the object of activity with the purpose of satisfying its goal(s). Material tools are used to handle objects, whilst conceptual tools are used to influence behaviour (Mwanza, 2001).

4. Rules and regulations also mediate the object. Rules and regulations are the explicit or implicit conventions or cultural norms that constrain or allow actions taken by the participants in the activity.

5. The community or stakeholders, who are the participants in the activity, provide the social and cultural context of the environment in which the subject operates.

6. Division of labour refers to the way in which the work that needs to be done is allocated as job roles or responsibilities for carrying out the activity.

The essence of activity theory is that it is object-driven. Understanding the relevance of activity theory depends on our grasp of how objects can change their character, creating new objects as people change through their activities. Since objects 'are concerns […], generators and foci of attention, motivation, efforts and meaning' (Engeström, 2009:304), the implication is that there can be two or more activity systems to explain a phenomenon. As soon as the object changes its form, the basic model can be expanded to include a minimum of two interacting activity systems, the initial one and the transformed one. The activity system is dynamic, not static. There is constant movement in an activity system with the object changing its form; sometimes components within the activity system can change roles within the system. For example, an object may become an artefact, which mediates a new object. The third generation of activity theory aims to 'develop conceptual tools to understand dialogues, multiple perspectives and networks of interacting activity systems' (Warmington *et al.,* 2004:3). Figure 3.4 illustrates a multitude of systems, indicating patterns of contradiction and tension.

Mediating Artefact

Mediating Artefact

Object 2   Object 2

Object 1

Object 1

Rules   Community   Division of Labour

Rules   Community   Division of Labour

Object 3
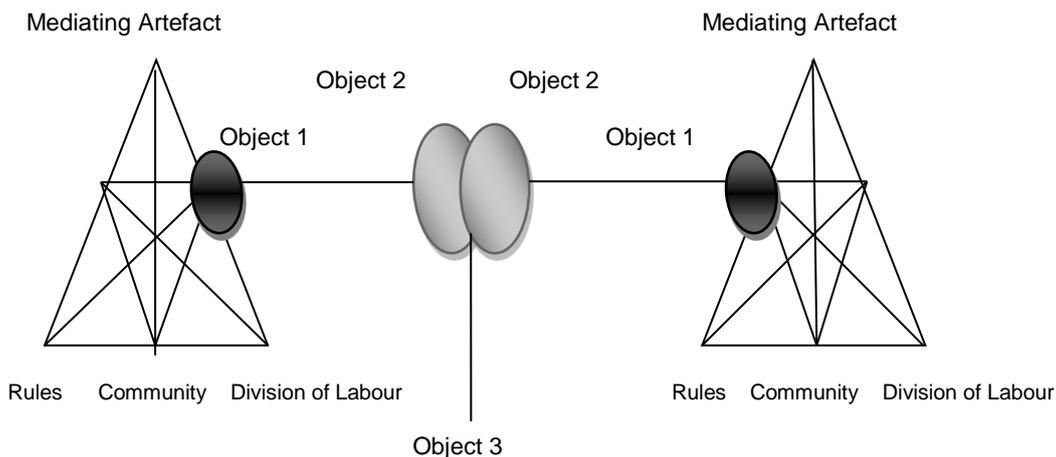
Figure 3.4   Third generation activity theory model (adapted from Warmington *et al.*, 2004:3).

By definition, then, an activity system is multivoiced (it contains many different perspectives) as can be seen in the expansive cycle of activity, with its different viewpoints and different roles by various participants, the individual and the collective.

The activity system represents the complex whole. As already pointed out, activity is not defined by time in the same way as an action is, but evolves through learning. The activity is where the individual or individuals are involved in the situational context. In Figure 3.5 the six components of an activity system are illustrated and described in a TVET college situation or context.

Curriculum Framework (artefact/tool/instrument)

Leader
(Subject)

TVET college
(Object)

Transformed college

1. Rules   2. Community   3. Division of Labour
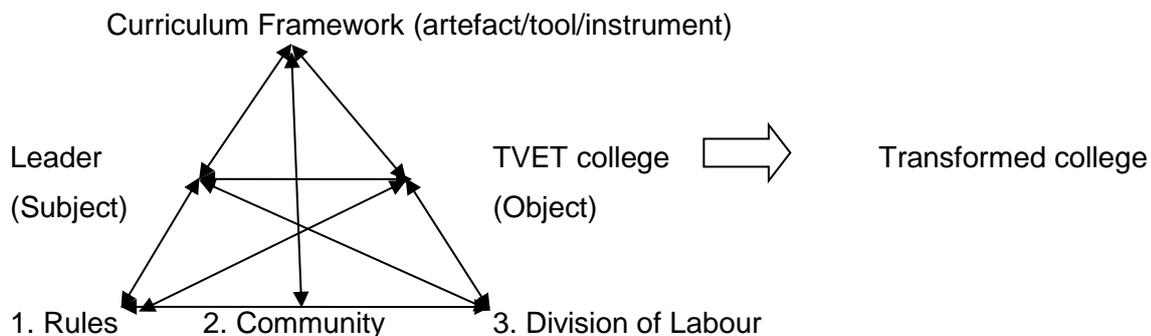
Figure 3.5   The structure of human activity in a TVET college (adapted from Engeström, 1987:78)

What constitutes the rules, community and division of labour at a TVET college are defined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1   Explanation of rules, community and division of labour in terms of the TVET college

1. Rules	2. Community	3. Division of Labour
• As determined by policy and procedure • Reporting conventions as determined by organogram • Determined by student rules • Determined by terms of reference	• Internal and external • DHET • College Council • Academic Board • Executive leadership • Mid-level leadership • Departmental leaders and staff (operational) • Academic staff • Administrative assistants • Terrain staff • Cleaners • Services • Student Representative Council • Unions and shop stewards • Parents, guardians and students • Community • Media and other sub-groups	• Council and other boards: various terms of reference (legislation) • Employees: according to job descriptions • Students: according to student manual • Community and other external organisations with their own rules

The subject-object relationship is represented in the top part of the diagram. The triangles inside the larger triangle represent the relationships influenced by the larger cultural and historical context in which all these relationships operate. The cultural and historical influences modify these relationships and influence the tools (instruments or artefacts) which are used by the participants. As already mentioned, this is not a static situation as rules may be changed and the division of labour modified, which leads to the creation of a changed activity system. All activity systems make up a network of activity systems that make up human society.

The subject in this activity system is the leader, or rather the leader as learner, who is the participant of this study. Through the mediation of the artefact, which is the curriculum framework, the motivation is to acquire the necessary tools to transform the object, which is the TVET college. The rules, which refer to the norms and general culture of operating concerning people and things, structure the social interaction internally and externally with horizontal and vertical divisions. Rules can also be seen as principles of control; they are applied to determine how relationships are formed and maintained, how communication

takes place and operations at the college are organised. The division of labour, which refers to the role that each member of the community plays according to the college organogram, could therefore also refer to power and status. The multivoicedness of the system needs to be highlighted to understand the dynamics of the system.   The activity system is heterogeneous and diverse, with multiple worldviews. The community comprises multiple individuals and groups who share the same object, which is the TVET college that needs to be transformed to meet the new legislative needs.

3.5.5.1   Transformation

Since a key notion in activity theory is transformation, the use of the term in activity theory needs to be explained. Activity theory maintains that change differs from transformation in that transformation does not take place simply by changing the object of the activity but by altering the very essence of the object. No single definition has emerged for 'essence' but, in this respect, it could refer to the individually specific feature of the object (Davydov, 1999a). The essence or individually specific feature of an object can be seen in how a TVET college differs from other learning institutions such as a university or a school. In other words, the TVET college is different in its essence or in the individually specific feature of the object which is made up of the features of the present TVET college (post-school vocational, FET and HET mix), a university (academic, higher education only) or a school (FET and basic education). If the earlier FET college has to transform into the TVET college required by the White Paper (RSA, 2014) and not simply change some of its practices, it needs to change into something with radically different features. In other words, one could say that something must happen from within the activity system.

3.5.5.2   Contradictions and conflicts in activity systems

Leont'ev (1981) believed that the object has the potential for change. Each action can be viewed as being able to transform life conditions and people. Collective engagement in an activity not only increases the potential of action, but also opens up a ZPD for individual learning and transformation (Engeström, 1987).   Engeström suggests that 'the incoherencies, dilemmas and double-binds' in an activity system mark out its ZPD (Blackler, 1993:872). This means that 'understanding the inner dynamics or contradictions of the activity system provides the key to understanding the laws which govern social change' (Blackler, 1993:872). Both Warmington *et al.* (2004) and Roth (2009) point out that the driving force of change and development within activity systems is contradiction.

Fichtner (1999) describes contradiction as follows: Development moves forward incrementally. With each new phase or stage, there is an enlargement, an increase in advancement from the simple to the complex. Development is a process where another

level of functioning is reached which has not been available earlier. In development, differences and anomalies are encountered which can become opposites and, finally, contradictions which are inherent to self-development. The contradiction is therefore not a 'source or driving force outside of development and alteration' (Fichtner, 1999:59). The effect of the contradiction depends on the intensity of the interaction between the opposites. Their 'mediation determines to what extent developmental processes are set in motion' (Fichtner, 1999:59). The existence and solution of contradictions lead to development. Development is therefore not primarily the change or transformation that takes place, but the contradictions allow people or the situation to 'become otherwise' (Fichtner, 1999:59) which is qualitatively different to how the person or the situation was previously. Transformation thus takes place.

Even though tensions among the elements within activity systems are not only peculiar to systems during periods of rapid change, they are particularly evident when there are attempts to change predominant views of the object of activity rapidly (Blackler, 1993). Conflicts and contradictions are also to be found within and between activity systems since activity systems do not exist in isolation. The relationship between different activity systems is also a source of potential tension. These conflicts or contradictions are analysed in the following chapters.

Inherent to an activity system are contradictions and conflicts at the borders where different people relate to each other, since the system comprises a diverse number of participants, each with his or her own socially or culturally influenced perspectives (the multivoicedness to which Engeström refers). Individuals internalise the available cultural tools to help them cope with inner contradictions. By analysing the activity system and not the actions that are the causes of the contradictions, one may be able to identify the contradictions that can either cause the failure of the system or lead to new improved ways of practice. An example of a contradiction in the TVET college activity system could be the dichotomous situation that many leaders face in the changing TVET college climate. This situation often leaves the leader feeling isolated and uncertain. Professional leadership development will support him or her to cope effectively with change or to alter a leadership style to suit the new situation as described in the previous chapter or suggested by the participants in the study in Chapter 5.

Externalisation is at its peak when a new model of activity begins to take form. This means that a novice, through socialisation and training to become a competent member of the activity, first internalises the activity as it is routinely carried out. Through self-reflection, externalisation begins to take place and solutions are sought. A new activity model is created and internalisation once again becomes the dominant form of learning and

development at that stage. The expansive cycle with its collective activity systems is equivalent to Vygotsky's ZPD (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999:34).

According to Engeström, activity theory can be summarised with the help of five principles (Engeström, 1999b:6; Warmington *et al.*, 2004): The first is that, the primary unit of analysis in cultural-historical studies of human conduct, is the object-orientated and artefact-mediated collective activity system, or activity systems interacting with other activity systems. Here he moves away from Vygotsky's focus on the individual to the collective.   The second principle is that the chief sources of movement and change in activity systems are the so-called multivoicedness of participants with many different points of view depending on the community involved, the rules and conventions that bind them and the division of labour that directs their actions and the artefacts that they use, with diverse histories and different traditions and interests. The third principle is historicity. Activity systems are non-static and change or transform over time. It often takes a great deal of time for activity systems to take shape. Problems can only be understood according to the history that shapes the activity as a system is different today than it was before. The fourth principle focuses on the role that inner contradictions play in bringing about change and development. Contradictions must not be confused with problems or conflicts.   Contradictions are historically motivated because of the many voices of the participants in the system, led by their many different perspectives or points of view. Whenever a new element is introduced into the system, it could create conflict that drives efforts to change the activity. The solutions to the conflicts and internal contradictions that inevitably arise are all sources of innovation, which lead to deeper learning. The fifth principle refers to the possibility of expansive transformations in activity systems.   The systems can undergo long cycles of qualitative transformations producing a number of contradictions. As the contradictions increase, individuals begin to question them and may move away from the established norms.   This can lead to a collective attempt to change the system and take it to the next level.   An expansive transformation takes place when the object or the motive of the activity is revised or reconceptualised and goes beyond the initial mode of the activity.   Warmington *et al.* (2004:4) note that '[a] full cycle of expansive transformation may be understood as a collective journey through the ZPD of the activity'.

Engeström suggests that further research is needed to analyse expansive learning. It is clear that a great deal of work is being done and still needs to be done in the reconstruction of activity theory to form new theories which will reflect human activity in its multifaceted forms (Engeström, 1999b).   Engeström (1999b) suggests the following with respect to development: Development takes place when the old has been destroyed or rejected. In other words, the object changes. This view is also highlighted by Cole and Gajdamashko

(2009). Development is not only an individual transformation, but a collective one. Development does not only take place vertically and hierarchically, but horizontally across borders.

These suggestions are also relevant to this study. When change becomes difficult, it is usually because people cannot let go of the past and embrace the future. Engeström's first two suggestions, namely that the old needs to be destroyed to make way for the new and that transformation cannot only be an individual responsibility, are covered by the notion of learning by expanding as described in 3.5.5.3 below. The concepts of vertical and horizontal development and border-crossing are explained in 3.5.5.4 and 3.5.5.5.

3.5.5.3 Expansive learning

Engeström (1987) maintains that collective learning about activities follows an expansive course. The contradictions and inconsistencies between elements within a particular activity system must first be recognised before moving to a concern about the implications of change for other systems. The conflicts between the old system (old object) and the demands of the new system (revised object) first need to be addressed (Blackler, 1993).

The most important mechanism for development in activity theory terms is expansive learning (Engeström, Y, 2009). Engeström's theory of expansive learning means that knowledge is attained by moving step by step from the abstract (or partial) to the concrete (the whole). A new theoretical idea or key concept, or what Vygotsky refers to as a 'germ cell' (Edwards, 2011:36), is produced 'in the form of an abstract, simple explanatory relationship' (Engeström, 1999b:11). This initial abstraction, or partial understanding, is transformed into a concrete system, or whole understanding, which constantly evolves and changes depending on societal, cultural and historical circumstances in which it occurs. In an expansive learning cycle, the abstraction or idea is transformed into a complex object which becomes a new form of practice, producing new theoretical understanding of practice in a number of different ways (Engeström, 1999b).

An intervention that Engeström suggests using for expansive learning, is a sequence of epistemic actions to be taken in an expansive learning cycle, which consists of the following seven steps: questioning, analysing, modelling, examining, implementing, reflecting and consolidating. By following these steps, participants can criticise or reject some aspects of their present accepted practice and existing behaviour to identify causes and then formulating solutions to the problematic situation or creating a new idea in the format of a model. By examining these models, they can determine whether performance is optimal or whether there is room for improvement. The model can then be applied in a practical situation. This step is followed by reflecting on the effectiveness of this model with a larger

group of staff before finally consolidating the outcomes and establishing a new, stable form of new practice.

A useful methodology is to apply Engeström's Development Work Research (DWR) to bring about change and transformation in an organisation. DWR aims to enable workers to 'become conscious objects of their own learning activity' (R Engeström, 2009). The purpose of this methodology is to study human development related to individual learning during societal change. A detailed description of this methodology is beyond the scope of this study, but it could be useful when offering the curriculum proposed by this study as a transformational exercise in the TVET sector. In DWR, participants examine the present situation, highlighting what is or what is not working effectively. Models and visions are then developed for the future. As participants talk about their problems, contradictions inherent in the system are exposed which provide the catalyst for change. It also co-constructs a vision for the future.

Engeström's model of activity theory therefore has potential value 'in helping people to picture the dynamics of their situations' (Blackler, 1993:872). His triangle can act as a new instrument of mediation. By questioning the accepted practice, individual subjects set the expansive cycle in motion. It then expands into a collective movement as buy-in is acquired by the group in the practice. Expansive learning can therefore be understood as 'the construction and resolution of successively evolving contradictions in the activity system' (Engeström, 1999b:12). By ascending from the abstract to the concrete, specific learning actions are enacted that form an expansive cycle or spiral. Organisational transformation 'requires long-term effort and deliberate interventions' in order for 'the expansive learning cycle and its embedded actions' to take place (Engeström, 1999b:12) and it is central to the need for change and transformation that needs to take place in the TVET college sector.

The process of expansive learning should be understood as 'the construction and resolution of successively evolving tensions or contradictions in a complex system that includes the object(s), the mediating artefacts and the perspectives of the participants' (Engeström, 1999:384). This process suggests that the proposed curriculum framework should take cognisance of the tensions and contradictions in the system by providing the mediating artefacts to ensure that leaders of the proposed new TVET colleges are adequately equipped to lead the colleges of the future. In Chapter 5 the identified artefacts that inform the curriculum framework presented as the outcome of this study are developed with the help of the perspectives of the participants. This curriculum framework is intended to respond to the requirements of the TVET college as an activity system with its different components or elements and underlying contradictions.

Both the Green Paper (RSA, 2012) and the White Paper (RSA, 2014) have questioned accepted practice at TVET colleges which has become entrenched through history. It is imperative that qualitative change and transformation take place. Engeström (1999b:13) sees society as 'a multi-layered network of interconnected activity systems rather than a pyramid of rigid structures dependent on a single centre of power'. The same can be said of each of the 50 public colleges in the TVET college sector. Work activities at these colleges could be redefined in a socially mediated activity system, contradictions or disturbances analysed and new tools collectively designed to be applied by practitioners. The new tools could take the form of the proposed curriculum framework.

To continue with Engeström's thoughts on development, the first points that he makes concern expansive learning as explained above. His other contention is that development does not only take place vertically and hierarchically, but horizontally across borders. An explanation of vertical and hierarchical development is followed by an explanation of what he means by 'across borders' in his third suggestion in 3.5.5.5.

3.5.5.4   Vertical and horizontal development

Most people see development as moving upwards, following a vertical path upward through various hierarchical levels (Beach, 2008). The higher the level, the more abstract the knowledge and the greater the progress that has been made. Horizontal development refers mainly to adapting to change in society. Education prepares people to adapt to existing societal values and beliefs across generations and it prepares individuals for participation in the transformation of society. Consequential transition refers to the second concern, even though it presupposes the existence of the former (Beach, 2008). This view is echoed by Vygotsky (1981).

Vertical learning (or hierarchical progression) does not mean that learning has to take place in a certain fixed sequence. There is a 'continuous interplay between the levels' (Engeström, 1999b:10). Historically, people from different cultures, in different societies or busy with different practices, all grasp things differently. No-one's cognition should be judged as being better or more advanced than the other. All thinking and practice cannot be judged the same especially in the light of the diverse composition of staff and learners prevalent in TVET colleges as has been referred to in Chapter 1.

There are new demands for expertise in a changing world. Engeström (1999b) argues for a broader, multidimensional view of expertise. While the vertical dimension remains important, the horizontal dimension of acquiring expertise is gaining relevance. Experts operate in and move between different activity contexts which require different and often conflicting cognitive tools, rules and social interaction. Edwards (2011:33) states that as practitioners

collaborate and move from their field of expertise to another's field of expertise, they acknowledge the other's expertise but they bring both their own core expertise and another form of expertise (which she calls 'relational expertise') to the working environment. This, in a TVET college environment, would mean that if, for example, the discussion is about a problem regarding classroom practice, the lecturer will be acknowledged as having relational expertise in that situation. The academic or departmental head, say, also has some core expertise since, at some stage, he or she had also been in the classroom, but the relational expertise that this person now brings to the discussion would be valuable too in that it would bring some other perspective or way of knowing to the situation. The approach is thus more collaborative than dictatorial as was described as being the more preferable and current approach to leadership in the previous chapter. Edwards (2011:33) explains that '[r]esponsive collaboration calls for an additional form of expertise which makes it possible to work with others to expand understandings of the work problem as, in activity terms, an object as activity'. To be able to change perspectives does not necessarily mean seeking consensus, but implies a willingness to try to understand someone else's point of view and to reach mutually satisfactory agreement (Edwards, 2011:38). The vertical master-novice relationship becomes problematic for problem-solving in these new interactions (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008).

At TVET colleges, not only are the staff diverse in terms of qualifications and culture, but so are the learners. As was explained in the two preceding chapters, the leaders as learners come from a variety of different backgrounds and stages of development and many need to learn through various modes of delivery. It is for these reasons that vertical and horizontal development and, especially understanding relational agency, are of consequence to the curriculum framework presented in this study.

3.5.5.5   Polycontextuality and boundary- or border-crossing

Since there are new demands for expertise in a changing world, Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young. (2008:3) suggest that this 'newly emerging landscape of expertise may be designated as polycontextuality and boundary-crossing'. This means that people are no longer engaged in single tasks, but in multiple simultaneous tasks that may entail crossing the boundary from one community of practice or group of experts into another in the same activity. Activity theory views learning as the unit of analysis of learning whereas gaining knowledge is a collective activity: 'Significant learning processes are achieved by collective activities' (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008:4). This is particularly true of the TVET college staff who are constantly involved in this horizontal dimension of expertise. It would also be true of the staff and the learners at TVET colleges who have to cross borders or boundaries of knowledge to view how others work when job shadowing (observation in the

workplace). It could also be suggested that it is not until leaders cross borders and share what they have learnt that they critique their own leadership practices (Robertson, 2005).

Border-crossing may also be horizontal or vertical. Educational institutions have many borders and it is important to know how to cross them (Robertson, 2005). These borders may include theory and practice, executive leaders and staff, staff and learners, DHET and institutions, universities and TVET colleges, cultures, genders, ages, and so on. There are also potential conflicts or contradictions at all these borders.

In education, the ability to transfer one's knowledge from one situation to another makes survival possible as people are capable of adapting to new situations. Especially in the light of the knowledge explosion, one cannot be taught everything one needs to know throughout one's life. Learners should thus be equipped with the ability to apply what they have learnt in one situation to another or to use existing knowledge to solve new problems. The TVET college leader as learner, who may receive theoretical knowledge at a university through the proposed curriculum framework, will have to apply this learning in practice at the TVET college. This person has to cross from one activity system to the other, which entails boundary-crossing. It does not entail simple transfer from the one activity system to the other, but interpreting, modifying and reconstructing the knowledge and skills. The scope of learning is therefore radically broadened (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008).

Boundary-crossing is thus a 'category of cognitive processes' where new elements from the one activity system are introduced to another (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008:4). The zone where ideas and needs from different cultures meet so that learning and development can take place has been called a boundary zone by Konkola (2001, cited in Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008) or the third space by Gutierrez, Rymes and Larson (1995, cited in Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008). It is in the boundary zone or third space that the object of each activity system can be extended. Edwards (2011:34) regards boundaries as spaces 'where the resources from different practices are brought together to expand interpretations of multifaceted tasks'. She does not see these boundaries or spaces as barriers between knowledge and motives which are prevalent in specialist practices, even though these places can be uncomfortable. It does not entail learning to do the work of others but simply gaining insight into the work that is done to enable collaboration. She calls this notion of relational expertise 'relational agency' (Edwards, 2011:34). The result of relational agency is that a shared object can be created, resulting in new opportunities for learning. Relational agency could be useful to the various departments at TVET colleges to enable the staff to move out of their silos and learn to work together towards the common good of the college, to move beyond the here and now and find solutions with alternative possibilities. In Chapter 5, it is mentioned that the various

support functions of TVET colleges seem to operate independently of one another, with little acknowledgement that they are all simply support functions of the core business of the college, teaching and learning. In this respect, awareness of the benefits of relational agency will be useful.

In cases where there are different approaches to what people do, they could coordinate their activities around an object which can give common meaning or shared meaning 'across settings where the activities take place' (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2008:5). Edwards (2011:34) calls this 'common knowledge' or common ground which is based on shared experience. Common knowledge is made up of what matters for each practice. It mediates collaborations. She believes that building common knowledge enables quick transfer from what is known to what is new. According to Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young (2008:9), '[t]he boundary object is an important element in producing innovative learning'. Boundaries can demark power in decision-making with regard to specific fields of action, to identify an organisation's resources so that they can be used optimally to benefit the organisation and for establishing corporate identity (Edwards, 2011).

In Chapter 5, the results of the IQA study are interpreted according to the five principles of activity theory, namely the TVET college as an activity system which is the primary unit of analysis; the multivoicedness of this system because of the many perspectives of its role players; the historicity of the system or the TVET college's firm location in its cultural history; the contradictions which lead to change, and finally, expansive transformation of the object that is triggered by the participants questioning the contradictions that exist.

By analysing organisations such as the TVET colleges as activity systems, people are encouraged to look critically at their everyday entrenched routines with the purpose of detecting overall patterns. They can explore the origins of the patterns, what the inner conflicts and consistencies are and what can be reworked or changed for the better. People can be controlled by events but they are still able to think and act critically (Blackler, 1993).

Relationships among the various stakeholders are transformed through mediating mechanisms such as tools, language, social rules and division of labour (Blackler, 1993). Engeström's activity theory identifies how activities can become entrenched and resistant to change but it also identifies uncertainty, potential conflict and contradictions both as natural to the human experience and as a major source to potential learning (Blackler, 1993). It also needs to be pointed out that not everyone in an activity is in agreement about the object of their shared activity. People do not necessarily agree on why they are doing something. They only have to agree on what should be done. Organisations can be represented as mediated systems where there are active individuals engaged in collective activities.

Relationships among the various components of an activity system may be inconsistent. The theory of organisations as activity systems helps to explore the nature of 'knowledge work, organisational competencies and organisational learning' (Blackler, 1993:878). It provides a unified, distinctive framework of a range of different issues which would otherwise appear to be loosely related (Blackler, 1993). Effective activity or expertise can be found in different cultures, histories, changing technologies and divisions of labour that respond to situations by means of the resources provided by their activity systems. Change in routines may need change in conceptions about the activity system.

3.6　　　CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a contextual and conceptual overview of curriculum and curriculum design in higher education, specifically for adult learning, with activity theory as the underpinning conceptual framework. Philosophies, theories, models and approaches to curriculum design have thus been described as a backdrop to this study.

For leaders, the theory of the college as an activity system in respect of curriculum and learning as core activity elements of the TVET college models embeds the nature of human activities and suggests development which is offered by means of engagement and conflict. Activity theory is useful for alerting the future leader of a TVET college to the elements or components that make up the college as an activity system as well as the interrelations among the elements, which are potential areas of conflict or creative transformation. In Blackler's (1993:882) words:

> [Activity] theory encourages a particular orientation: away from a concern with the management of experts to a concern with the management of expertise, from an emphasis on plans and strategy to an analysis of activity and activity systems and from a preoccupation with objective knowledge to a concern with the management of collective instability.

It is helpful to use Engeström's (1987) version of activity theory since the change and transformation envisaged by the curriculum framework as proposed later in this dissertation are central to the way in which activity systems work. Since activity theory has stressed the necessity of accounting for the social, cultural and historical aspects of the context (Mwanza, 2001), these are the aspects of the TVET college that have been explored in this study.

While activity theory frames the context of the college as an activity system within which the TVET college leaders operate, there is a need for a structured methodology to guide the data gathering and interpretation process (Mwanza, 2001) towards proposing a curriculum framework for leadership development of TVET college leaders which not only meets the needs of government policy, but also meets the needs of the very people who will undergo

this training. IQA has been selected to meet these requirements. The next chapter will therefore describe and analyse this methodology used for the empirical research, which will be followed by a detailed discussion of the outcomes and implications of this research.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous three chapters, the purpose and the context for this study were provided. The following research question needed to be answered:

What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment?

The subsidiary questions were:

- What is the current status of leadership development in the TVET college sector?

- What kind of TVET college leader is needed to meet the challenges and demands of the future in the sector?

- What competencies (including knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes) will be needed by TVET college leaders to engage meaningfully in the new DHET environment?

In Chapter 1, a socio-cultural and historical background to the South African public TVET college sector was provided. It was described how the educational landscape of the post-school technical and vocational education and training (TVET) college sector (previously known as the further education and training or FET sector) experienced prolonged and constant change. There have been numerous calls for transformation of the sector in the last 20 years. Most of the changes have been brought about by legislation because of the changing social and economic needs of South Africa. In Chapter 1, I argued that contextualised and customised training of TVET college leaders was essential for developing leaders to bring about the legislated transformation of the colleges in this sector.

In Chapter 2, leadership theory and the type of leadership development models which could have an influence on the development of a curriculum framework specifically designed for TVET college leaders were described. According to the more democratic, shared, transformational model proposed in Chapter 2, the intended curriculum framework based on this model should cover the necessary competencies (including knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes) to enable these leaders to lead the colleges effectively as mandated by legislation.

In Chapter 3, the South African public TVET college was examined as an activity system in terms of Engeström's (1987) version of activity theory which shows how a network of

multivoiced relationships mediated by a curriculum framework can be considered in order to guide leaders' actions in transforming the colleges as required by legislation. Even though IQA is primarily about understanding how a constituency draws meaning from a phenomenon and describing important dimensions from that phenomenon, Engeström's ideas situate IQA within an organisation. Activity theory provides a cultural-historical lens through which one can examine the dynamics of formal organisations such as the rules that mediate the interaction of the community and how the division of labour interacts with these rules. The very notion of a 'constituency' (which is explained below) addresses the organisational characteristic of division of labour and the rules that apply.

This chapter focuses on IQA as developed by Northcutt and McCoy (2004) as the appropriate methodology of this study. IQA was regarded as suitable for this study as it builds on a total quality management system (TQM), which is aimed at planning organisational development (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xxvi). Since this study was about developing a curriculum framework for leaders in TVET colleges, this methodology was regarded as an appropriate choice. As the researcher has been involved in the sector for a number of years, the second reason for this choice is the rigour of IQA with its structured approach, its clear protocols and its insistence on using the voice of the participants which could help keep bias to a minimum.

IQA as a research design and process is described in this chapter. First, the target population and sampling are defined, followed by how the data were collected by using focus group interviews and individual interviews, the two methods favoured by IQA. The results or findings of this study are described and analysed in the next chapter, followed by an interpretation of the findings in Chapter 6.

4.2 **INTERACTIVE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

IQA is a contextualised, interpretive approach to research grounded in systems theory, which refers to a 'systems representation of phenomena' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:28) from one person's or a group's viewpoint. The primary goal of interpretive research is to describe and understand rather than to explain (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In qualitative research, systems may be represented as elements and the relationships among these elements (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). The primary purpose of IQA is to identify the elements of the system and to describe the relationships among the elements as a way of representing the meaning of a phenomenon in terms of elements. In IQA, the elements are called affinities, and the relationship between them is represented by a mindmap.

An affinity resembles the quantitative concept of a variable but tends to be richer and more meaningful since affinities are constructed from the thoughts and words of those close to the

phenomenon (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:82).   Affinities are the building blocks of the mindmaps or mental or conceptual models produced by participants. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:81) define them as 'sets of textual references that have an underlying common meaning or theme'. Affinities are synonymous with factors or topics. They are identified, clarified and described by participants. This process takes place according to the IQA theory of coding which is situated within the processes of deduction and induction.

During the first two phases of IQA, participants – in this case current and future TVET college leaders – induce these categories of meaning or affinities, which they then define and refine. This process is referred to as the *emergent and axial coding* phases in IQA. During the axial coding phase, the affinities are named. This takes place during the focus group interviews.   The third phase is the *theoretical coding* phase, when relationships between pairs of affinities are identified and the influence of one of the pair over the other is investigated. The mindmap or SID (systems influence diagram), which is the picture or visual representation of the system of influences, the construction of which is the purpose of IQA (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:149), is constructed according to the IRD (interrelationship diagram) which represents the system of affinities and the relationships among them. Northcutt and McCoy (2004: xxiii) describe a mindmap as the 'second component of the phenomenological system'.

Data are collected during these processes and analysed and interpreted according to prescribed protocols. Data, analysis and interpretation are integrated into a whole by means of a 'detailed, applications-orientated, systematic process' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xxii). Northcutt and McCoy (2004) argue that there is no such thing as pure description, but that descriptions are interpretations. All interpretations involve comparisons by making formal comparisons of mindmaps produced by the group or the individual.   IQA provides the procedures for making these comparisons.

IQA thus makes use of systems theory to construct, interpret and compare mindmaps, which are the systems representation of how individuals or groups understand a phenomenon. Systems theory is then combined with dialectical logic where perceptions produced by the group are verified by the individual in one-on-one interviews.   The perceptions of the participants are represented by a system (mindmap) which is its basic method of representation and consists of a specific set of relationships among 'ontological (what is real?), epistemological (how do we know?) and ethical (what is good?) elements' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xxii).

There are four distinct phases in the IQA research flow (see Figure 1.3): research design, focus group interviews, individual interviews and the report (or write-up).   IQA research

design provides a series of tools to help identify constituencies and formulate the research questions that are implied by the problem statement. The two main methods used in IQA are focus group interviews and individual interviews. The researcher gains useful insights into a socially constructed reality as reported by members of a group through the focus group interviews. Follow-up individual interviews are intended to both expand upon and contrast individual meanings to that of the group (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). The main aim of an individual interview is to bring attention to what individuals think about a phenomenon, thus providing the subjective reality that can be incorporated into the study (Henning *et al.*, 2004). In the report, the researcher describes the affinities and their relationships, making comparisons and inferences or predictions based on the property of the system. The identification and sampling of the target population form part of the design phase of IQA. The target population is defined in the next section, and a detailed discussion of the four phases of IQA follows in 4.4.

4.3   DEFINING THE TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The participants in an IQA study are called constituents. Northcutt and McCoy (2004) borrow from the work of Foucault and others with their use of constituencies with their political connotations, since constituents are selected according to their distance from and power over a phenomenon. IQA presumes that knowledge and power are dependent in that power influences which knowledge is regarded as relevant or irrelevant. This can be seen in IQA's conception of constituencies as an important component of the research design phase as well as the inclusion of comparisons of the mindmaps, or as used in IQA, representations of mental models or 'systems consisting of concepts and relationships among these concepts' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:148), among constituencies. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:16) have deliberately chosen the word 'constituency' since one of the two criteria governing selection is the degree of power that a constituency has over the phenomenon that is being examined.

Therefore, when identifying a constituency, one asks two questions: 'How close is this constituency to the problem?' and 'How much power does this consistency have over the phenomenon?' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:46). A constituency thus reflects both an interest in and power over the phenomenon at the centre of the problem statement. Northcutt and McCoy (2004) explain a constituency as representing someone who has something to say about the phenomenon or someone who can do something about the phenomenon. Different constituencies are selected as they have different perspectives and will therefore respond differently to the phenomenon.

The two different constituencies identified for this study comprised leaders at public South African TVET colleges at two different levels of leadership: top-level or executives and mid-level. In this study, even though all the constituents were leaders at the TVET colleges, one group, referred to as Group 1 in this study, consisted of individuals in top leadership positions, the executives of the colleges, the principals and vice-principals – thus the leaders within the sector at the time. This group were at some distance to the phenomenon since they provided leadership, but may have been less affected by it than their subordinates. The present leaders at the time also had more power to influence leadership competencies than the other group, which consisted of the potential future leaders within the sector. This latter group, referred to as Group 2, consisted of mid-level as opposed to executive leaders. They were campus or departmental heads, who were close to the phenomenon of leadership since they felt the effects of leadership more acutely but did not have a great deal of power to do anything about it. The nature of each group's work thus had an influence over the way in which they perceived the phenomenon. A comparison between the perceptions of the two groups, their differences and similarities helped to meet the research objective of developing a curriculum framework for the development of leaders of TVET colleges.

The selection of a sampling strategy is governed by the criterion of suitability or fitness for purpose which should serve the purpose of the research and the methodology if validity is to be obtained (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The target population for this study was selected not because of its diversity, but because the participants all had something in common. They were all working at TVET colleges and they all held leadership positions at different levels. In IQA terms, the participants in this study are called the constituents of the study. A major tenet of IQA research is that 'comparison is fundamental to interpretation' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xviii). It is for this reason that there are two different constituencies as each brings a different perspective to the research. The commonalities and the differences between the two groups were thus compared in this study.

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study so that they are representative of the target population from which they have been selected (Henning *et al.*, 2004). Babbie and Mouton (2006:164) define sampling as 'the process of selecting observations'. The sampling methods used in this study were purposive (or non-probability) and convenience (or accidental or opportunity) sampling. Purposive sampling will first be explained. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:114) describe purposive sampling as the handpicking of participants who are to be included in the sample. Researchers may choose the participants according to whether they typically display the characteristics required for the sample. The participants were purposively selected for the focus group interviews and for the individual interviews. Participants were not selected randomly but according to

whether they typically displayed the characteristics required for the sample (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Therefore the sample satisfied a specific need. This type of sample is therefore deliberatively selective and biased (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), but conforms to the protocol of IQA's selection of participants. The participants were all in leadership positions at the TVET colleges and were purposely selected to represent as many of the colleges and the provinces as possible.

Owing to the geographical spread, the focus group interviews took place in two provinces, with the participants of both groups given the choice to attend the workshops either in Johannesburg (Gauteng) or in Cape Town (Western Cape). Ultimately, there were two Group 1 (executive leadership) groups and two Group 2 (middle leadership) groups, one of each in each of the two provinces.

Babbie and Mouton (2006) point out that it is never possible to sample everyone relevant to the social phenomenon being studied. Sometimes it becomes necessary to use other sampling techniques. No matter how carefully the sample has been selected, it is difficult to provide a perfect representation of the population from which it was selected. With convenience sampling, respondents who happen to be available and accessible at the time, can be chosen (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Neuman, 2006) as long as the sample does not seriously misrepresent the population (Neuman, 2006).

With purposive sampling, respondents who were available to take part in the survey were included in both the focus group interviews and the individual interviews. Invitations were sent to representatives of each of the two groups mentioned above and invited to attend the focus group interviews, and whoever was available agreed to attend. Therefore, the sampling was purposive in that the invitations were only sent to people in leadership positions but only those who were available responded. With convenience sampling, two participants could be replaced by two others who shared the particular characteristics of the population being studied but who were available at that particular time and in that particular place, as the original respondents were not able to attend at the last minute. This meant that these two replacements had not attended the focus group interviews but they represented the population from which the initial sample had been selected. De Vos *et al.* (2011) state that the convenience sample selected usually comprises those who are nearest and most easily available but who are connected with the phenomenon. They warn that this type of sampling could be biased and risky when it applies to subjective topics such as moral or political issues but in this study, they were intended to verify affinities generated by a focus group with which they shared the same profile.

When selecting individuals to be interviewed, Northcutt and McCoy (2004) do not prescribe a specific number to be selected but state that the number will depend on 'the number of affinities generated in the focus group interview, the degree of interrelatedness of the affinities and the degree of agreement among the respondents' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:291). Since the number of affinities generated were comparatively small and there was a great deal of consensus as to the affinities and the relationships between pairs of affinities in this study, the decision was thus initially made to select 20 individuals based on location (in order to cover a wider geographical distribution), gender (to include both male and female interviewees) and size of college (rural and urban). Logistical reasons also played a role since distances are great in South Africa and representatives of urban and rural colleges which could be reached reasonably easily by air and by car, were selected. Finally, a total of fifteen individual interviews took place for the reasons given below.

For the individual interviews, respondents from the two focus group interviews were included, as well as six additional respondents who had not attended the workshops but matched the profile of the two main groupings, namely senior and mid-level leaders as required by IQA. Northcutt and McCoy (2004) do not preclude interviewing individuals who did not attend the initial focus group interview. They are, however, specific about selecting participants according to the constituency that they represent. An explanation for the choice of these six follows.

Two respondents from Mpumalanga and two from the Eastern Cape who had not attended the focus group interview workshops were selected purposively. The reason for this selection was twofold: it was intended to increase the geographical spread of the respondents from five to seven of the nine provinces since representatives from different provinces may have different perspectives. A second reason was for the purpose of data triangulation to verify the mindmaps of the focus group interviews in order to increase the validity of this study. The other two respondents were examples of convenience sampling as they replaced members from the focus group interviews who were unable to attend the individual interviews on the day that had been arranged beforehand.

The reason why ten individual interviews were conducted with executive management and five were conducted with middle managers was that, besides the fact that it was the middle managers who could not be interviewed as they did not arrive at the appointed place or time, the data had reached saturation point since the data from the focus group interviews had been sufficiently verified. This conforms to IQA's requirement since there was consensus with regard to the affinities and their interrelatedness as can be seen in the data in Chapter

5. The focus group input had thus been sufficiently verified and it was unnecessary to do further individual interviews.

The two groups of constituents involved in the research project thus consisted of top- and mid-level leaders at nine public TVET colleges in seven provinces nationally. A map of South Africa, indicating the geographical spread, follows in Figure 4.1.

There were a total of 61 people in the two focus group interviews (divided into constituencies based on their distance to and power over the identified research problem) and 15 (25% of the total) individual interviews were conducted with representatives from both groups thereafter. Focus group interviews provide the textual references that have an underlying common meaning or theme (affinities and their relationships), which are then verified during the individual interview phase. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:290) suggest that from their experience and to avoid having to re-interview participants, between 15 and 25 individual interviews are advisable. However, the number of individual interviews depends on many factors, such as 'the number of affinities in the system, the degree of interrelatedness of the affinities and the degree of agreement among respondents concerning the relationships' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004: 291).

Six other studies using IQA as a methodology were consulted (Human-Vogel, 2006; Human-Vogel & Bouwer, 2005; Human-Vogel & Van Petegem, 2008; Mampane & Bouwer, 2011; Smith & Leonard, 2005; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). The number of individual interviews conducted in these studies ranged from three to 14. Another reason why more individual interviews were not conducted is that the SIDs of the participants did not differ widely and very little deviation or level of disagreement was expected or found.

The four phases of IQA, namely research design (4.4), focus group interviews (4.5), individual interviews (4.6) and report write-up (4.7), are discussed in detail below.

4.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

The first phase, IQA research design, consists of two steps: identifying the problem statement and identifying those who have something to say about this problem. The identification of the constituents has already been explained in 4.3.

The second step in the research design is to define the issue statement which must hold some interest for both constituencies. The issue statement is always a variation of '*Tell me about …*' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:72). Initially with an IQA study, the problem is rather vague and may be no more than a vague concern, a desire to know more about a phenomenon or a need to correct a situation but the IQA design cycle, through a process of recursion, will hopefully clarify it. Forming the problem statement initially is largely inductive

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or intuitive whereas generating research questions is largely deductive (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:73).

Northcutt and McCoy (2004:72) suggest that 'comparisons generate research questions'. IQA thus strives to answer three questions, according to Northcutt and McCoy (2004:28):

1. What are the components of the system being represented here?
2. How are the components related to each other?
3. How do the systems compare?

By using IQA as a methodology, this study attempted to answer these three questions as follows:

1. The components of the system represented in this study are the affinities produced by leaders in the TVET college system. These affinities represent what needs to be covered in the curriculum framework that was envisaged for this study. These affinities are described and analysed in Chapter 5.
2. The affinities are related to one another since they are generated by public TVET college employees at different levels of leadership, namely leaders at the executive management level and leaders at middle management level. The relationships among the affinities are described and analysed in Chapter 5.
3. The affinities generated by these two groups or constituencies can be compared with one another since they have different perceptions of the phenomenon as one group is closer to the group and the other has more power over the phenomenon than the other. This affects their viewpoint as is illustrated in the comparison of the systems and the interpretation of the data for this study in Chapters 5 and 6.

If the study that is to be undertaken is able to address the problem or answer the research question(s), the IQA research design is complete. In this study, the initial question that started the discussion was: *Tell me how the future TVET college leader should be*? *In other words: tell me what skills, knowledge and attributes the future TVET college leader should have.* The responses received were sufficient to guide me in designing a curriculum framework for TVET college leaders. The research issue was thus addressed.

4.5   FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Interviewing is one of three main categories of data collection in research making use of qualitative data (Henning *et al.*, 2004). Henning *et al.* (2004) do not see the interview as a data making process, but rather as a data eliciting mechanism. Interviewing was used as the main method of eliciting data for this study. Both focus group and individual interviews were used in accordance with the IQA procedure.

In the second phase, the IQA study begins with a focus group interview that is made up of people who share a common experience and are knowledgeable enough to say something about the subject.   The individuals making up the group have 'varied opinions and experiences' but they 'share a common perspective' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:47).   In this study, the focus group interviews shared a work experience at two different levels of leadership at the South African public TVET colleges. In a focus group interview, people get together to create meaning for themselves, shaping and reshaping opinion (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).   Focus group interviews are used in IQA to identify the affinities of a system that are representative of the group's experience with the phenomenon.   The group next identifies the relationships amongst the affinities.   They then use a set of protocols or rules which stems from systems theory to draw the system in the form of a mindmap that represents the group's reality.

A focus group is homogenous in that the participants are brought together to apply their knowledge, experience and expertise to a specific problem. More than one group enhances the quality of the results (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). In this study, there were two distinct groups. According to Norvell and Northcutt (2004:48), an IQA study prompts the participants to examine an issue or phenomenon by exploring the following questions: 'What does this mean to you? What led to this? What are the results?'.

For the focus group interviews in this study, 61 constituents represented leaders at executive and mid-level at 12 public TVET colleges in five out of the nine provinces in South Africa. With the purpose of reaching as many colleges geographically as possible, four focus group interviews were held in two different provinces where both levels of leadership were represented in each province. This created the opportunity for colleges from as far afield as Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the North West to send representatives to attend the group sessions.   The following tables (Tables 4.1 and 4.2) illustrate the geographical distribution of the focus group interview representation.

Table 4.1 Geographical spread of leaders at the executive level (or Group 1) identified for the focus group interviews

GROUP 1					
Province	Urban/rural college	No. of colleges	Male	Female	Total
Gauteng	Urban	2	4	2	6
Gauteng	Rural	1	2	0	2
KZN	Rural	1	1	1	2
Limpopo	Rural	2	0	3	3
North West	Rural	1	0	1	1
Western Cape	Urban	2	5	2	7
Western Cape	Rural	3	1	7	8
TOTALS: 5	4 urban, 8 rural	12	13	16	29

Table 4.2 Geographical spread of leaders at mid-level (or Group 2) identified for the focus group interviews

GROUP 2					
Province	Urban/rural college	No. of colleges	Male	Female	Total
Gauteng	Urban	3	6	3	9
KZN	Rural	1	1	1	2
Limpopo	Rural	1	1	1	2
North West	Rural	1	1	0	1
Western Cape	Urban	3	8	5	13
Western Cape	Rural	3	3	2	5
TOTAL: 5	6 urban, 6 rural	12	20	12	32

As has been illustrated, 61 participants representing the two constituencies from 12 (24%) out of the 50 urban and rural public TVET colleges in five (56%) out of the nine provinces in South Africa were selected to attend the focus group interviews. This was regarded as being fairly representative but it had been hoped that representatives of all nine provinces would attend. Participants from two other provinces, namely Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape, were included in the follow-up individual interviews. Colleges in the last two of the remaining provinces, the sparsely populated Northern Cape and the Free State, did not respond to any of the invitations or personal requests for individual interviews.

A map indicating the provinces represented by the participants, namely Limpopo, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Kwazulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape (78% of the provinces), is provided in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1   Map of South Africa

4.5.1   Focus group interview method in Interative Qualitative Analysis

I began the focus group interview by mentioning that the TVET college sector has been inundated with change in the past 20 years. Research has shown that leadership development is responsible for successful institutions and that this has been recognised in other countries. Yet, even though the need for a training programme has been acknowledged in the Green Paper (RSA, 2012) as well as in the White Paper (RSA, 2014), there is still no context-specific customised leadership training for TVET college leaders available in South Africa. Discussion on the challenges facing the TVET college leader was then invited while my researcher assistant kept notes on a flipchart.

After about 15 minutes of free-flowing discussion of the challenges facing the sector, I proposed a question that captured the essence of the purpose of the workshop, namely:

> *What should be included in a curriculum framework to enable the TVET college leader to lead the new TVET college in the way that is mandated through legislation?*

The first step in the IQA process is thus the formulation of the issue as proposed in the question above. The next step starts the data production process.

There are three stages of data production or analysis in IQA. Even though working with qualitative data usually demands an inductive approach, generating new hypotheses and theories (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), IQA makes use of both deductive and inductive approaches when investigating meaning. In the first stage of the IQA process, participants (called constituents) are asked to induce categories of meaning (deduction), then to define and refine these (induction and deduction) and finally to investigate the relationships of influence between pairs of affinities deductively. These three phases correspond with 'three formal classes of analysis of coding: emergent, axial and theoretical' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:16).

IQA provides a set of data collection and analysis protocols (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:44) which were developed from TQM techniques. A major assumption of TQM is that the people closest to the job understand best what is wrong and know how to fix it. In the same way, IQA data collection techniques help participants who are perceived to be close to the phenomenon describe and label their experiences and, in identifying the perceived relationships among these experiences, are able to produce a 'theory in perception' or a 'conceptual map' (collectively as a group or individually in an interview) (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:81). The conceptual map is a systems representation of how the individual or the group sees a particular phenomenon. This system consists of elements, called affinities, and perceived causal relationships among affinities.

These data collection and analysis protocols are designed to minimise interference from the facilitator. According to Henning *et al.* (2004:127), analysis of qualitative data takes part during the collection process since the researcher constantly reflects on what is happening. Firstly, all the data are read and then organised into smaller, more organisable units or units of analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 2006:184). In analysing the data, it will be determined what patterns have emerged to explain the phenomenon and comparisons made which could provide a possible reason for these patterns (Henning *et al.*, 2004; Babbie & Mouton, 2006). Description of what these views and perceptions mean forms the basis of the analysis (Henning *et al.*, 2004).

The participants are given a great deal of freedom within the framework provided by the facilitator. Participants provide the first attempts at analysis by organising their discourse into categories of meaning called affinities. They take this analysis further by identifying the perceived relationships or influence among the affinities. The role of the researcher becomes that of facilitator, creating a process in which most of the data can be generated without influencing the content. The same process is then followed with individual interviews. In both settings (group and individual), the purpose is identical, namely 'to represent a particular reality in terms of a mindmap' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:237). It is for

this reason that the analytical tools are identical. With axial coding, a range of meanings of the affinities is presented; with theoretical coding, the relationships among the affinities are presented by both the focus group interviews and the individual interviews. The difference is only in the context in which the observations were made.

4.5.2   Focus group interview data collection and analysis

The IQA data collection begins when the focus group interviews take place. There are two distinct phases of data collection and analysis: the axial coding phase and the theoretical coding phase. In the first phase of IQA, after the discussion process has been completed, notecards are distributed and each participant is asked to jot down as many answers as possible, one thought per card, to the question formulated in the group discussion, namely: *What should be included in a curriculum framework to develop the TVET college leader who would be able to lead the new TVET college as mandated through legislation?* Northcutt and McCoy (2004:xii) refer to such as brainstorming session as a 'brain dump'.

4.5.2.1   Axial coding phase

The next step is the inductive coding of the data. The cards are stuck to the wall in columns, but in no particular order, so that everyone can see them. The researcher then ensures that there is common understanding about what has been written on each card. This is the clarification stage of IQA. The participants are then asked to sort the cards into categories of meaning or emerging themes. This is done in silence. Through a process of consensus, a name or affinity is ascribed to each category of cards. This step is the axial coding or 'naming' phase of IQA. Any cards that have been wrongly categorised are moved to the correct category consensually. Once the axial coding had been completed, the group is ready to begin the theoretical coding.

4.5.2.1   Theoretical coding phase

The fourth step or second phase of the IQA focus group interview is the theoretical coding or 'performing' step (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xiii). Theoretical coding entails determining the perceived cause-and-effect relationships or influences among all the affinities in the system. In the focus group interview setting, this objective is accomplished by 'facilitating a systematic process of building hypotheses grounded in the data, linking each possible pair of affinities' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:149). The influences are then summarised in the group interrelationship diagram or IRD, which is a matrix that represents all the relationships in the system, regardless of how the group theoretical codes are constructed. The IRD represents the group's reality since the group determines the directionality of the influence. The goal is to identify the underlying structure of the group mindmap, which is summarised in the SID. The SID is similar to a set of 'qualitative structural equations' or as a 'path diagram'

(Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:48). It differs from a path diagram in that it allows recursion or feedback loops (an explanation of a feedback loop will follow and is illustrated in Figure 4.2). The SID is a visual representation of the 'theory in perception grounded in the specific experiences and logic of the participants' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:48). The group and individual reality can be interpreted through the meaning that research participants give to their world (De Vos *et al.*, 2011).

At the four different workshops, the participants looked at the affinities that they had identified and determined what the relationship was between pairs of affinities. Each pair was examined in terms of which affinity had influence over another. To investigate the links, they created a system of perceived causes and effects through which reality was constructed. The protocol used to indicate a relationship is an arrow starting at the affinity which has a direct influence over the affinity towards which it is pointing ($\rightarrow$ or $\leftarrow$). In cases where there is no influence, the symbol <> is used. There are thus only three perceived relationships that need to be identified: $\rightarrow$, $\leftarrow$ or <>. The results were recorded in an affinity relationship table (ART). Northcutt and McCoy (2004:150) state that in recording these relationships, researchers have the choice of level of detail in the light of logistical constraints or the purpose of the research. Focus group interviews may thus produce either a simple or a detailed ART. A simple ART was chosen for this study because of time constraints as only three hours were available for the focus group interviews and also because individual interviews would be able to provide any other detail if necessary. An illustration of a simple 6-affinity ART can be seen in Table 5.3.

During the focus group interviews, each individual completed his or her own ART without any discussion with the group. These were handed in to the researcher who used them to produce the IRD. The group's judgment with regard to the nature and directionality of each of the possible relationships was recorded in an IRD. An example of an IRD can be seen in Table 5.5.

The IRD is created by placing arrows into the matrix, showing the direction of the relationships. Arrows point either left (Ins) or up (Outs) and each relationship is recorded twice, resembling double-entry bookkeeping. All the relationships in the ART are recorded in the IRD in this way.

The IN totals are subtracted from the OUT totals to calculate the Delta in the last column of the matrix on the right (Δ = Out minus In). This is done for each affinity. The affinities are now sorted in descending order of Delta and cut and pasted into a new table, with the highest Delta value in the first line and the highest negative Delta in the last line. Once this

table has been completed, it is time to assign tentative SIDs in preparation of drawing the mindmap or SID.

The final step is to create the SID which is a mindmap or visual representation of the system of influences and outcomes. Systems represent a particular reality, depending on the situation. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:40) define social systems as 'systems in which human interpretation of meaning is involved'. As has already been stated, systems consist of elements and relationships. The same applies to social systems. While the elements may vary in different systems, the relationships remain the same. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:40) point out that the elements of social systems 'are characterised only by their diversity'. In this study, for example, the elements represent the components that should be included in a curriculum framework for TVET college leaders. The relationships among these components establish the causes and effects or influences that the components have on one another, which of the affinities have an influence on the other affinities and which affinity is the outcome of the influences of all the other affinities in the mindmap.

The SID is constructed by using a set of rules through a process of rationalisation of the summarised theoretical codes in the IRD produced by the focus group interview. Systems must be organised or rationalised according to a set of rules depending on their purpose. 'Rationalisation' is the term used to mean the rules for constructing a system. According to Northcutt and McCoy (2004:37), rationalisation is a 'set of rules … by which elements are first sorted into zones and then connected with the minimum number of relationships consistent with the data'. The process of rationalisation aims to sort out the elements into four different zones, namely Primary Driver Zone, Secondary Driver Zone, Secondary Outcome Zone and Primary Outcome Zone. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:32) define a topological zone as 'a region of a system in which the elements have similar characteristics of influence'. The four zones are illustrated in Figure 5.1.

A driver is a relative source of influence as it has more arrows going out of it than into it. There may be more than one primary driver in a system. The mindmap in Figure 5.3 has two primary drivers in the system, Affinities 1 and 5. The difference between a primary driver and a primary outcome is that the primary driver(s) only has outgoing arrows and no inward-going arrows (see Affinities 1 and 5 in Figure 5.3 or Affinity 1 in Figure 5.2). The converse is true of the primary outcome (see Affinity 6 in Figure 5.2). A secondary outcome, on the other hand (see Affinity 2 in Figure 5.2), is relatively influenced by other elements but, at the same time, it influences other affinities in the mindmap. Secondary drivers (see Affinities 3, 4 and 5 in Figure 5.2) are driven by the primary driver (1) but these, in turn, drive the secondary outcome (see Affinity 2 in Figure 5.2). Secondary drivers have both in- and outgoing arrows in the IRD with a predominance of outgoing arrows (affinities 2, 4 and 5 in

Figure 5.2), while secondary outcomes, which also have both in and outgoing arrows in the IRD, have more in-going arrows (see Affinity 2 in Figure 5.2). Secondary outcomes are driven by secondary drivers but these, in turn, drive the primary outcome (Affinity 2 in Figure 5.2). The elements are thus arranged from the left to the right, beginning with the drivers and ending with the outcomes. Primary outcomes do not drive any other elements in the system.

Primary drivers are the fundamental causes or sources of influence in the system while primary outcomes are strictly outcomes. Secondary drivers are relative causes and secondary outcomes are influenced by secondary drivers but also influence primary outcomes. Primary outcomes do not have any influence at all and are influenced by all the other elements in the system.

The topology of a system therefore refers to the pattern of links among the elements of the system. Rationalisation of the system has four goals, namely 'comprehensiveness', 'complexity', 'parsimony' or 'simplicity' and 'visual interpretability' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:37). 'Comprehensiveness' refers to the identification of all the elements relevant to the phenomenon. 'Complexity' means that the complexity of the phenomenon must be represented fairly by the degree of interrelationships among elements. 'Parsimony' refers to representing the phenomenon as simply as possible, despite the complexity of the phenomenon. Finally, the 'visual representation' is the picture or diagram of the system. In IQA, this would refer to the mindmap or conceptual model.

Delta in the IRD is used to position the affinity in the system or in the mindmap or SID. Affinities with positive deltas are relative drivers (causes) and those with negative deltas are relative outcomes (effects). The Tentative SID Assignments Table (see Tables 4.3 and 5.9) represents the initial placement of affinities for the SID. The affinities are assigned driver (cause) or outcome (effect) status as indicated by the Delta column. There can be more than one primary driver (as can be seen in Figure 5.3) or outcome. The same applies to the secondary drivers and outcomes. Sometimes it appears as if there is no primary driver or outcome (there are not only Ins or Outs) as can be seen in Figures 5.4 and 5.5. No actual primary driver or outcome indicates that although the affinity is a strong relative cause or effect, it is still influenced by or influences other affinities. It is appropriate in some cases to label these affinities as Primary.

Table 4.3   Tentative SID assignments (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:174)

Tentative SID Assignments	
1	Primary Driver
2	Secondary Outcome
3	Secondary Driver
4	Primary Driver
5	Secondary Outcome
6	Primary Outcome

Affinities with zero Ins will always be at the top of the list and affinities with zero Outs will likewise be at the bottom of the IRD. The rules that are important here are the zero Ins and the zero Outs and the ordering of the affinities based on delta. Based on this order, the affinities will be laid out in a specific pattern that will assist with drawing up the system.

The SID may be considered as a 'set of qualitative structural equations' or as a 'path diagram' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:176). As mentioned above, it differs from the traditional path diagram in that recursion or feedback loops are allowed. Once the elements of the system and the nature of the relationships among elements have been defined, the systems will only differ in their structure (systems topology). The structure consists of two features: branching and recursion (feedback loops). The simplest system is linear, with one element always leading into another as can be seen in Figure 5.2.

For the purpose of this study, two versions of the same system were produced: a Cluttered SID, which is complex and unsimplified (see Figure 5.1) and an Uncluttered SID (see Figure 5.2), which has been simplified but is not very complex.

The Cluttered SID is simplified by removing all the redundant links after the system is first rationalised to create an Uncluttered SID (Figure 5.2). Redundant links are 'those between two affinities in which, even if removed, a path from the driver to the outcome can be achieved through an intermediary affinity' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:178). For example, by removing the arrow in the Cluttered SID in Figure 5.1 that leads directly from affinity 1 to affinity 6, the path from 1 to 6 will be via 1-4-5-6 or 1-3-2-6. The central theorem of IQA representation then is 'given any set of affinities and a set of binary unidirectional relationships among these, there exists one, and only one, Uncluttered SID' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:180). This means that every system has a unique, topologically simple representation. Two researchers working with the same data (IRD) will produce the same Uncluttered SID. They may look different but they will be topologically identical since the

process of constructing the system is not dependent on the 'meaning content' of the affinities (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:180). The researcher therefore has no control over how the Uncluttered SID is constructed. The structure is assembled according to a set of rules.

Some systems are more complicated than the linear one depicted in Figure 5.2, not only in the number of elements, but in the number of possible paths though the system. The first structural feature showing the difference between a simple system and a more complicated one is called 'branching' and is illustrated in Figure 5.3. In Figure 5.2, there is no branching, with only one path through the system (1-3-4-5-2-6). The first affinity, legislation, represents a 'presumed cause-and-effect relationship' and the last affinity, quality management, represents the 'dependent variable (effect)' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:29). The directions of the arrows show the perceived direction of the influence of one element on the other. In computer programming terminology, 'branching' refers to a choice of paths through a system. Northcutt and McCoy (2004:29) use the term 'branching' to mean 'more than one possible relationship emanating from an element without demanding a formal logical test'. 'Branching' has been demonstrated in Figure 5.3.

The second structural feature of a system is the presence of feedback loops which are explained by Northcutt and McCoy (2004) as follows: Feedback occurs when there is a 'relationship from an element later in the system back to one earlier in the system' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:30). They explain that 'later' refers to elements that can be found in what they call the Outcome Zone and 'earlier' refers to elements that can be found in what they call the Driver Zone. This kind of relationship is recursive. It is otherwise known as a feedback loop which occurs when a 'relative outcome feeds back or influences the state of an element that is a relative driver' of the system (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:30). A feedback loop is illustrated in Figures 5.4 and 5.5.

The simplest feedback loop requires only three elements which can be seen in Figure 4.2.
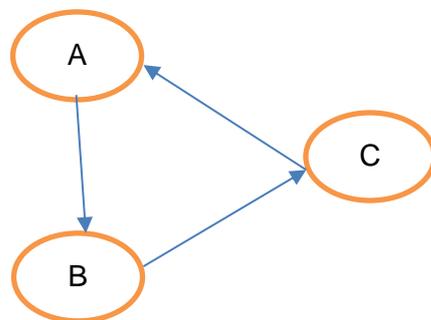
Figure 4.2   A simple feedback loop (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:162)

In this simple feedback loop (A → B → C →A), A indirectly influences C through the mediation of B. If any of the elements are undetected, it is understandable that the

relationship among the three affinities would at first seem bidirectional (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004).

In Figure 5.4, the feedback loop is more complex and consists of six elements, namely 3 → 4 → 2 → 5 → 7 → 1 and back to 3. It has no starting point and no end. Each affinity influences the other until the influence returns to where it started. This SID has no primary driver but all the affinities in the feedback loop are secondary drivers except for Affinity 5 which is a secondary outcome that indirectly influences Affinity 6, through the mediation of Affinity 8. Affinity 8 is also a secondary outcome while Affinity 6 is a primary outcome. The affinities thus all have an influence on Affinity 4 with only Affinity 8 having a direct influence. IQA uses the concepts of direct and indirect relationships, combined with recursion or feedback, to show the 'nature of the relationships that are, on the surface, reflexive or bidirectional' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:31). This is as a result of members of a focus group interview differing in the way they perceive the relationship. They might feel that Affinity 1 influences Affinity 2 or, conversely, Affinity 2 influences Affinity 1. This situation is almost always indicative of a feedback loop, containing a possible third element not yet recognised by the group.

The final step of the data collection and analysis of the focus group interviews is to develop a group composite. Selecting a protocol for representing the consensus of the group's analysis of relationships is 'independent of the level of detail' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:156). A reasonably rigorous and powerful technique for achieving and documenting the degree of consensus of the focus group is based on the Pareto Principle, which is a statistical method. In systems terms, the Pareto Principle states that 'something like 20% of the variables in a system will account for 80% of the total variation in outcomes' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:156). What it means is that a minority of the relationships in the system will account for the majority of the variation within the system. It is more than likely that there will be some disagreement about the nature of a given relationship. This will therefore account for some variation. The Pareto Cumulative Frequency Chart can be used operationally to achieve consensus and thereby create a group composite.

The Pareto Composite requires an exact count of each relationship code. These frequencies are recorded on a spreadsheet. The total number of relationships are tallied and sorted in descending order. Cumulative percentages are then calculated for each relationship and the Pareto Chart is thereby constructed. The cumulative percentages determine the optimal number of relationships since it is the researcher's goal to use the fewest number of relationships (for the sake of parsimony) but which represents the greatest amount of variation (for the sake of comprehensiveness and richness). Any relationships

that do not attract many 'votes' are discarded. The Pareto Principle is demonstrated in the next chapter.

The cumulative percentages also help to resolve ambiguous relationships or those that receive an equal number of arrows in either direction. For example, some members of the group have identified a direct relationship between A → B, whereas others believe that B influences A as in B → A. This ambiguity may be the result of the group's failure to identify at least one other affinity that intervenes between or interacts with both A and B. Northcutt and McCoy (2002:162) call these 'mischievous topologies'. The solution is to code the relationship with the highest frequency with the appropriate arrow and the one with the smaller frequency with a question mark (?). In this study, it was found that the affinity with the highest frequency could be used but when both frequencies were equal, the SID usually had the final say as to which of the affinities needed to be used. This coding is also demonstrated in the next chapter.

The SID is thus also used to address any ambiguities that may have occurred in the affinities. Once the SID has been created and examined, a decision has to be made about whether the ambiguous relationship is one of the two illustrated above or whether it could even be that the same categories of meaning would be better represented under one affinity. For example, in this study, one group named leadership skills, leadership characteristics and personal attributes as three separate affinities where they are all different aspects or sub-affinities of one affinity, namely leadership. Similarly, financial management, resource management and quality management could all be regarded as sub-affinities of management. Northcutt and McCoy call this technique 'zooming in' and 'zooming out'. It is discussed in Chapter 5. Any decisions made in this regard can be verified further during the individual interview phase.

Once the cumulative percentage has been calculated, the power index is calculated. This is the 'degree of optimisation of the system' and is calculated by subtracting the cumulative percent relation (based on the number of total possible relationships) from the cumulative percent frequency (based on the number of arrows).

Central to the Pareto Table is the cumulative percent frequency and the power index since they determine which relationships need to be included in the group or composite IRD. The decision to exclude relationships from the composite IRD is based on what Northcutt and McCoy (2004:160) call the 'MinMax criterion' which accounts for maximum variance (indicated by the cumulative percent based upon frequency) but minimises the number of relationships which do not appear to have much of a relational role for the sake of parsimony (indicated by the cumulative percent based on relations). True to Pareto's concept, relatively

few of the relationships account for the most variance. The MinMax criterion also generally answers the question as to which of the pairs of affinities need to be selected where the direction of the influence is shown to emanate from each of the pairs or when there is a tie. Where a tie cannot resolve the conflict, it usually means that too few interviews had taken place. This did not happen in this study.

The final step of the focus group interview data collection and analysis is thus to combine the affinities of each group to create a group composite for Group 1 and Group 2 in preparation of the individual interviews. The composites as described in Chapter 5 were then presented to the individuals who had agreed to be interviewed, to explain what their understanding of the affinities were and to verify the group's selection.

4.6   INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Individual interviews are a critical component in most qualitative studies.   Individual interviewing allows individuals to speak for themselves and in this situation the respondent ideally does most of the talking. The aim of the individual interview is to encourage the respondent to tell his or her own story (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).   The IQA individual interviews were thus semi-structured.

Since IQA is a systems approach to qualitative research, the primary purpose is to represent the meaning of a phenomenon in terms of elements (affinities) and the relationships among them. Therefore, the affinities created by the focus group interviews formed the foundation for the individual interview protocol (see Chapter 5).   The individual interviews further explored the meanings of the affinities as well as their perceived relationships.   'A comprehensive systems diagram was developed from the individual interviews to explain the phenomenon' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:45).

For the individual interviews, 15 constituents representing nine colleges in seven of the nine provinces were interviewed. A breakdown of the geographical spread is illustrated in Tables 4.4 and 4.5. As has already been mentioned, respondents who had not attended the focus group interviews were also selected to be interviewed. The first reason was to increase the representation of urban and rural colleges in a wider geographical distribution.   Two constituents from one urban and one rural college were included from the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga respectively. This arrangement increased the number of representatives from five provinces to seven out of the total of nine provinces. The second reason was for triangulation purposes. These four constituents were able to verify the group reality, thus increasing the validity of the data. Tables 4.4 and 4.5, representing the geographical spread of the individual interview respondents, follow.

Table 4.4   **Geographical spread of leaders at the executive level (or Group 1) identified for the interviews**

GROUP 1					
Province	Urban/rural college	No. of colleges	Male	Female	Total
Eastern Cape	Urban	1	1	0	1
Gauteng	Urban	1	0	1	1
Gauteng	Rural	1	1	0	1
KZN	Rural	1	0	1	1
Limpopo	Rural	1	0	1	1
Mpumalanga	Rural	1	1	1	2
North West	Rural	1	0	1	1
Western Cape	Urban	1	0	1	1
Western Cape	Rural	1	0	1	1
TOTALS: 7	3 urban, 6 rural	9	3	7	10

Table 4.5   **Geographical spread of leaders at mid-level (or Group 2) identified for the interviews.**

GROUP 2					
Province	Urban/rural college	No. of colleges	Male	Female	Total
Eastern Cape	Urban	1	1	0	1
Gauteng	Urban	1	0	1	1
KZN	Rural	1	1	0	1
North West	Rural	1	1	0	1
Western Cape	Urban	1	1	0	1
TOTAL	3 urban, 2 rural	5	4	1	5

Respondents representing each group were each presented with two six-affinity lists (the combined or composite lists of affinities from Group 1 and Group 2) during the individual interview phase for verification.

4.6.1   Individual interview method in IQA

In the focus group interview, the group reality takes precedence over individual differences. The individual interview phase provides the opportunity to explore these differences. The composite of the individual interview mindmaps presents the opportunity to partially

triangulate the focus group interview results. Since the focus group interview affinities determine the content of the individual interviews, it is unlikely that new themes will be introduced and this was found to be the case. However, the individual interview presents the opportunity to clarify uncertainties about the names of affinities, which affinities should be stand-alone affinities and which affinities are sub-affinities or sub-categories of other affinities. The construction of the composite individual interview mindmap was therefore very similar to that of the focus group interviews. This similarity is demonstrated in the next chapter.

The individual interview phase is the second round of data gathering. I showed the respondent the affinities and asked the respondent to say what each of the affinities meant to him or her. This phase of the individual interview is relatively open-ended and is expected to encourage the respondent to reflect on his or her experience and explain what each affinity means to him or her. The individual interviews are designed to add richness and depth description to the meaning of the affinities.

Northcutt and McCoy (2004) believe that it is unnecessary in IQA to distinguish between data (produced by the participants) and analysis, where the researcher analyses the data. In its name, IQA suggests a systemic relationship between data and analysis. The participant is seen as both a source of data and an analyst. Participants identify elements of meaning and describe the perceived cause-and-effect relationships among them, thereby creating a mindmap. The structure of the individual interview 'corresponds exactly to the manner in which the data will be analysed' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:199). A systems approach integrates the content of the individual interview, its structure and the way the individual interview data are analysed. The second part of the individual interview provides the respondent with the opportunity to indicate the perceived relationships among the affinities which results in an individual SID. The results of an IQA individual interview are therefore twofold: a rich, detailed description of each affinity from the participant's point of view is obtained as well as a mindmap of the phenomenon for the participant.

4.6.2   Individual interview data collection and analysis

The individual interview analysis proceeded in the same way as the focus group interview protocol: for each of the affinities, three questions were asked, namely 'What does this mean to you? What led to this? What are the results?' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:43) All the responses or utterances were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts of the individual interviews were then coded both axially and theoretically in the same way as with the focus group interviews. The utterances at the individual interviews were recorded in an Individual Interview Axial Code Table or ACT. The axial codes were identified by noting key words or

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phrases illustrating or describing an affinity. The axial quotes in the ACT were cross-referenced with the transcript. In this study, the words of the participants themselves were favoured in an attempt to reflect the real meanings of the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The combined ACT of both groups can be seen in Addendum 4.

The respondents were also asked to identify the relationships among the affinities through a formal line of questioning in the second phase of the individual interviews. These theoretical codes were recorded in the Individual Interview Theoretical Code Affinity Relationship Table or TCT which is identical to the group ART (see Table 5.3). The same rules that were used with the group apply to the recording of the relationships by placing the appropriate arrow in the TCT. The individual interviews were also examined for links between the affinities.

The same procedure as with the focus group interviews was used to develop an IRD and SID for each respondent. The data from the individual interviews were also combined to represent a composite of the individuals' experience with the phenomenon. As the respondents sometimes disagreed with the direction of the relationship as identified by the group, the IQA protocol (the Pareto Protocol with MinMax criterion) helped to construct a composite SID from the individual SIDs as well.

Firstly, the axial data were transferred from each Individual Interview ACT to a Combined Individual Interview ACT which then became a database for the entire set of individual interviews, containing all axial codes for all infinities, linking each to the transcript. The last two steps of the analysis were then completed by means of an adaptation of the statistical procedure called the Pareto Protocol combined with Power Analysis using the MinMax criterion as explained above. This process is demonstrated in the next chapter.

More or less the same protocols are followed in the individual interviews as have been followed for the focus group interviews. The individual interview protocol consists of two parts: 'the open-ended axial interview designed to provide rich description of affinities by the respondents' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:200) and the structured theoretical interview designed to identify relationships among affinities. The individual interviews produce a much richer picture of the phenomenon than the focus group interviews do on their own since they provide a narrative of how they perceive the elements of the phenomenon. The individual interviews help to verify the affinities produced by the focus group interviews since items of interest prompted by the respondent may be probed, and also to sort out any anomalies. The main anomalies that were sorted out for this study were the following:

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1. Should corporate governance be a separate affinity or is it a sub-affinity. If it can be seen as a sub-affinity, to which affinity does it belong?
2. Should Financial Management, Human Resource Management and Marketing Management be clustered as sub-affinities under the Management Skills affinity?
3. Should Quality Management be singled out as a separate affinity, or can it also be regarded as one of the management skills?
4. Should teaching and learning be a separate affinity or should it form part of academic management, a sub-affinity of management skills?

The answers to these questions are discussed in the next chapter.

The first step in the individual interview analysis is documenting the axial codes or affinities in an ACT. This is done by analysing the transcripts for axial codes which are 'specific examples of discourse that illustrate or allude to an affinity' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:242). The researcher reviews each line of the individual interview transcript, looking for phrases or statements that define or provide examples of affinities. These phrases and statements are then documented in the Individual Interview ACT. Thereafter, the theoretical coding recorded in the respondents' individual ARTs is analysed and transferred to the IRD and the Cluttered and Uncluttered SIDs are drawn.

Thus the individual interview data are coded by the respondents themselves and the researcher follows a protocol identical to that used to generate the focus group interview mindmap to produce a composite individual interview mindmap. Each of the phases of the IQA research flow is 'represented by a protocol and each protocol is supported by a document or set of documents' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:240). There is thus a public data collection and analysis audit trail for the entire study.

The following IQA working document flow is illustrated in Figure 4.3. The protocol and the documentation are mapped to the process in this illustration.

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                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Design     │
                    │   Protocol   │
                    └──────┬───────┘
                           │
                    ┌──────▼───────┐
                    │ Focus group  │
                    │ affinity     │
                    │ write-up     │
                    └──────────────┘
```
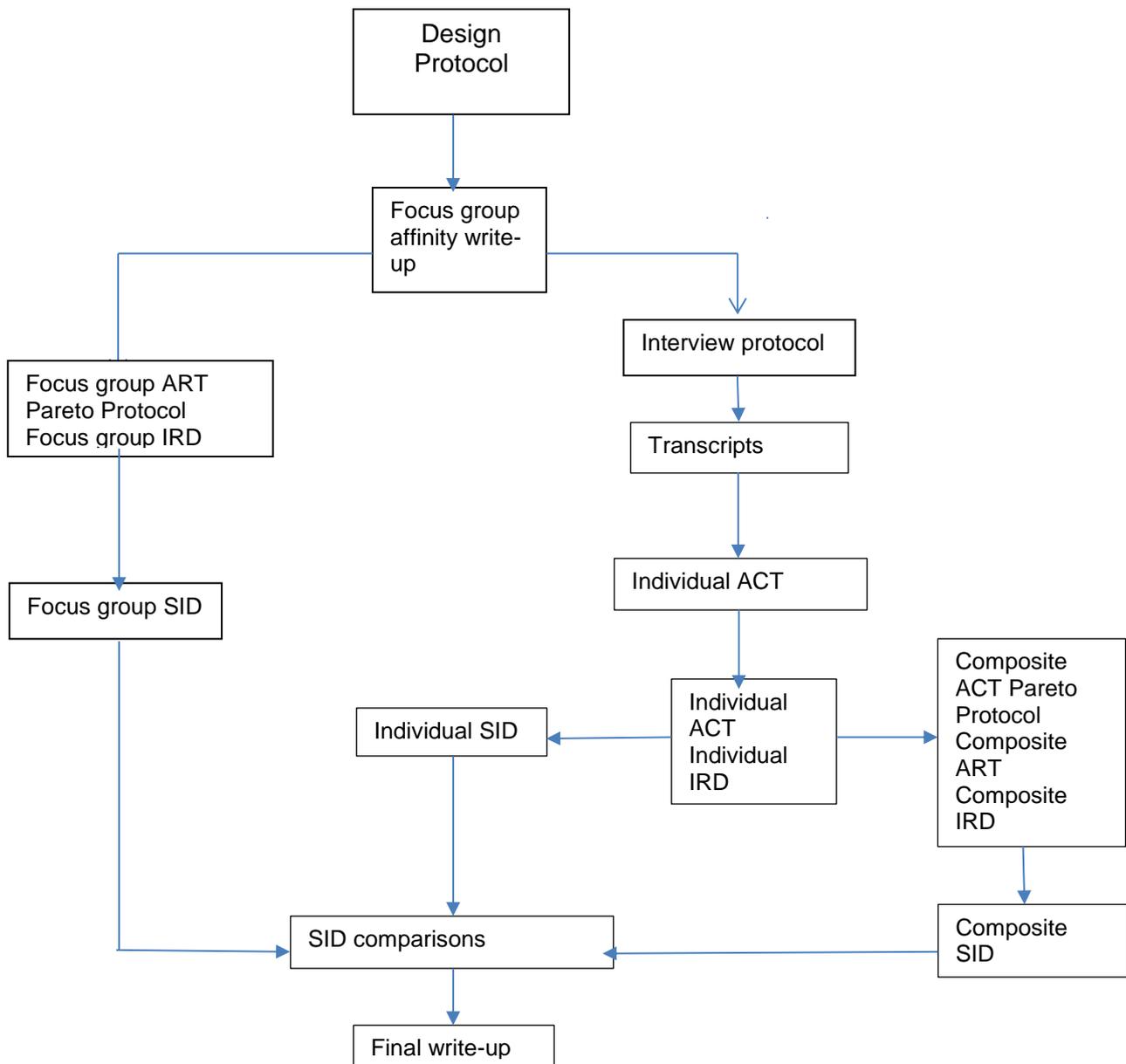
Figure 4.3   IQA document flow (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:241)

For each stage in the IQA research flow, there is a protocol with a supporting document or set of documents that serves two purposes: firstly, it provides an audit trail of both data generation and gathering and analysis is created that is open for public inspection. Secondly, information and analytical results from each step feed into the next.

4.7   REPORT

The report signifies the fourth and final phase in the IQA process. During the first three phases of IQA, the research design was first explained in section 4.4. In the second phase, the focus group interview method, data collection and analysis were explained in 4.5. In the third phase, the individual interview method, data collection and analysis were explained in 4.6. The typical IQA report accomplishes three goals: the elements of the system are

named and described, the relationships among the elements of the system are explained and systems are then compared. As has been illustrated, the IQA systems approach assists with interpretation. The next chapter focuses on the findings of this study, the IQA report or write-up, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data.

4.8   ADDRESSING ISSUES OF RESEARCH QUALITY

Everyone has a right to expect that research has been done in a rigorous and ethically defensible way (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Even with sampling, reliability must be considered. All participants were purposively sampled as belonging to the leadership of public colleges in the TVET college sector as explained in 4.3. Convenience sampling took place to address the challenge of interview respondents not being present at their appointments and to expand the geographical spread of the study to people in other provinces who had been unable to attend the focus group interviews in the two selected provinces.

According to Northcutt and McCoy (2004: xxii), rigour refers to the 'truth value' of research. In this study, the truth value lies in the perception of the participants, and no-one else. Although threats of validity and reliability can never be removed completely, their effects can be reduced by being mindful of them throughout the research exercise (Cohen *et al.,* 2007). Since there are an explicit set of protocols for conducting and documenting qualitative studies, IQA is considered a rigorous methodology with regard to validity, reliability and bias. These issues have been described in detail in Chapter 1.

4.9   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Each participant signed a form agreeing to take part in the study. In this document, the purpose and scope of the study were fully explained to the participants and these were repeated verbally before embarking on the focus group interviews.   Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and information would be handled confidentially.

Respondents for the interviews were verbally informed that their participation was voluntary and that information would be handled confidentially. They were asked whether their interviews may be recorded and were assured that the transcriptions would be anonymous. No first names or surnames would be mentioned; neither would the colleges where they were employed or the provinces in which the colleges were situated. They were assured that the transcripts of the interviews would remain confidential and that any information used would not reveal their identities. The extracts obtained from the interview respondents were dealt with in such a way as to protect the individuals' identity. In the transcriptions, the respondents were labelled Respondent 1 to 15. Any sensitive information that could have identified individuals was omitted from the transcriptions and not used for this study.

4.10   POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS TO THE RESEARCH

There are other methodologies that could have been used instead of IQA. The developers themselves admit that IQA theory did not simply come into being. They acknowledge a debt to numerous other methodologies that incorporate inquiry and activity, like 'concept mapping, grounded theory, Kurt Lewin's field theory, action research, systems theory' amongst others (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:xxiv). For the reasons stated in 1.7.4, I believed that the structured and rigorous approach of IQA would curb bias during the data generation and analysis phases. The protocols that need to be applied to each stage of the analysis of the data result in a clear audit trail which 'support constructs such as credibility, transferability and dependability, highlighting concepts of validity and reliability' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:17) through accountable procedures. It was also helpful to be able to make use of both deductive and inductive methods in the research.

Despite being known to some but not all of the leaders sampled in the sector, I do not believe that they allowed their perceptions to be influenced by my presence since the focus group protocol 'does not lend itself to "thick description"' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:302). The main purpose of the focus group descriptions is to provide the affinities which influence the individual interviews that follow. The affinities themselves are the elements of the system and IQA does not depend on the nature of the elements themselves for meaning. The individual interviews offer deeper, more comprehensive descriptions of the affinities. The resultant mindmaps (SIDs) are characterised 'more by their similarities than their differences' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004: 17) which supports the notion of reliability. Two different analysts would produce a topologically identical SID by adhering to the IQA rules for rationalisation, regardless of possible researcher bias or the meaning of the affinities (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004).

4.11   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, it was shown how the focus group interview names and describes the elements of the system by identifying the affinities according to the focus group interview protocol. The affinities are described in the participants' own words. The system dynamics are made evident by means of an explanation of the relationships among elements. The individual interviews expand the descriptions of and the relationships among the infinities, producing a picture of the system or the SID. Relevant quotes help illustrate the range of meaning to 'ground the abstract representation … [of] the SID in the data of the participants' words and descriptions' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:50). By looking through an activity theory lens, the two systems will be described, explained and compared in the next chapter. The

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comparison can take place at two levels: firstly by comparing individual SIDs with each other or by comparing the SIDs of different constituencies with each other.

'Comparison is the primary method of interpretation, both from the participant's point of view and from the investigator's' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:50). IQA focus group interview and individual interview protocols encourage comparison by the participants throughout the process.   Northcutt and McCoy (2004:51) claim that 'IQA methodology allows for a representation of both individual and group realities, comparisons of which allow the researcher to ask the two great interpretive questions: "What is …?" and What if …?"'. In the next chapter, these two questions will be answered.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The research purpose of this study focused on how the educational landscape in the further education and training (FET) sector (now known as the TVET sector) had changed over the past 20 years and continues to do. If the leaders of the public (TVET) colleges in South Africa are to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes for leading these colleges as mandated, some form of leadership development, as is the practice elsewhere in the world, should take place. This study therefore aimed to answer the following research question: *What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment?*

The subsidiary questions were:

- What is the current status of leadership development in the TVET college sector?
- What kind of TVET college leader is needed to meet the challenges and demands of the future in the sector?
- What competencies (including knowledge, skills attributes and attitudes) will be needed by TVET college leaders to engage meaningfully in the new DHET environment?

In Chapter 1, it was noted that leaders in the TVET sector who have to bring about radical change in their colleges to meet the social and economic needs of South Africa, need to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes to lead these colleges in the future. It was also pointed out in this chapter that leadership development seems central to the effectiveness of educational organisations (Muijs, *et al.*, 2006).

In Chapter 2, it was observed that despite custom-designed leadership development programmes in vocational education being available in other countries, no context-specific qualification has been developed in leadership specifically for leaders in the vocational sector in South Africa, besides various short ad hoc training programmes. These findings attempt to answer the first subsidiary-question by explaining what the current status of leadership development is in the TVET college sector. Despite the need being recognised in both the Green Paper (RSA, 2012) where it is stated that a leadership programme would be designed within three years, and the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training, where the need is still recognised but no mention is made of the envisaged leadership programme, no custom-designed leadership programme for leaders in this sector exists to

date. The fact that there is no such training programme initiated the focus group discussion described in Chapter 4 (see 4.5.1) and the affinities generated addressed the question of what the participants themselves believed should be included in such a curriculum framework.

Also in Chapter 2, various ideas and theories pertaining to leadership were explored and the challenges facing leaders of post-school institutions were examined, thereby partially addressing the second subsidiary question as to what kind of TVET college leader is needed to meet the challenges and demands of the future in the sector. It was suggested that a type of blended leadership (explained in 2.3.3) which should include a shared, participative or distributive form of leadership as well as transformational leadership had been found to be suitable for leaders in the VET sectors in other countries and could possibly be suitable for leaders of TVET colleges in South Africa. This question will be addressed further in this chapter when the participants in this study suggest how they perceive what kind of leader is needed.

In Chapter 3, curriculum concepts and contexts were examined and the theoretical framework, activity theory as viewed by Engeström (1987), was introduced. In Chapter 4, the methodology used for this study, interactive qualitative analysis or IQA, was explained. One of the reasons for choosing this particular methodology was to enable leaders in the South African public TVET college sector to have a say in what should be included in a contextualised, sector-specific curriculum framework for leadership development.

In this chapter, the third and last subsidiary question will be addressed when the results of this research will be made evident concerning the knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes or competencies TVET college leaders themselves believe will be needed by these leaders in order to do the work expected of them. These results will be interpreted to address the main research question, namely what could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment. In this chapter, the results of the IQA process are presented, described, analysed and interpreted, the fourth and final stage of an IQA study. This chapter concludes with an analysis of the data through an activity theory lens. Activity theory has been explained in 3.5.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the typical IQA report accomplishes three goals: the elements (or affinities) of the system are named and described, the relationships among the elements of the system are explained (as represented in the SIDs) and systems are compared. The elements refer to the affinities which are the thoughts and words of those close to the phenomenon as explained in 4.2. The affinities form the building blocks of the

mindmaps or SIDs, the visual representation of the group's reality (as explained in 4.5.2.1) based on the relationships among the affinities. The SIDs are then compared.

In the 'describing the results' chapter, as Northcutt and McCoy (2004) refer to it, two questions are first addressed: *What are the affinities*? and *How are they related?* (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:314). These two questions are answered in the next section.

5.2   DESCRIBING THE RESULTS

5.2.1   Naming and describing the elements of the system

After the initial focus group interview brainstorming phase of the IQA analysis process with 61 participants across two constituencies in response to the same problem statement ('*What should be included in a curriculum framework to enable the TVET college leader to lead the new TVET college in the way that is mandated through legislation?*'), affinities were identified by participants from all four focus groups at four separate focus group interview sessions as described in 4.5.1 and 4.5.2. There was some similarity among the affinities generated, but there were also slight differences. The similarities could be seen in the responses written on the cards in the focus group interview brainstorming session but the differences emerged in the clumping of the cards and the naming of the different categories. Table 5.1 illustrates the main similarities and differences among the affinities generated by the four groups. The affinities as well as the position of some of the affinities that had been listed as sub-affinities have been highlighted in bold and the initial letters have been capitalised for the purpose of identifying affinities easily as elements of the system pertaining to this study

Table 5.1   Focus group interview affinities and sub-affinities generated at the focus group interview IQA workshops

Group 1(a) 7 Affinities	Group 1(b) 8 Affinities	Group 2(a) 9 Affinities	Group 2(b) 6 Affinities
1. **Legislation** • Understanding and interpreting relevant legislation • Policy formulation, development and implementation • Political context of FET	1. **Legislation** • Interpreting relevant legislation • Policy development and implementation • Political context of FET • Skills landscape • Corporate Governance	1. **Legislative Framework** • Knowing relevant legislation	1. **Knowledge of legislation** • Understanding of sector • Skills development • Research
2. **Corporate Governance** • Terms of reference for Councils/Boards • Internal auditing • Risk Management • Strategic Planning (development, implementation and management)	[**Corporate Governance** under **Legislation**]	No mention of **Corporate Governance.**	No mention of **Corporate Governance.**
3. **Communication Skills** • Writing skills • Reporting and report writing • Presentation skills • Meeting skills • Research skills	2. **Communication Skills** • Report writing • People skills • Networking skills	2. **Communication Skills** • People skills (ability to put people at ease, share college policies with staff) • Share information with staff (teamwork) • Presentation skills • Writing skills (report writing) • Rational response to problems • Computer literate • Resolve conflict	2. **Communication Skills** • Give clear directions • Give clear job descriptions • People skills • Know your clients • Share information • Orator • Respond timeously

Table 5.1 (continued)

Group 1(a) 7 Affinities	Group 1(b) 8 Affinities	Group 2(a) 9 Affinities	Group 2(b) 6 Affinities
4. **Management Skills** - Financial Management (budget, internal auditing) - Human Resource Management (HR skills, mentoring and coaching) - Performance Management (and monitoring) - Industrial relations (networking, partnerships, community and industry engagement) - Monitoring and evaluation - Macro-management Skills - Operational Management - Infrastructural development, utilisation and maintenance - Academic Management (education systems, **teaching and learning**, creating a teaching and learning environment, planning, leading, organising, control, managing exams and assessment, curriculum management, delivery) - Risk Management - Project Management - Contract management - Change management - Diversity Management (cultural awareness) - MIS knowledge (understanding), generation and management - Quality Management	3. **Management Skills** - Generic Management - Operations Management - HR Management (mentoring and staff relationship management, labour relations) - **Quality Management** (quality auditing skills) - Partnerships and Linkages - Business Management (business skills) - Project Management - Marketing Management (branding) - Innovation Management - Change Management - Diversity Management - Conflict Management - Crisis Management - Industrial relations	[**Management Skills** under Finance, Human Relations and Marketing]	3. **Advanced Management Skills** - Financial Management - HR Management - Operational Management - Project Management - Change Management - Management Skills (implementer, adaptable, organiser, record-keeper) - Time Management
[**Quality Management** under Management Skills]	[**Quality Management** under **Management Skills**]	3. **Quality Management (Systems)**	4. **Quality Management**
(**Financial Management** under Management Skills]	4. **Financial Management** - Budgeting skills	4. **Finance** - Basic accounting skills - Financial Planning and Management	[**Financial Management** under **Management Skills**]

Table 5.1 (continued)

Group 1(a) 7 Affinities	Group 1(b) 8 Affinities	Group 2(a) 9 Affinities	Group 2(b) 6 Affinities
[Human Relations Management under Management Skills)	(**Human Relations Management** under **Management Skills**)	5. Human Relations • Labour relations • Disciplinary procedure • Performance Appraisal • Staff development	(**Human Relations Management** under Advanced Management Skills)
[Research skills under **Communication Skills]**	5. **Research Skills** • Knowledge Management	[No mention of **Research Skills.**]	**[Researcher** under Qualities of a leader**]**
[Marketing under **Leadership Skills]**	**[Marketing** under **Management Skills**]	6. **Marketing** • Community and Industry liaison • Customer care	**[Marketing** under **Qualities of a Leader]**
(**Strategic Planning** under Corporate Governance)	6 **Strategic Planning** • Understanding the economic drivers • Forecasting • Risk Management	7. **Strategic Planning** • Scenario creating and analysing • Strategic management • Operational planning • Change management	**[Strategic Plan** under **Strategist]**
5. **Leadership** • Styles (transformational, innovative, inspirational, goal-orientated, team-player, participatory, *lead by example*) • Skills (management, people, promote organisational culture, planning) • Attributes (critical thinker, discerning, visionary, strategist, motivator, organised)	7. **Personal Development** • Leadership Styles (caretaker, conciliatory, teambuilding, pastoral, transformational, gets out of comfort zone, delegation) • Leadership Skills (life skills, survival, negotiation, ability to deliver, time management, decision-making, planning, motivational) • Leadership attributes (adaptive, flexible, confident, optimistic, supportive, *ethical*, innovative, creative, human touch, accepting, influential, resilient, emotional intelligence)	8. **Leadership Traits** • Styles (democratic, self-leadership, how to be a good steward, delegative, *lead by example*) • Skills (management, problem-solving, diversity management, stress management, conflict management, knowledge of all skills programmes) • Attributes (innovative, creative, big picture thinker, think out of the box, team player, transparent, visionary, thinker, results-driven, motivational, accommodating, know oneself, open-minded, pro-active, change agent, confident, assertive, open to ideas, understanding, flexible, motivator, trusting, emotional intelligence, developmental, learner, human touch, realistic, understanding or and passion for youth development)	5. **Qualities of a Leader** • Styles (bottom-up leadership, *lead by example*, delegative, be a PR for FET) • Skills (understand diversity, decision-making, a researcher, organiser, recordkeeping, computer literate), counselling) • Attributes (consistent, caring, caring about the staff's wellbeing, keep your word, passion and love of sector, motivational, self-motivational, trusting, understanding, empathetic, transparent, open, firm but fair, diplomatic, decisive, brave enough to make unpopular decisions, smart, mature, ability to forgive oneself, open-minded, a learner, understanding, resilient. Implementer, adaptable)

Table 5.1 (continued)

Group 1(a) 7 Affinities	Group 1(b) 8 Affinities	Group 2(a) 9 Affinities	Group 2(b) 6 Affinities
6. **Leadership Skills** • Knowledge (education, technology, multiple disciplines) • Skills (planning, time management, decision-making, business and negotiation, marketing and Public Relations, delegation, conflict and crisis management, stress management, administrative, advanced computer literacy) • Attributes (objective, analytical, people skills, entrepreneurial, multi-tasking)	[**Leadership Skills** under **Personal Development**]	[**Leadership Skills** under **Leadership Traits**]	[**Leadership Skills** under **Qualities of a Leader** and **Strategist**]
[**Strategist** under **Leadership**]	[No mention of **Strategist**.]	[No mention of **Strategist**.]	6. **Strategist** • Take risks, innovative and creative (does things differently, planner (for future), goal-orientated, analytic, organiser, visionary • Adaptation of **strategic plan** to operations
7. **Personality Traits** Hard worker, realistic, sensitive to needs, humble, committed, motivated by passion,, creative, innovative, assertive, competent, consistent, have emotional intelligence, a teacher and a learner, *ethical, moral, value-driven, absolute integrity*	[**Personality Traits** under **Personal Development**]	[**Personality Traits** under **Leadership Traits**]	[**Personality Traits** under **Qualities of a Leader** and **Strategist**]
[No mention of Business Skills.]	[**Business Skills** under Management Skills.**]**	9. **Business Skills** • How to lead a college like a business • Business economics • Risk taking • Project Management • Time management (shorten endless meetings) • Negotiation\Mediation skills • Proposal writing • Tendering processes	[No mention of **Business Skills**.]

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Table 5.1 (continued)

| [**Teaching and Learning** under **Management Skills** (Academic)**]** | 8. **Teaching and Learning**

• Service delivery
• Curriculum
• Articulation and progression
• Monitoring and evaluation
• Student support and development
• Analysis and interpretation of statistics (MIS, national targets)
• Skills development
• Lifelong learning | [No mention of **Teaching and Learning**.] | [No mention of **Teaching and Learning**.] |

From Table 5.1 it is clear that the affinities resemble one another, but there are also differences. Affinities have three features in which they could be experienced differently by participants. In the first place, they may differ in 'timbre' or 'feel' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:345). Timbre in relation to an affinity could be described roughly as being equivalent to a value in relation to a variable in quantitative data. Northcutt and McCoy (2004) use the example of temperature as a variable which may range from hot to cold. In the same way, timbre is a characteristic of an affinity which also has a range which is the structural feature of the affinity where some people may experience it positively, others negatively. The timbre is the range or the feel of the affinity. The second feature of an affinity is 'scalar' in that its range varies from one extreme to another, for example, pleasant to unpleasant (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:345). The third feature of the affinity is dialectic. The dialectic of an affinity is seen as 'the dynamic interaction of opposites'. If the one opposite ceases to exist, the other also vanishes since it is no longer relevant (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:346). For example, if, say, confusion vanishes, so does the cognitive reaction of learning or growth.

Northcutt and McCoy (2004) believe that where affinities are similar, it is reasonable to reconcile the affinity names with one another. A separate interview protocol for each constituency would ignore 'the equally obvious similarities between the two systems' which could lead to 'difficulties in comparing the two groups, which is one of the important objectives of the study' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:212). There is evidence that disparate constituencies vary mainly in the way in which the relationships among affinities are perceived rather than in the affinities themselves. Participants often name the same affinity differently. There is always a 'common core of affinities' across constituencies (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:213). It would be best to prepare a single reconciled protocol 'that incorporates the commonalities between the two while maintaining the integrity of each of the original systems' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:213). The common meanings for this study have thus been retained as well as any other affinity that is unique to any of the two constituencies as will be explained below. Please note that for consistency, the affinities and sub-affinities have been treated as a grammatically singular element rather than using the plural form suggested by a word like 'skills'. Once again, the initial letters have been capitalised for the purpose of identifying affinities easily as elements of the system pertaining to this study.

For this study, the following reconciled list of affinities was developed according to the following protocol:

- All four groups had named Legislation and Communication Skills as affinities. Legislation and Communication Skills could thus be retained as affinities for both groups owing to their commonality.

- Only the two groups belonging to Group 1 had made any mention of Corporate Governance. Group 1(a) had named Corporate Governance as a separate infinity but Group 1(b) had listed it as a sub-affinity of Legislation, where most of those interviewed suggested it belonged. Since it was unique to only one group, Corporate Governance thus became a sub-affinity of Legislation for Group 1's composite but this decision was ratified during the individual interviews. It had been listed as a sub-affinity of Legislation by 60% of the Group 1 respondents (Respondents 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9).

- Management Skills was identified as an affinity by three groups, while one group identified it as a category of meaning or a sub-affinity, or the dialectic of a larger category of meaning. Whether Management Skills was identified as an affinity or sub-affinity, the four groups all produced similar categories. This suggested that it could be retained as an affinity. Group 2(a) was the only group that had not listed Management Skills as an affinity, but had listed Human Relations, Business Skills, Financial Management, and Marketing Management as separate affinities. The other groups had seen these support functions either as separate affinities or categories of meaning, some of them belonging to the affinity Management Skills. Groups 1(a) and 2(b) had listed Financial Management and Human Resource Management under Management Skills, but Group 1(b), although it had listed Human Resource Management as a sub-affinity of Management Skills, had named Financial Management as a separate affinity. Group 2(a) had done the same. Group 1(a) had listed Marketing under Leadership Skills while Group 1(b) had listed Marketing under Management Skills. Group 1(b) had listed Marketing Management under Management Skills but Group 1(a) had not mentioned Marketing Management at all. Other diverse Management Skills (such as Project, Risk, Contract, Change or Diversity Management) were also listed under Management Skills. Management Skills could thus remain an affinity in a composite of both groups with the other management support functions such as Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Marketing Management, and so on, sub-affinities of this affinity.   This decision was tested during the individual interviews.

- Quality Management as an affinity was unique to Group 2 but both Group 1(a) and 1(b) had regarded it as a sub-affinity of Management Skills. Based on the fact that the affinity was unique to Group 2, a decision was made to keep Quality Management as an affinity for Group 2 and tested with both groups during the individual interviews whether Quality Management could be retained as an affinity or could become a sub-affinity of Management Skills.

- Research was mentioned in one form or another by three out of the four groups. Research Skills was regarded as a separate affinity by Group 1(b) only but Research Skills was regarded as a sub-affinity under Communication Skills by Group 1(a). Group 2(b) listed 'researcher' as a sub-affinity of Qualities of a Leader. The majority seemed to believe in the importance of research skills as a sub-affinity rather than an affinity. Research Skills would therefore not be listed as a separate affinity as it had received minority support.

- Strategic Planning was listed by all four groups. Strategic Planning was regarded as an affinity by Groups 1 (b) and 2 (a). Strategic Planning was also listed by the other two groups, but as sub-affinities. Group 1(a) listed Strategic Planning as a sub-affinity of Corporate Governance and Group 2(b) named Strategist as a separate affinity but mentioned strategic planning as a sub-affinity of Strategist. Strategic Planning would thus be retained as an affinity in both composites. Strategist would be regarded as a sub-affinity of Leadership Skills as had been indicated by Group 2(b).

- All four groups listed Leadership as a separate affinity but named their affinities differently. Group 1(a) had separated Leadership, Leadership Skills and Personality Traits as separate affinities; Group 1 (b) had clumped Leadership Styles, Skills and Attributes under the affinity Personal Development; Group 2(a) had listed Leadership Traits separately but had included styles, skills and attributes as sub-affinities; Group 2(b) had listed Qualities of a Leader, which included leadership styles, skills and attributes as sub-affinities and Strategist as a separate affinity referring to strategic leadership skills. Leadership would thus be retained as an affinity in both composites.

- Finally, Teaching and Learning was only named as an affinity by Group 1(b). Group 1(a) had clumped it under Management Skills as an academic management skill. Both Group 2(a) and 2(b) had not mentioned it at all. Since teaching and learning was unique to one group and listed as a sub-affinity by the other group in the same constituency, it would be retained as an affinity for Group 1 and the decision tested during the individual interviews with both constituencies.

On the basis of the protocol offered above, a similar individual interview protocol for each of the two constituencies, Group 1 and Group 2, was developed. The process for reconciling the affinities in preparation of the individual interviews is illustrated in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2   Reconciled affinities for the individual interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:215)

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	Combined affinities to be verified during individual interviews
Legislation, including Corporate Governance	Legislation	1. Legislation, including Corporate Governance
Communication Skills	Communication Skills	2. Communication Skills
Management Skills (including Finance and HR)	Advanced Management Skills (including Finance, HR, Business and Research)	3. Management Skills (including support functions and Quality Management)
Strategic Planning	Strategic Planning	4. Strategic Planning
Leadership (knowledge, style, traits, skills)	Leadership (knowledge, style, traits, skills including strategist)	5. Leadership (knowledge, style, traits, skills)
Teaching and Learning		6. Teaching and Learning
[Quality Management sub-affinity of Management Skills]	Quality Management	*Quality Management sub-affinity of Management Skills*

In summary: the first five affinities were the same for both groups. The affinities differed in that Teaching and Learning was only named by Group 1, once as an affinity and once as a sub-affinity. Group 2 did not mention Teaching and Learning as an affinity or a sub-affinity. It was therefore omitted from their list of affinities but they confirmed that it should be included as an affinity during the interviews. Both Group 2 constituencies named Quality Management as an affinity but Group 1 had listed it as a sub-affinity, so Quality Management was retained as a separate affinity for Group 2 only. During the interviews they confirmed that it would be better positioned as a sub-affinity of Management Skills.

These two lists of similar affinities were presented to each of the two constituencies during the individual interviews and tested by posing the following questions to each respondent: Would you agree that each of these affinities should be separate? Could some of these affinities be regarded as sub-affinities of the affinities listed here? Are there any affinities that you would like to add? Fifteen participants representing both Group 1 and Group 2 constituencies were identified to take part in the individual interviews. Four of these participants had not attended the initial focus group interviews. They were included in the individual interviews with the purpose of increasing the geographical representation of

participants. With the inclusion of the four participants from two additional colleges, the researcher was able to verify the focus group interview results with participants from seven out of the nine South African provinces – instead of only the five provinces that were represented at the focus group interviews.

As can be seen from Tables 4.4 and 4.5, care was taken to have an equal geographical distribution of respondents. An equal distribution in terms of gender was not so easy to achieve as males generally dominate as leaders in the TVET college sector. However, In Group 1, more females than males participated in the individual interviews while more males than females participated in the Group 2 individual interviews. This ratio had not been specifically planned but it was representative of participants who were available for interviews.

Besides providing an opportunity to verify the group reality, the purpose of individual interviews was to obtain an explanation of the affinities in the participants' own words and to test the researcher's decisions in forming the composites. The interviews were transcribed and a combined Interview Axial Code Table compiled. Examples of the first page of a transcribed interview and a combined Interview Axial Code Table can be seen in Addenda 3 and 4. The complete interview transcriptions and Interview Code Tables can be obtained from me upon request.

Northcutt and McCoy (2004) propose a protocol to be used for the write-up or for describing the results of the individual interviews. This protocol, which includes specific punctuation and voice rules, is called the 'Rules of Evidence' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:317). This protocol has not been followed strictly in this chapter except that the words of the participants have been used. The individual meanings of the affinities as perceived by the respondents are presented in italics where the respondents are referred to numerically as Respondent 1 to 15. Where there is consensus about the meaning of the affinity, the individual respondents will be referred to as 'the respondents'.

It needs to be pointed out that the majority of the participants are second- or even third-language speakers and their first-language idiom has had an influence on the type of language that they have used especially with regard to the choice of vocabulary, tense and concord. Their language use has not been changed but, where it is unclear, the researcher has added a clarification. The affinities have been numbered, starting with 5.2.1.1.

5.2.1.1　　　The importance of legislation

The data suggest that the respondents viewed legislation as any legislation that had to do with a TVET college and was not restricted to the FET Act and its amendments. Legislation was translated into the policies and procedures of every college. Legislation underpinned

the way in which these colleges had to operate and offered direction and guidance to colleges.

In more detail, the respondents' views on the general nature of legislation are portrayed as follows:

> *Legislation is all relevant legislation acts that impacts on a college. [Respondent 1]*

> *It is also good practice for one to adhere to. It underpins service delivery [and] it underpins the way of doing things. [Respondent 5]*

Three of the respondents saw legislation in terms of a 'driver', a 'vehicle' and a 'roadmap' to provide the direction in which the colleges should be moving as is evident from the quotations below:

> *Various legislation that drives us. [Respondent 2]*

> *It gives you direction when you need one. [Respondent 4]*

> *Inside the institution you have the applicable policies and procedures that becomes the vehicle for you to respond to the legislative framework. [Respondent 10]*

Legislation thus constituted the operational guidelines but, according to Respondent 8, legislation also clarified different roles at the TVET colleges:

> *Under legislation, it is important for the principal to know that he is appointed by the minister for a certain mandate. I don't know whether anybody realise it but at this stage, the difference between a college and a school is the fact that the accounting body at a school is the school governing body, while the accounting officer at a college is the principal. So that actually makes the council an advisory body and not an accounting body as a school governing body. It is supposed to be the principal who is the accounting officer and it is not being practised like that. One of the biggest challenges within colleges is actually the regulation and the relation.*

Respondents indicated that legislation ensured a standardised approach to policies and procedures in the sector and therefore needed to be commonly understood and interpreted. However, although a number of respondents stressed the importance of interpretation, it appears that colleges tended to interpret legislation differently and therefore differed in their policies and procedures as respondents themselves said:

> *Each college interpret legislation in their own way and that is part of the problem why we all do things differently and read it differently because the internal policies*

are so different. We need to get common understanding so when we implement, it is a common implementation across the different colleges. [Respondent 2]

Interpretation of legislation is different from campus to campus. We should make sure that we all have the same understanding and the same interpretation of the legislation, particularly with HR. There needs to be more unity, uniformity amongst all of us for the interpretation. [Respondent 3]

There should be an implementation plan and you do not deviate from this implementation plan because as soon as I deviate, the next college has got a problem. We must slowly come up with a manual. [Respondent 7]

As a college, you can't do your own thing. [Respondent 9]

The interpretation of the national directive is vital. [Respondent 10]

There was consensus that everybody in a leadership position needed to know the relevant legislation thoroughly so that he or she could comply with such legislation. It seemed essential for leaders of colleges to understand and be able to interpret the law correctly in order to formulate and communicate the institution's policies and procedures as pointed out by Respondents 1 and 9:

You need to know those legislation very well. You need to interpret the legislation and you need to identify what does the legislation say that impacts on your college and the operations at your college. Also to disseminate that information to all the different levels within your institution and where a specific department, like your HR department, for example, will have to interpret their legislation, the Employment Act, the Skills Development Act, specifically, or even for training purposes, you need to make sure that people understand the right level of the legislation for them to do their work according to legislation. [Respondent 1]

As a leader, you must absolutely be on top of [relevant legislation and policies]. You must understand where all these things fit in. [Respondent 9]

The respondents were disappointed that, without input from the colleges, legislation was drafted externally but had to be implemented internally, often with very little guidance or support for the colleges themselves. Some of the respondents felt isolated by the employer while they were expected to lead colleges in circumstances beyond their control. This sense of isolation is explored further in 5.2.1.2. Union influence was prevalent even though legislation was not clear about their role. As Respondent 3 stated:

I just feel that one should be consulted. We are all thrown to the lions at this level. It is just sent down to us when it is signed and that is it. Do with it what you like. Handle it. Handle it. You managers, handle it. But we handle it differently to what another college is handling it 80 km from here and it cause problems. It was easy

for them to just put it on our table and say handle it. But when one of them came and tried to handle it, I said but you are the principal now, you must give me an answer here. He said to me I cannot come back here. I cannot. I cannot take this. So that I think that when the legislation is done, there's got to be a back-up for us to implement. There is absolutely no backup because the unions just run riot. It's not what they say there in the bargaining councils. I don't think everyone knows the background to it and it's very difficult to implement it. We are not the writers. It's mostly advocates and lawyers and people who do the policy for government. The difficulty of designing these policies and procedures is that we've not been involved in the drafting of the legislation and often it is subject to interpretation.

Respondent 3 added that leaders at colleges did not always receive the information that they needed first hand, which not only placed them at a disadvantage when it came to dealing with college matters and internal and external pressures, but was regarded as isolating and problematic.   This situation was also described as creating a communication problem between the employer and senior management as well as between senior management and staff at the campus level:

Unions are obviously involved in the deliberations because their people who sit in the chambers or wherever they decide these things, they communicate down to the provinces, provinces communicate down to their members, but from our side we don't get it. We are the last people to hear about the legislation. Most of my legislation I got from my union without getting anything from DHET. The staff were asking us questions which we could not answer because we could not get the legislation. I had to three times email and say please give me the signed documents because we have got unions here that are threatening me and I cannot produce anything because I haven't got the signed legislation. If the union is giving them pressure, now they change their story, but we are the stupid fools here on the ground who's still sitting with the first interpretation that they gave us. I could not find the piece of legislation which talks to it except it says there was meetings and that there was agreements. Then I contact DHET. I said where do we stand? To today, I haven't had an answer. Then I contact a person who writes a reply that says no, it does not apply to us. I say please give us a formal letter. Every day I SMS the person now in the department, please I need that in writing. I've got to go back to the unions and they've already had their next meeting yesterday. I need an interpretation of this. Where does it apply to us? Now nobody wants to answer my call. Nobody wants to answer my SMS.

Many leaders of TVET colleges came from a teaching background and were not always adequately prepared for this role as suggested by Respondents 2, 3 and 7 below:

> *That's why so many colleges are under administration because we don't understand or were not trained how to implement those policies. [Respondent 2]*

> *Most of the managers have come through a teaching career. It is not our field of expertise. [Respondent 3]*

> *People coming from the school sector. They cannot cope in the FET college because they don't know the dynamics and they don't understand the influence of the different stakeholders – how to manage them. Even the legislation itself. [Respondent 7]*

Perceptions about the importance of communication skills are discussed in the next section.

5.2.1.2 The importance of communication skills

All the respondents agreed that a leader needed to have good communication skills as the message needed to be communicated clearly, on time and effectively especially since campuses and colleges were so spread out geographically. Support of this view is evident from the following excerpts:

> *You transfer information. If we don't know how to talk to each other and give each other information timely, correctly, politely then we are not hitting it. [Respondent 4]*

> *Communication skills is key. In the [one of the provinces], they are 700km away from one another and that's only two campuses of the same college. So, one have to communicate well in order to be a good manager. [Respondent 5]*

> *There are things which might be important which fall into the gaps because we don't attend to them or because we communicate them late or not at all. [Respondent 13]*

> *We hardly expect someone to carry out the instructions when your instructions themselves are not clear. We should be able to say what we want to say, at the right time and be sensitive on saying it and how you say it. [Respondent 14]*

> *You [must] know how to communicate and communicate effectively. There's a lot in our world where people tell you one thing and then they meant something else. [Respondent 15]*

The respondents also believed that communication skills covered a number of skills such as being empathetic and being a good listener as well as being able to communicate verbally,

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non-verbally, orally and in writing with an external and internal stakeholder group. It was important for leaders to be culturally sensitive in the way in which they communicated. It was also important for a leader to have knowledge of different communication skills so that the right skill or method or channel of communication could be selected for the right audience, otherwise communication would fail.   Staff seemed to prefer face-to-face communication with their leaders for communication to be effective.   Attention should be given to formulating and sending out the right message. Support for these views can be seen below:

> *How managers should communicate with their staff – it is broad - emails, faxes, circulars, noticeboards, posters, social network, besides the traditional methods of communication. Writing skills, report writing skills. Verbal communication is also critical as much as writing, body language … Dress code should be part of non-verbal communication. We need to set the example of how we dress to the staff. It's part of the package. [Respondent 2]*

> *Some people hear good, some people see good. One can apply both of these skills. That is why the principal and deputy principals need to travel a lot to communicate in person because to read something on an email, people do not read anymore. And to have a teleconference. People say they do a road show twice a year. I don't believe in roadshows. I think they need to be there in person more often. Writing letters is not good anymore. I still believe in the personal touch. [Respondent 5]*

> *You need all sorts of communication skills. We do have communication at all the different levels, from the lowest level to the highest level … How can you ensure that the message that you want to give through is the real message that reach everybody on the ground? [Respondent 6]*

> *Cultural awareness affect communication skills. [Respondent 7]*

> *You need to be able to be versatile. [Respondent 15]*

Communication was not one-directional but required feedback. By ensuring that there was feedback, leaders could ensure that the communication had been successful. These views were supported by the respondents quoted below:

> *Are you allowing communication to be two-way or is it one-way only? We do have communication at all the different levels, from the lowest level to the highest level … It is critical for me to meet with everybody in my office once a week. I want to call it interactive because everybody must speak, whether they like it or not, and you don't just tell me business as usual. We use it as a capacity-building session. You are making people just know again the rules and to play the game correctly. [Respondent 6]*

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Sometimes the information is sent across and there's a dead end. You don't get a response to the communication. [Respondent 12]

It should be effective top down and from the bottom up. [Respondent 13]

Check if your message has been related correctly to the other side and you get acknowledgement of receipt of that particular message. [Respondent 14]

These remarks also supported the belief that communication took place externally and internally with different stakeholders, which meant that the type of communication selected had to be appropriate. The individual views can be seen below:

There are two layers of communication within the institution: one is external and one is internal and you need to know how to deal with stakeholders. [Respondent 1]

We deal with different stakeholders at different events. [Respondent 6]

You have to learn how you are going to communicate with students, for instance your greatest target market. They can either make the college or break the college because it depends how you communicate with them. So, to me, communication skills can be broken up into different areas depending on which audience you are dealing with. You got parents, students, staff, managers, community and you have other state bodies. You have to ensure that you are able to communicate at those levels so that those people can grasp how you are wanting them to assist you, partner with you or support you as an institution. You are not going to get the response you expect if you don't analyse the target audience first. [Respondent 7]

Most important of all is to identify the different stakeholders – who are they, what is it that you want to communicate, how and how often will you communicate? [Respondent 8]

You are basically the person who must go out and get partnership from people in business and industry … You should conduct yourself at a very high level because you are the ambassador for the college … Things like protocol and your written skills because a lot of your work is based on report writing to various bodies. Communication is about target group, people skills. [Respondent 9]

It's important for any manager to be able to make sure that all of those that have an impact on the institution are regularly and well informed of what is being developed. This also impacts on your marketing strategy because we are in a competitive environment. This relationship with the outside world is important for you to be able to make the college's presence felt wherever you go. It is essential to expose your staff to the most recent practices in industry and also for industry to assist you to upgrade and to develop your staff. This relationship can also

result in contributions being made by the industry that supports their particular training in your institution. Communication is not just merely how you speak and how you write. It's got a broader context that lends itself to fundraising, marketing, advocacy, developing relationships internally and externally. [Respondent 10]

If a leader can't communicate with his people below him, then he won't get co-operation. [Respondent 11]

Respondent 5 believed that communication skills were akin to leadership skills which should ensure that people receive the right information before misinformation became a problem:

We must have an open door policy to be able to communicate well. Otherwise something 'crop up[2]' and 'crop up' and then that's why you see a lot of strikes at the colleges because they get fed third-hand information and what normally happens, there's seven campus managers sitting around the table. They get a message then there's seven different messages that go out. It is important the quality of what the communication that lands on a person's desk must reflect the organisation and the status of the organisation. And obviously with communication skills and leadership style, the two intertwine. Your communication must actually put forward your leadership even in a simple thing like a communication.

There was a prevailing sense of isolation and miscommunication between the colleges and the employer on the one hand and the college management and staff on the other. In the former case, colleges were no longer clear about with whom they must communicate officially. They felt that they were not receiving essential information first hand and this had repercussions on internal communication. Communication between the employer and the colleges was either not happening effectively, negatively influencing communication between top and middle management, or the approach was top-down, which caused frustration and a feeling of rejection. Respondents 3, 4 and 12 offered their views as follows:

There is very, very little consultation. There's no communication in the province anymore. We do not know at this point whether the province people have been seconded to DHET or whether we still work though them or whether we don't work through them. One day we'll hear, no, you still fall under the province, you've got to work through the province, yet all the correspondence comes straight from head office and you've got to reply to DHET. So where does that leave us? Province is cross with you because you sent things straight to DHET, but DHET require it and then DHET say remember, you need to work through your province. But when the

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[2] Researcher's note: in Afrikaans, *krop op* means 'builds up'*;* this is the way in which 'crop up' has been used here and not in the sense of its English meaning, 'occurs' or 'pops up'.

requests come directly from DHET and the returns must go directly to DHET, and every time we do not know whether these people have been seconded or not. Not all of them want to be seconded either so there's a communication problem. And not only that, it also leads to a communication problem between management and staff. For example, the migration. Staff will come and say to me when are we migrating? I cannot give them an answer because for months we didn't know what was happening with migration. And we asked just send an email that says we're still busy in the bargaining units, we haven't come to a conclusion. Then we know. Because the same story happens – the unions are giving feedback to their staff because obviously for them, it's a perfect situation to get more members and to get members all worked up. We get nothing. I find that unacceptable. Whenever you go to a campus they want to know what has happened to the migration. Obviously, because it is their jobs! It is really just a feeling of they're hunting us down because you just get instructions that you will do this or you will do that by tomorrow or the next day but there's no support. You really get that feeling they feel absolutely nothing for you. You are just there. From a management point of view, there is definitely a communication gap between us and our employer. [Respondent 3]

We are responsible to parents and students and companies and other stakeholders. There was no communication to tell us listen expect the results late because of A, B, C; meanwhile do this. If we don't get any guidance from the people that we report to, DHET, you know, there's nothing – it hampers the way we communicate within this level as well and it's not professional to say DHET has done this or that. No. You take it upon yourself and say I'll communicate to give direction to the people. [Respondent 4]

We don't know who we're accountable to. [Respondent 12]

This perceived communication gap also prevailed internally at campus level where staff believed they were not receiving the right information and they also wanted to feel valued. Communication between leaders and staff needed to be improved since campuses felt that they needed recognition from top management and needed to see their leaders on a regular basis. On the other hand, leaders at senior level felt that staff had campus managers who were meant to be their link to the central office but Respondent 3 acknowledged:

There is also a lack of communication on college level. There is also a perceived and there may be in some places a genuine communication gap between us and the campuses because of the 'us and them' which you get at most places. You find that some things are of the utmost importance and they are coming from DHET and how they get communicated downwards you find that there's loads of gaps. And you probably have to give a report and you find that your report has

lots of shortfalls and it's because of the type of communication that was filtered from whatever office to all other offices. Weaknesses in an institution is communication between the head office and the campus. Everyone will tell you very quickly we're not schools. But like I say to the staff, you keep on saying we're not schools but yet you want to have a staff meeting every week or wherever. You want a manager on your campus where you've got a campus manager and we communicate through campus managers. But yet you still want top management to come every week to come and find out if you're OK but you insist that you are higher education. They still want a pat on the back every day.

In the following section, the respondents' views on the importance of management skills are discussed.

5.2.1.3   The importance of management skills

Some of the respondents agreed that there was a close correlation between management and leadership but Respondent 10 was of the opinion that there was a distinction between the two concepts:

> *We must make a distinction between a manager and a leader.*

Respondent 3 felt that at the colleges, leaders had come through the teaching staff ranks and were thus managers rather than leaders.

> *There's a difference, a bit of an overlap whether you're a manager or whether you are a leader. But I think because most of us came through the system, the majority are managers and not leaders. Deputy Principals can be more on the management side but you can't have the principal that is the manager that wants to manage the leave, the hours that people are teaching. It doesn't work.*

'Management' was believed to be an overarching term that referred to all the support functions in the college and management skills were the tools needed to manage these functions. Managers were process or portfolio owners of the various functions at the college, the main two being Finance and Human Resources. These views were supported by the respondents in the following quotations:

> *Incorporate all the various departments you might have within an institution or your units. And that includes your functional management also of an institution which could include your Human Resource Management, Corporate Services, your Corporate Communication, Marketing and Public Relations, Financial Management, Quality Management. [Respondent 1]*

> *Things like our HR, the finances, asset management, the infrastructure, all those strategic functions in the college need to be managed. Supply Chain Management. [Respondent 2]*

HR, for example, is a huge portfolio. [Respondent 4]

Management skills is an overarching theme … [to] make sure that we delivers effective service. The Act says there must be internal controls specifically and the college council is responsible for that, but the management must execute that to ensure that service delivery is effective. [Respondent 5]

Even though teaching and learning is separate, your management skills must also talk to your academic link where you have to know who is doing what, why. It is supporting to academic but without it, academic can't go on. [Respondent 6]

Management skills has a whole array of things, most important of them all being Financial Management and HR Management … I think emphasis must be put on these if I can say sub-sections that would fall under management because they are called the running of the organisation, managing the day-to-day processes. [Respondent 7]

There was a general feeling that these managers needed to be trained to fulfil the function as they were not always qualified. This state of affairs might cause serious problems, as indicated by Respondents 1, 2 and 10:

We need to train the people [in those positions]. [Respondent 1]

We know sometimes they get appointed and they don't have the proper qualifications. Supply Chain Management, the whole procurement function, is a management function and if people are not trained then you find that people get suspended or go to jail, all those things, tender fraud and things. So, all those things are critical for me to be trained on and the managers are then equipped to manage things. [Respondent 2]

We don't have qualified and experienced managers at the moment. You find that people are not trained then you find that people get suspended or go to jail. These facets are critical that drives the sector. [Respondent 10]

Leaders expressed the need to know something about all these managerial functions in order to make informed decisions, but had to take care not to become involved in operational functions in view of the danger of micromanaging. The respondents' views are highlighted below:

So you are part of all these facets of management although you are not the process owner driving that as a management function but you are feeding into it because they are our support functions. So it is not just for the HR Manager or the Finance Manager. It is for the whole management team because we are all featuring at any one point on these decision-making bodies. [Respondent 2]

Leaders need to know a little bit about the different areas. [Respondent 6]

You don't need to do the books but you must be able to interpret the financial data presented to you in order for you to make the correct decision because you are accountable. [Respondent 7]

Part of good management skills is delegation. You need the basic understanding of Finance and HR. [Respondent 10]

In the next section, perceptions about the importance of strategic planning are discussed.

5.2.1.4　　　The importance of strategic planning

Respondents generally agreed that strategic planning was informed by legislation and was a planning tool that plotted the direction in which the college had to move. It positioned the college by determining where the college saw itself and where it was going. Legislation supplied the blueprint, the what, while the strategic plan provided the how, the details. Their views can be seen below:

Strategic planning impacts on your entire institution. [Respondent 1]

Legislation is truly no. 1 here because even strat ties with legislation. Every college should have a strategic planning. You plan ahead. You need to know what does the government want to achieve. So, without strat. planning, it's like working without legislation. [Respondent 4]

So that people can see the bigger picture. It is for the college to ensure that we deliver service as intended by the government. [Respondent 5]

The strategic plan is the direction of the college to answer to the mandate that is expected from them. [Respondent 8]

All your operations should refer back to your strategic planning which will be in line with what is expected from government. [Respondent 9]

This is where we are and where we are going. [Respondent 13]

Respondents proceeded to say that operational plans provided the action plans and the planning dates and were linked to a budget, as well as to activities such as monitoring and evaluation which flowed out of strategic planning. Their views are captured below:

Subtitles under that will be your operational planning and all your other monitoring and evaluation and all of that. [Respondent 1]

Your ops plan is your little stepping stones to start from January to December and tells you what you need to do by when, how and by what cost and so on. [Respondent 6]

After the operational plan, they must link the finances to the actual cost to implement the operational plan to a budget. [Respondent 8]

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> *Often strategic planning becomes a paper exercise if you don't have the action plans related to the strategy. Monitoring and evaluation takes place after these plans are rolled out in order that in hindsight you can be able to evaluate the strategic plan. [Respondent 10]*

The respondents believed that planning was a key management tool. Planning at some of the colleges tended to be haphazard and people seemed to want to act without having a plan first, which might have negative results. Respondent 4 likened the strategic planning to a rudder of a ship, keeping the ship on course. This comparison fits in with other instances of a sailing metaphor used by the respondents, where the leader was seen as the captain and if things went wrong, the ship could sink. This extended metaphor is described further in 5.2.1.5 and 5.3.1.5. The individual views of the respondents are quoted below:

> *Every college should have a strategic plan. So everything has to be planned for. Not haphazard. It's important, especially for our colleges in this changing environment. It's like a rudder. It keeps you in the right direction. This is where the legislation goes and I need to know the direction.   [Respondent 4]*

> *Planning is very key. One have to ensure you use your facilities optimally 24/7. Operational planning is key so that there's no facilities standing empty and your staff as well must be used optimally. [Respondent 5]*

> *It is important because here I am sitting and I am supposed to be on leave. [Respondent 11]*

> *This is what leadership is all about. If you plan well, then half your problems is solved. As a leader, you should share that strategic vision. [Respondent 15]*

It was generally agreed that the strategic plan had to be relevant, practical, achievable and monitored. It also had to have buy-in from all the college's stakeholders, especially the staff. In instances where staff had been invited to give input, there was buy-in. They added that if strategic planning could be a shared activity, involving all the staff and not a top/down exercise, the staff would support it. They felt it was unfortunate that this did not always happen. In some instances they mentioned that strategic planning was not taking place at the colleges or else it was a simple adaptation of the national plan and did not take the needs of the region into account. The respondents' views are quoted below:

> *Strategic planning is very keen to involve the stakeholders and the community itself and what's happening in your area specifically. [Respondent 5]*

> *It should also be workable. It mustn't be a thing that's not referring to your area. It must meet your needs, your community needs and it also must not be a pie in the sky. Your objectives must be attainable and you must have buy in from all your*

staff. It must be a combined effort at the end so that they will contribute. [Respondent 7]

It must be practical, achievable and monitored. When managers are observing strategic planning, the staff below you have no idea what a strategic plan is. You have to share it with people. [Respondent 12]

For staff, sometimes they hardly see the executive management. Sometimes you don't get that interaction. This is the vision. This is how we would love you to come in and what's on your mind? It would carry more weight. Then we feel as though we are part of this whole thing. I think that there will be a big difference. Strategic planning comes from [up] there and it goes down. [Respondent 13]

There is a serious lack of strategic planning. Our strat plan is adopted from national strat. plan. We didn't have any input in it. We must just follow on what is the drive from national. We don't have our own. We should have adapted it. The strat. plans that are there, they don't address our needs. It is addressing national issues. We need to address regional issues [as well]. You need to have that person around that says, look in three years' time from now, where do you want to see you at this college, at this institution? Our management is not up to doing strategic planning. No input – no buy in. We are not national – we are the implementing agent of national. Top down – that is the sad reality. [Respondent 14]

A strategic plan was not intended to be a paper exercise, a document to be placed somewhere and forgotten about, but a working document. Respondents believed that the strategic plan had to be a living document which was used and reflected on and was not just to look good like a brochure and put away somewhere. Respondent 7 believed:

The most important thing as a leader is to constantly bring your management back to the strategic plan and always reflect on it. It's put into a nice, pretty booklet and it's put away, but we need to continually interact with it because it will provide guidance through the years.

Respondent 9 concurred:

Strategic planning is not something that is in the cupboard. We absolutely cascade it down so it is a living document.

Respondents saw strategic planning as being a necessary skill that needed to be learnt and mastered, yet staff were not trained to do strategic planning. Not everyone was skilled at strategic planning and to encourage participation and conformity, DHET had been assisting colleges lately by supplying strategic and operational planning templates. The colleges did not always find these templates useful but rather saw them as a necessary act of

compliance, so there was duplication in the way they worked. Respondents admitted they were still relying on their own methods which tended to work better for them.

Respondent 10 was concerned:

> *We lack the ability to look at what needs to be done in the next year or the next ten years. Very few people have the skills.*

Respondent 3 commented:

> *We are self-taught but at least on the last two years we've got a template which may not necessarily suit everyone but at least there are some guidelines as to what to take into account in your strategic plan. And we've at least got the plan from DHET, our department, but at least there's some guidelines as to you know fitting in the country's plans as well. I think they're trying to push us in the right direction and to help us in that direction. It's a skill that we all need and it's something that needs to be done. I'm still very strict on my old method of strategic planning, the way the colleges used to do it even though that don't go up to national anymore. They don't ask for it. We still use that template and that information because that still feeds into the template, the information. Because of the way they structured their tool is mainly leading to the indicative budget. It is linked to the programme and to the funding. It is not the way we were schooled in strategic planning. The ops plan template is also different from the way [we used to do it]. So I still do both because that template also was not really work-shopped and people were not really trained how to use it. So it's back and forth the whole time and that will be consultants. DHET has started to again top to bottom but at least they are having workshops now to assist with the strategic planning which I really appreciate because, before that, everyone is doing their own thing.*

The importance of leadership is discussed in the next section.

5.2.1.5   The importance of leadership

Respondents indicated that leaders needed to be visionary, able to identify benefits and opportunities for the institution and to make things happen.   Respondent 10 said:

> *The leader has got be a visionary not only in the SA context but needs to know what is going on in the rest of the world [with] the ability to make partners, or to develop relationships, to identify good practice, to be able to communicate with other people in order to identify benefits for his or her institution is very vital. We cannot be locked up in our office or locked up in our institution. We need to engage with the rest of the world in order to be able to bring benefits to the organisation. [Leaders must be] up to date with current developments. The college has to be sensitive with regards to what's going on in the community.*

They believed that leaders needed to be able to see the bigger picture and communicate the vision. They should be able to spot the opportunities and to act on them, inspiring and motivating followers to share the vision, thereby getting the best out of them. Respondent 3 commented:

> [A leader] sees the much bigger picture. The leader should be out there to say let's go for that and then the managers must make that happen and if it really cannot happen within legislation, then we need to find a way around it to make it happen. That person must see all the opportunities.

Respondent 1 added:

> The way you, as the leader, need to apply yourself to get the best out of people. And to motivate, keep them motivated, focused on the vision. A pertinent link in the entire structure is that unless I can communicate very well as the leader, I will not be able to communicate the strategy of the institution very well and it might be then that people don't perform according to the vision and the strategy of the institution because they don't understand it. How do I use my style as a leader to almost embrace other staff in the institution, their styles of learning and their styles of co-operation and motivation to work towards a strategy of the institution to be successful? How adaptable and flexible you are as a leader to get the best out of people towards a vision.

Respondents believed that the staff were important and that leaders should not take their followers for granted and needed to make sure that they were behind him or her, understanding and sharing the same vision.

According to Respondent 13, it was important for a leader to have support from his or her 'people':

> To make sure that your people are 100% behind you and they understand where you are and where you are going.

This view was shared by Respondents 4, 6 and 9:

> As a leader you always need to go back and see are the people still following you? They need to understand the journey the way you do. Do you want to lead from within them and push them because this is the right direction? You need to communicate with these people that you are leading exactly what the legislation is and what is happening. Understand your people well. [Respondent 4]

> How do you get people to follow you? How do you get people to become innovative so that you don't over-oppress people? That they feel they are free to speak and also free to make the best of the moment and also ensuring that the college is thriving. You have the skill to learn how to deal with those who want to

> *sink the ship the whole time. What can you do to work on the values of the institution? How do you bring trust? How do you ensure ethical values are applied? What is right, what is wrong? [Respondent 6]*

> *You have to speak with the same mouth. We can have our differences, but when you go out to the rest of the staff, then you are one united front. You need a strong person there to pull you there and keep you on your toes. He will say 'exceed expectations'.   [Respondent 9]*

Leaders were evidently driven by their values. Since staff valued consistency, respondents thought that leaders should stick to their convictions and show strength of character. Some respondents suggested that ethical leadership was important as was indicated by Respondents 1, 2 and 7:

> *Soft skills such as ethics and how to lift the values of things at the institution and just how to comply without deviating from the straight and the narrow. Ethics is respect, values. Your personal values and how do you apply that within the workplace. [Respondent 1]*

> *I know you can't teach people ethics. It's in your fibre, in your make up. You can't teach people how to act moral and how to not be corrupt, but it's more then to sensitise them on what is integrity, what is moral value. And what's the implications if you do not act in that way as a leader? It's almost an awareness because it's not a skill you can teach people. It's in you. [Respondent 2]*

> *Leadership is having a strength to stand by your convictions and your ethics. Are we working for the good of the community, the good of our country or are we doing things to please other people or other factions? You may be popular but once things settle, you have now compromised your ethics. You must have strength of character. There has to be consistency. Staff members look for that. [Respondent 7]*

According to the respondents, leaders had to remain current with new developments, remain in tune with the community and be informed about national and international trends. In changing times, leaders had to become knowledgeable about the current situation and environment within the institution and the impact that outside factors could have on that institution, as is evident from the responses of Respondents 3, 4 and 10:

> *You don't have to be an expert in everything to be a leader but then at least surround yourself with the best people in the field and not feel threatened by those people and push them away because they know more than you. You don't need to know everything about everyone. [Respondent 3]*

> *You need to stay current to lead people because they're looking at you, they're listening to you. So it's challenging if you don't know what is happening. So you*

need to read, go onto the internet, check what's happening, the trends. What changes are there that will affect my organisation. Be informed. You need to know your legislation and be able to reflect. [Respondent 4]

The college has to be sensitive with regards to what's going on in the community. [Respondent 10]

This knowledge included knowledge of the sector. Leaders of TVET colleges needed to develop sector knowledge, according to Respondents 3, 7 and 10:

The leaders of the future do not need to be somebody that comes from the classroom but it needs to be somebody who knows FET but who can lead us because our money is not going to come from the department for very long. [Respondent 3]

People coming from the school sector. They cannot cope in the FET college because they don't know the dynamics and they don't understand the influence of the different stakeholders – how to manage them. Even the legislation itself. [Respondent 7]

The leader must have sector knowledge. It's things that you develop by experience being in the college sector over a number of years. [Respondent 10]

Respondents 3, 6, 12 and 13 believed that leaders of TVET colleges needed extensive knowledge of teaching and learning in the sector so that they could keep up to date with developments and trends in order to make the right decisions and steer the college in the right direction:

You must know how the NSFAS system works. Not to be involved with it but to know which curriculum there is available because ultimately if you decide on a new course or a new programme, … know what is needed in the country, what is needed in the area, to have an input and for that you must know what is available. But again, not the details. You need to know what's happening, so if the next procurement or the next requisition comes past you, you know we did speak about this. You can't just sit there dumb and just sign everything that comes in front of you. You need to know. You can't just say it's an academic matter. All managers at whatever level need to know what's going on.   The broader picture. [Respondent 3]

Critical in terms of understanding what is it that you offer, are you addressing what is the need of this specific business or industry in your environment. Do you take into cognisance what does the community want from you?   Do you have partnerships and linkages with who you have to go to? Do you understand that there must be work-integrated learning, that there must be work-based exposure? How do you get all of this to work together and at the same time, how do you

ensure that your teaching and learning is properly infrastructured and structured but in the end that what must be taught is really taught. [Respondent 6]

As the leader at the top, one should definitely have a good idea of what is going on in the teaching and learning environment. [Respondent 12]

'We as leaders need complete knowledge so that we can make sure that things happen as they should. [Respondent 13]

The environment had changed radically in that leaders now had to consult with important stakeholders such as the student representatives, the unions, the community as well as forces bent on destabilising the colleges. A new skill that needed to be acquired was that of consultation with all stakeholders. Unions had become major challengers of operations at colleges. Respondent 8 held the following opinion:

Unions is never mentioned anywhere whilst I think that unions are one of the biggest role players at this stage and it might be one of the biggest reasons why we have tension within it.

This view was supported by Respondent 10:

The environment has changed tremendously. The current environment forces you to be able to consult with stakeholders in your organisation which means that you cannot just manage a college out of a prescription in a textbook but that you will have to be open to other people's opinions. You would have to be knowledgeable about the current situation and environment within the institution as well as the environmental impact from outside the institution and here I'm speaking about the role of the employee unions, the role of your SRC and student organisations but even more importantly, the role of the community that then becomes your major client and you cannot ignore the input that your employer organisations make to the institutions because in a new environment, part of your responsibility is to make sure that your students are placed after they have completed their studies with you. In the past, it wasn't as important to take the opinions into consideration of the stakeholders that I've just mentioned but I think that the success of any leader in the current scenario is dependent on that consultation. It's sad that the college management is significantly influenced by the unions to the degree that people say that the unions are managing this institution. We need to look at the impact of unions in FET colleges, SRCs, student disruptions, student organisations. We need to define the present environment at FET colleges. There's a national union focus to destabilise colleges in this country. It's like fighting a ghost. You see the symptoms coming and I am trying to pacify my students, then there's a demand of this and then it changes. You become a moving target all the time.

The respondents were of the view that a leader needs to be a team player, surrounding him- or herself with expertise and people with complementary leadership styles since they could not be expected to know everything. Through delegation and by being a team player, the leader could train and empower staff to help run the organisation according to the highest expectations. Leaders should be aware of different leadership styles and that certain styles are suitable in certain situations and to adapt them accordingly. Staff with different leadership styles to complement the leader's style should be incorporated into the team.

At least 7 respondents pointed to this issue as follows:

> I obviously don't believe just in seeing a management, with the CEO, as the leader of the college. Every HOD, every lecturer, wherever they find themselves, become a leader. I can't be the leader. I really see all my staff as a leader. If everybody is just going to look at the five Senior Management Team [SMT] members as the leaders, nothing is going to happen in the college. And they all gonna fold arms and wait for us to come down and take the lead. Everyone is a leader. Obviously people will know where's the boundaries within which they can meet and make decisions and they should also know when to call the next level in. It's not an open everyone lead and make decisions. It can just strengthen the SMT's hands if we train all our staff in leadership skills. Every leader at any one stage will make a autocratic decision. We use a mixture of all these styles and it's necessary to make use of a variety because you cannot achieve anything unless if you gonna to stick with one style, then the colleges will crumble. We all want to be democratic and we think woo! Autocratic is a swear word but it actually have a space. It depends where you use it. [Respondent 2]

> We definitely need more of a team player, but a team player who can put his foot down and say, listen guys, this is the reason why we need to do it this way. It should be a dynamic person that can lead a flatter system. That can bring people on board and can go with it. [Respondent 3]

> Make sure that you infuse the team with other people that think otherwise, people that have other types of leadership styles in terms of maybe not people-orientated but task-orientated. You might find yourself on the one side of the continuum and you need to be careful and aware that you need to work towards the other side of the continuum. You must be an involved person. Visible. You must lead from the front but you must also recognise people with strong talents and bring them to the foreground and let them also share their experience. Don't think you've got all the knowledge. [Respondent 5]

> I believe in to apply the style as it is needed at the moment. You may sometimes need to be harsh and cruel; you other times need to be very sympathetic; other times you need to go in with the democratic way; sometimes you can be

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autocratic. You want to be transparent, also consultative. It depends. And you need to understand when it is the right time to use which one. [Respondent 6]

There needs to be a team approach in managing an institution and that the leadership attributes should be complementary and that you don't have the same leadership style amongst all of your managers in the team. You might have a leader that is authoritative but then it's useful if you have another person in the team that can be more a people's person so that whilst the authoritative style continues, the people's person can almost rectify the problems that has been caused by the authoritative person. It is unfortunate that in the society that we are living in today that one needs to be authoritative. It often becomes a lonely portfolio but you then have to measure the outcomes of taking the institution forward versus your own personal rewards that you want to get if you change your management style. [Respondent 10]

And if he has a good style on him, he will find that it will be easy to delegate duties to people because people will want to work with him and not against him. A leader should always be open to advice. [Respondent 11]

We don't want leaders who are invisible. A one-minute manager. Only one minute to make your comment.' [Respondent 14]

Respondents recognised that management was not leadership but that leaders had to avoid micromanaging their institutions and rather empower staff to manage operations. This view was supported by Respondents 3, 10 and 13 as follows:

You can't have the CEO that is the manager. [Respondent 3]

One can fall into the trap of micromanaging your institution. [Respondent 10]

Not to micro-manage, empowering the people. Because when I'm not there, what happens? I'm saying that if I drop dead tomorrow, there will be chaos. The ship is definitely going to sink. [Respondent 13]

As supported by their quotations below, respondents suggested that leaders needed to develop specific skills such as negotiation skills, administrative skills and decision-making. They also supported the idea that leaders could be developed to be better leaders. They stated that there were many aspects of leadership that could be developed, such as emotional intelligence and people skills, being a good listener and learning to respect others, having tact, making people feel valued and technological skills. The following quotations support the idea of leadership development:

Leadership is a competency that any manager or leader continuously need to develop. Leadership requires specific skills. Your use of your intelligence, the

use of your organisational skills. All these skills are important. You need to be the negotiator; you need to be the silent partner. [Respondent 6]

You're not born with skills. You have to learn it and you have to learn as a leader. And if you don't have the skill to handle the challenge, it's going to make your problem bigger than it is. You have to have the skill of negotiating. You must be able to write a report. . If you're lacking in something you must upskill yourself in those ways. [Respondent 7]

[Leaders] can be developed to be better leaders. Whether they will reach good, I don't know, but they can be better but I do think that emotional intelligence and people skills are things that you can develop and that you can actually teach people to listen and to respect other people. Having tact. Also to make people feel valued. But whether you are a person for detail or not detail, I don't know. I don't think you can change that. But I think style, and the way that you treat people and work with people, I think that can be changed. And to like all people, unconditionally. And thereafter, you may be surprised. [Respondent 8]

It's necessary for a manager himself or herself to also have administrative ability and to also being au fait with the current technology so that he or she doesn't become totally dependent on others to be doing the administration which forces us to become more organised in the way we do things. We must be very decisive in our decision-making. A person who is not hesitant about making decisions. We have been hit by a lot of strikes because we cannot make decisions. What I actually saw happening was how a person who were not properly trained and groomed to be a leader can make a whole institution, a whole campus, suffer. You've got so much responsibility because with one wrong word, you can cause a lot of damage. [Respondent 10]

You also need to know about these things so that you can see what your shortcomings are (e.g. are you assertive enough?). Then you can make a conscious effort. [You need to] have that as part of your training. [Respondent 15]

Respondents indicated that leaders need to be culturally sensitive and learn how to interact with different people. For instance, Respondent 7 had the following opinion:

Leadership has got a lot to do with cultural awareness. You have to study and learn the skill of actually interacting with people so that you can get them to produce at their best because the moment you cannot understand where people are coming from, where your managers are coming from, you put in a barrier and immediately it affects the output from that particular person.

Respondent 3 believed that the sector needed dynamic leaders who had business skills; not autocrats. This respondent did not support political appointments, as is evident from the following quotation:

> *We really need that dynamic, business leadership with a more modern style. Not because I am the principal, you have to do this, you have to do that. I think that should be banned and knocked out. Not political! Not the person who is there because of politics. Definitely not! In the end it's not going to survive if you make political appointments. We need a person who can really be business-wise otherwise we are not going to survive.*

Various respondents pointed out that strong leaders with authority were also needed. Leaders who led by example seemed to be generally respected. 'Lead by example' was suggested as a leadership competency by three out of the four focus group interviews. Respondent 9 held the following view:

> *You have to set the example. You need a strong leader at the top. You cannot rely on people on the second level to have that vision. People must be able to look up to that person and know that that person has the authority. And that person is also setting a sterling example. That can make the college successful. We have to lead by example.*

Lastly, Respondent 6 commented that leaders should remember that they were also human and needed to take care of themselves in order to lead a balanced and harmonious life, especially if the leader was a woman in a male-dominated sector:

> *And you need to take care of that part that you don't only work and you never play. You need to take care of yourself as a person, otherwise your marriage might go down the drain. The leader is also a human being. Being a woman into leadership is also difficult. Men don't accept you, you are in the minority. When you go to the collective meetings or functions or events, some of them are brave enough to say are you coping and how do you do that? We can't believe that you are still there. Being a woman in the leadership, is very tough. I think men has it also tough but I think for us it is more tough. You have to balance a lot more. It's easier for a man to say to his wife I will arrive late or I might be away for so many days or something rather than for a woman. You've got so many roles to play. So, leadership is a balancing act of harmonising your day-to-day business so that everybody is happy and what you are doing at the end of the day, your business is running, your home is happy and everybody is coping.*

5.2.1.6   The importance of teaching and learning

According to the respondents, the strategic thrust of a TVET college was to ensure that teaching and learning took place effectively since teaching and learning were the core

business of the college and anything that was not related to the core business was of lesser consequence. This is supported by the respondents' quotations that follow:

> *Teaching and Learning [make it] clear that that is a specific focus in an FET college. Academic Management is all that other stuff. I think I would almost put Academic Management under Teaching and Learning rather than under Management Skills. It includes classroom management, student support services, academic support, a portion of the recruitment, placement of the learners in the right programme linking to their career path, delivery, learning materials, exams, academic administration, your assessment. [Respondent 1]*

> *Teaching and learning is our core business in colleges. Obviously we don't want to teach them [the other functionaries] to become an educator now. But they've found them in an education institution where they are managing teaching and learning whether as a support function, you know, like HR, it's a support function of teaching and learning. You are a support function for this to take place and what is expected of you as the CFO; what is expected of you as the HR manager to ensure that this take place in a conducive environment. So that is critical for me. [Respondent 2]*

> *If we are to increase our pass rates, we need to make sure that teaching is taking place and that students are really learning. If teaching is not actually taking place, then we are completely missing the bus. [Respondent 4]*

> *We are measured on our pass rates and there will be a claw back mechanism if we do not comply with the minimum standards so it will have an impact on the financial aspects of the college. If it has an impact on the financials, it could have an impact on employment because people will be retrenched and you can't expand. So you need to look after your core business. If you sell hamburgers, you need to make sure you have all the machinery for the hamburger but if you do not sell a good product, then you'll have all the machinery and you won't even make money. So from a business perspective, definitely, it need to be zoomed in. [Respondent 5]*

> *Teaching and learning is the passion of what we are doing. This is where we do what we are existing for. And you can stand on your head - whether you know legislation, whether you can communicate, whether you can be a good strat planner and have the management skills, but if you cannot deliver in the teaching classroom, you cannot be successful. [Respondent 6]*

> *Anything that hasn't got an influence on education and training provision, is of no consequence and therefore becomes secondary and if we can as we manage be continuously reminded regarding this primary business of the institution, I think*

there would be more focus in that regard.   It is central to our existence.
[Respondent 10]

Teaching and learning is the core business. The core business cannot be left out.
It must be a theme on its own because basically, that's why we're here. And if I
am in a management position, and I don't know what people are doing in the
classroom, what am I driving it for? You need to understand why someone wants
a projector in his classroom. [Respondent 14]

Respondents believed that once managers had been taken out of the classrooms and appointed as managers or leaders, their focus shifted. They tended to forget that the core business was teaching and learning, regarding it as the teacher's concern only. Respondents 5, 10 and 15 provided the following as reasons for the shift in leaders' focus:

I think people lost a little bit of touch on that because it's more at the level of the
educators and not at the level of the managers. [Respondent 5]

You see, it's that culture that says teaching and learning is the teacher's business
and we manage everything else. [Respondent 10]

Your business is education. We tend to forget [this]. We come from the ranks of
the educator and [when] we go into a management position we tend to forget the
things that you dealt with at a lower level. You are removed from the situation [so]
it's not so at the forefront of your thinking anymore. If you are out there in the
private sector and you're selling computers you need to know your product. If you
are in the education sector, and you are in the business of educating people, you
need to know your business and the business of us is education. So all managers
should first and foremost know their business of which they are part and parcel of
and which is education. All the other functions are subordinate. Legislation's
around education, everything else is around education, so all the main focus is
education and the support thereof. The people at the bottom will always remind
you thereof that this is their business, this is what they do, these are their issues.
You that are outside of that don't always necessarily see it the same. You forget
where you're coming from. You've gone up and you're sitting in a management
position and you were down there in those ranks in the past. You didn't come into
the sector in a high position. You came out from the ranks who will constantly
remind you; you forget where you are coming from.   You were one of us
previously or in the past, now you seem to forget that these were our issues. Now
you're there and it is no longer important for you. Managers' focus is on the
management role and do not see it as being supportive. [Respondent 15]

Since teaching and learning was the core business, all other functions in the college should have processes in place to support teaching and learning. All the support functions, such as HR, finance and academic support should be focused on enabling teaching and learning, the

core business of the college, to take place effectively; however, this was not always the case. Many of these support functions tended to operate outside of the context of teaching and learning. This was the view of Respondents 2, 9, 10 and 15:

All the support functions are the support. You are a support function for this to take place and what is expected of you as the CFO, what is expected of you as the HR manager to ensure that this take place in a conducive environment. The training elements will be based on what should the HR manager know about teaching and learning to take his or her job more serious to make sure this happen on time more effectively. We sit with academic as the core business and now we get all these people which we need with the HR skills, with the finance skills, with the whatever skills, but because they don't understand this context, they are not always effective. They're not always giving us the service that we need because of the lack of context knowledge here. They think they are actually the core business! Academic Management is all that other stuff. [Respondent 2]

You have a responsibility to make sure that that student move through the system and gets a qualification. That is why you are there. You are supposed to give the support to this person, make sure he gets financial support and academic support, holistic support, whatever. And from your top leader and even your groundsman or cleaners all of them should know that they have a role to play to make sure that teaching and learning takes place. And that is why we've got Finance and why we've got HR and why we've got marketing, everything. Support functions for teaching and learning. You can't work in silos. [Respondent 9]

I've packed around that all the aspects that supports quality provision: student support services, infrastructural development, extra-mural activity, funding, through-put rate. We need to put processes in place that can support students: academic support, social support, psychologists. The staff are central to high performance of our teaching and learning. The relationship between teaching and learning and employment I think is vital. We can develop relationships to get employment ultimately for our students. We must have proper administrative measures in place, for the bursary applications for the examination processes, for communication, for recordkeeping, for monitoring and evaluation, for filing, all of those things. [Respondent 10]

Everything is in education and training – your governance, your fleet management, your security. All these are only supporting processes but everything is supporting education and training. [Respondent 15]

According to Respondents 4, 6 and 13, leaders needed to think innovatively about teaching and learning since teaching and learning had to take place differently today:

We need to start doing something. We, the older ones, are not meeting the students at their own level. We still think pen and paper. They're doing it in a different way. Can you imagine if we had students with a tablet that can, with their assignment, they send it immediately and you are sitting on the other side and you indicate received. At least there is communication that is effective. So, we need to get to the level of students and be able to assist the lecturer in the class to make sure that teaching and learning does take place and I believe if we can push those students to come to class and do the right things, then those lecturers can go a long way. We need to get involved to say things are not done in the old way anymore. It's changed. The current pedagogy has probably become outdated especially as our learners have advanced and are exposed outside the college to modern technology, like your iPads and your cell phones and the colleges have not become abreast with regards to these issues. [Respondent 4]

How do you ensure that your teaching and learning is properly infrastructured and learner-structured and textbook-structured and IPad-structured and all this modern fancy things that come in but in the end that what must be taught is really taught. You continuously develop your people that they also are abreast with what is it that teaching and learning must do, to ensure that the product at the end of the day, that we successfully given out will be absorbed in the workplace. Or will be a proper contributor to the economic world of South Africa. [Respondent 6]

We can't be using the old method and OBE has proved not to have worked for us. [Respondent 13]

Since industry plays such an essential role in a TVET college, respondents indicated that the TVET college leader could not be deskbound, but had to build collaborative relationships that could influence the curriculum and have a positive effect on classroom practice. Respondents 4, 7 and 8 had the following to say about how the colleges could ensure that the students were employable since that was the mandate:

We need to be able to be the best that we want to be and produce the best candidates but at the same time, the teaching and learning, let's bring in the companies, industry. We need to understand why should we teach students radio and TV if we're missing the market? And who do we need? We need industry. We need these TV bosses and radio bosses and whatever. We need them to say this is what we need. Change from chapter so and so to chapter so and so. This is how it is now. Take the lecturers first, expose them, expose the student then we come back and say that this is the way it needs to be. And then we need to take DHET and communicate the curriculum. We need to get involved to say things are not done in the old way anymore. It's changed. And then who else do we need to reach – examiners who put together examination papers. They need

to understand the new way of doing things. So, in that way, I believe we'll be able to produce quality students. Then teaching and learning will be very effective and we will get the results that we want. We will have an industry that will be happy. [Respondent 4]

As a leader, you have to make sure that you encourage collaboration with industry to ensure that what you're producing is actually what's wanted out there. [Respondent 7]

Our mandate is to make people employable for the workplace. [Respondent 8]

In the next section, the way in which the researcher clarified uncertainties before forming the composite affinity lists is discussed.

5.2.1.7 Clarifying uncertainties for composites

During the individual interviews participants were also asked to confirm or disagree with the researcher's clumping or naming of affinities in order to create the two composites. An explanation of each affinity requiring verification (Corporate Governance, Management Skills and Quality Management) is followed by the actual words of the respondents.

Corporate Governance

With one possible exception, the majority of respondents believed that corporate governance was a sub-affinity of legislation supporting my decision to list it as a sub-affinity. Corporate governance was linked to legislation since it clarified the governance role in the FET Act. This view was supported by the respondents as follows:

And in terms of legislation is also the role of governance. Actually, I would like to say there are three strategic statutory bodies in the FET sector which is the college council, the college management or the Academic Board and the Student Representative Council. [Respondent 6]

Governance would be part of legislation [because] the FET Act guides the actual governance of the college articulating who should be on the Academic Board, as well as telling us what are the powers of the council. [Respondent 7]

The current Acts that are in place that governs the college and constitutes the college and then also linked to that the governance to say what are the governance structures as stipulated in the legislation. To say what is the mandate given to the college and mandated through what [and what are the] report[ing structures]. [Respondent 8]

Obviously some management skills will flow from your Corporate Governance but I think if we are talking about legislation and the King 3 and those things, then it should also be right there. [Respondent 9]

The one dissenting voice (Respondent 1) was unsure:

> *I would prefer if corporate governance was a separate theme. It needs a pertinent focus otherwise you will run into trouble and I think institutions run into trouble are not clear on what is governance. Although it may not be a specific theme as such because it may be a small theme, but where it is put, it needs a specific focus.*

However, Respondent 1 added:

> *Yes, it could be a sub-theme maybe under legislation or under leadership skills. Things at the end are very integrated. Your legislation and your governance and your strategic planning. All of them are outcomes that come out of your legislation. So governance can either be for me a sub-module or a sub-section of a theme.*

Corporate Governance could thus be seen as the way in which Legislation clarified the governance and reporting roles at the colleges and could thus be categorised as a sub-affinity.

Management Skills

Respondents were asked whether it would be acceptable to cluster all the support functions at a college such as Human Resource Management, Financial Management and Marketing Management under one affinity named Management Skills. This suggestion was supported unanimously as can be seen in some of the respondents' own words below:

> *Incorporates all the various departments you might have within an institution or your units that includes your functional management of an institution which could include your HR Management, Corporate Communications and Marketing, Financial Management, Quality Management. [Respondent 1]*

> *Things like our HR, the finances, Asset Management, the infrastructure, all those strategic functions in the college need to be managed. Supply Chain Management. Whole management team … decision-making bodies. [Respondent 2]*

> *Management skills is an overarching theme but it consists of Financial Management, Operational Management and Marketing Management to say the least. [Respondent 5]*

> *The student support now have been fragmented. So now if I'm going to be a Deputy Academic, I have to look at Academic Support. Then the CFO is going to have to look at Financial Aid, the Registrar is going to have to look at Registration process. That is why I say, ultimately, it falls under Management Skills. [Respondent 7]*

> *There's an Act on archiving so maybe that should be a sub-section under management skills and includes filing. And the full complement of marketing where you have to know how to brand you institution, how to do public relations. [Respondent 8]*

> *Management skills is a package – Financial skills, HR skills. [Respondent 14]*

It is thus clear that all the supporting functions at the colleges could be clustered under Management Skills.

Quality management

Respondents were asked whether quality management should be a separate affinity or whether it could be regarded as a sub-affinity belonging to Management Skills. This suggestion was supported unanimously. Generally, respondents believed that Quality Management actually influenced every facet of the colleges' functions. This support was articulated in the respondents' own words:

> *Incorporates all the various departments you might have within an institution or your units that includes your functional management of a institution which could include your HR Management, Corporate Communications and Marketing, Financial Management, Quality Management. Teaching and Learning. [Respondent 1]*

> *I would work it in by all these [affinities]. [Respondent 2]*

> *Management skills is an overarching theme but it consists of quality management. [Respondent 5]*

> *Quality Management is critical but I think it should be under management or leadership skills because it is cutting across, runs through everything. [Respondent 6]*

> *Quality does filter through everything. [Respondent 13]*

> *A quality management system in place guides you in your processes in your day-to-day working processes. [Respondent 15]*

Finally, all four groups agreed that Teaching and Learning had to be an affinity on its own since it was core business, as confirmed by the comments of Respondents 5, 13, 14 and 15:

> *Teaching and learning should be a separate theme because [it] is the core business of education institutions. [Respondent 5]*

> *We will definitely need that as a separate theme. Teaching and learning is core business. [Respondent 13]*

Teaching and learning is the core business. The core business cannot be left out. It must be a theme on its own because basically, that's why we're here. Everything is in education and training – your governance, your fleet management, your security, all these are only supporting processes, but everything is supporting education and training. I'm not fussy about [what it is called] as long as we know this is what it is all about – teaching and learning. But it could be called Education and Training. [Respondent 14]

Your business is education. We tend to forget. [Respondent 15]

Even though respondents supported the fact that Quality Management formed part of Management Skills, Quality Management had an effect on every aspect of the college with the ultimate goal of offering quality education and training. It should therefore always remain at the forefront.

5.2.2   Explaining the relationships among the elements of the system (theoretical coding)

Similarly to how the respondents' words were used to describe the affinities, the respondents' own words have been used to describe the relationships amongst the affinities. The SIDs have also been analysed to provide 'graphic reinforcement' of the descriptions of the relationships (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:323).

5.2.2.1   Legislation

According to the respondents, legislation was the primary driver influencing all other affinities in the system – driving the primary outcome, which was teaching and learning. Legislation determined how a college was constituted and what its role was, specifying the objectives, staffing, roles, student profile and other structures at the college. The following words of the respondents support this view:

You need a good, thorough understanding of the legislation to determine where you exactly fit into the system. A specific department, like your HR department, for example, will have to interpret their legislation, the Employment Act, the Skills Development Act, specifically, or even for training purposes, you need to make sure that people understand the right level of the legislation for them to do their work according to legislation. [Respondent 1]

[Legislation is] the different policies that governs the FET sector - various pieces of legislation that drives us. We customise our internal college policies based on what they developed. If we do not have understanding of legislation, we cannot implement quality, delivery of anything, whether it's finances, or whatever. If we don't understand legislation, we are going to make lots of mistakes further down with all the others, the strategic areas of the college.   [Respondent 2]

Legislation indicated all the forces, all the policies that are put together to give direction [and guidance] to colleges. Things that you can refer to, that stay the same. It is a rule. It's policy we follow. The way of solving [problems] should be by way of legislation. Legislation is no. 1. It gives you direction when you need one. You need to know what does the government want to achieve. [Respondent 4]

There's a lot of legislation that underpins service delivery at FET colleges. A person need to know about legislation in order to do your job. [Respondent 5]

As the leadership, we have to understand legislation and we have to implement what is given to us. We are not the writers, we are implementers. We all interpret legislation differently. [Respondent 6]

As a college [you] can't do your own thing. Everything you do must be aligned to legislation or policies. As a leader, you must absolutely be on top of [relevant legislation and policies]. You must understand where all these things fit in. You can't be a manager if you don't come with a background of legislation. [Respondent 9]

[Legislation] gives you the guidelines for your operation but I think what is more important for me inside the institution that is that you have the applicable policies and procedures that becomes the vehicle for you to respond to the legislative framework. [Respondent 10]

That is legislated regarding how a college should run. To say what is the mandate given to the college. It's policy we follow. [Respondent 11]

We expect people higher up to have full knowledge of legislation that is governing not only the institution, but other factors that will be included in that. You will not be in a position and try to be a leader [if you do not have] all your facts of government, from the parliament point of view. There is something that the idea that you want people to have knowledge of so that they do not end up making mistakes. [Respondent 14]

Legislation was thus geared towards ensuring that teaching and learning at a TVET college took place to satisfy the human resource and economic needs of the country.

5.2.2.2　　　Communication skills

Respondents generally believed that legislation had a strong influence on communication since it framed and provided the context within which conversations took place. Communication also closely influenced leadership and vice versa since communication skills were an essential leadership tool for a leader, especially in cases where campuses were situated far from one another. The two affinities were thus interchangeable in their influence

on one another. Unions and other stakeholder organisations were becoming major role players at FET colleges and the art of negotiation and consultation had to be prioritised as communication skills for leaders today. Communication also had an influence on management skills since the former ensured the way in which managers communicated with those inside and outside the organisation. Good communication could even have a financial benefit for the organisation. These links were confirmed by the respondents:

> *One have to communicate well in order to be a good manager. In one province, campuses are 700 km away from one another. [Respondent 5]*

> *You need to deal with your internal stakeholders as well as your external stakeholders. We deal with different stakeholders at different events. It's not only about your core business, it's also about having staff that is happy. You are making people just know again the rules. [Respondent 6]*

> *At the end of the day, your communication must also actually put forward your leader – they must see leadership, even in a simple thing like a communication. [Respondent 7]*

> *Communication skills will be how you should conduct yourself at a very high level because you are the ambassador for the college. [Respondent 9]*

> *It's important for any manager to be able to make sure that all of those that have an impact on the institution are regularly and well informed of what is being developed. It's got a broader context that lends itself to fundraising, marketing, advocacy developing relationships internally and externally. [Respondent 10]*

Communication was thus also closely associated with teaching and learning since in order to be happy, staff needed information and the way in which communication took place in the classroom ensured learner satisfaction.

5.2.2.3   Management skills

Respondents believed that management skills were generally influenced by leadership and communication skills. Management was also indirectly influenced by legislation which prescribed the way in which business had to be conducted, such as the optimal use of staff and infrastructure. Legislation, communication skills and leadership influenced management skills since management skills were concerned with the day-to-day running of the organisation. Management skills were utilised by the support functions at the college which would ultimately influence the quality of teaching and learning that took place at the institution since that was the context in which management skills were practised. These views were supported by the respondents:

Whether [management is] a support function, it's a support function of teaching and learning. [Respondent 2]

Management also links with legislation. HR, for example is a huge portfolio. It is supporting to academic but without it academic can't go on. So, management is huge. [Respondent 4]

Management must execute that to ensure that service delivery is effective. [Respondent 5]

One could similarly put Communication Skills under Management Skills. [Respondent 10]

Respondents saw the link between Management Skills, Leadership and Communication Skills where the links between Leadership, Communication and Management Skills were interchangeable.

5.2.2.4   Strategic Planning

Respondents 1, 2, 4 and 8 contended that Strategic Planning was driven by Legislation as that would inform its content. The strategic plan had to be communicated with the staff in order to ensure buy-in, so these affinities were all closely related and influenced one another, as evidenced in their remarks below:

Strategic planning impacts on our entire institution. Unless I can communicate very well as the leader, I will not be able to communicate the strategy of the institution very well and it might be then that people don't perform according to the vision and the strategy of the institution because they don't understand it. [Respondent 1]

The strategic planning lead to our budget for the year. [Respondent 2]

Legislation is truly no.1 here because even strat ties with legislation. You need to know: what does the government want to achieve. So without strat planning, it's like working without legislation. So everything has to be planned for, not haphazard. It keeps you in the right direction. This is where legislation goes and I need to know the direction. [Respondent 4]

It is the direction of the college to answer to the mandate that is expected from them. And that's approved by council. [Respondent 8]

Since Strategic Planning was a management and leadership tool, it would be influenced by the type of Management and Leadership skills that were present.

5.2.2.5   Leadership

The respondents concurred that there was a need for a leader to see the bigger picture but also the pieces of a puzzle and how they fitted into one another, just like all the affinities

fitted into one another, forming a whole. Legislation had an influence on Leadership since it provided the framework. It was essential that leaders knew and understood their mandate as it would influence what they communicated to the staff. Leaders delegated the operational responsibilities of meeting the mandate of the college to the various managerial support functions and thus had an influence on what Management Skills were necessary. Respondents suggested the following:

> *The characteristics of your leadership style and how adaptable and flexible you are as a leader to get the best out of people towards a vision. A leader sees a much bigger picture. [Respondent 1]*

> *It needs to be somebody who knows FET. We need a person who can really be business wise, which brings us back again to also the financial skills and also the HR skills, but not so much the pyramid style. It should be a dynamic person that can lead in a flatter system. [Respondent 3]*

> *You need to know your legislation and be able to reflect. You need to communicate with these people that you are leading exactly what the legislation is and what is happening. [Respondent 4]*

> *At the end of the day, your communication must also actually put forward your leader – they must see leadership, even in a simple thing like a communication. At the end of the day, we want the college to run properly and we want to deliver on our mandate – of upskilling our students and giving them the best education. [Respondent 7]*

> *You've got so much responsibility because with one wrong word, you can cause a lot of damage. You have to set the example. I don't think any one single manager has the capacity or capability to do all the functions. So part of good management skills is delegation.   [Respondent 10]*

> *So all managers should first and foremost know their business of which they are part and parcel of and which is education. All the other functions are subordinate. [Respondent 15]*

The ultimate goal of leadership and management was teaching and learning, so the leader was driven by legislation to achieve the ultimate outcome of effective teaching and learning.

5.2.2.6   Teaching and Learning

There was general consensus amongst all the respondents that teaching and learning was the core business, the primary outcome, of all the affinities. Legislation provided the mandate and the leader, using communication skills, management skills and the main leadership tool, strategic planning, to work towards achieving the mandate from government

which was teaching and learning. All the affinities in this system had an influence on the primary outcome of teaching and learning. Respondent 1 commented as follows:

> *[Teaching and learning is the] core of the business. Nothing in an FET college can happen if it's not about that academic side of it. Directly linked to your strategy and how best to utilise your available resources. It's a whole different set of skills you need as a leader in an institution to know how to drive that. You actually tap into different levels of your [affinities], for example your strategic planning and your leadership style and skills and your management. So, it's a whole integration of all of them that will culminate to be able to manage teaching and learning. Teaching and learning makes it clear that that is a specific focus in an FET college.*

Respondents thus believed that all the affinities were linked, starting with the primary driver which was Legislation and leading to the end goal, Teaching and Learning, which was the primary outcome. 'Systems consist of elements and relationships' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:420). The elements and relationships have been described and analysed above. IQA also attempts to represent the 'wholeness of the system rather than just the characteristics of the individual parts' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:420). In the next section, the elements and their relationships will be examined in the systems of which they form a part, the systems influence diagrams (SIDs).

5.2.3   Describing the systems or the mindmaps

The first step towards constructing a SID or mindmap is to complete an IRD that shows the influences or relationships among the affinities (explained in 4.5.2.1). The IRD (see Table 5.5) is constructed from the ART (see Table 5.3), in which participants of both the focus group interviews and the individual interviews indicated the perceived relationships among affinities by inserting an arrow between all conceivable pairs of affinities. The arrows in the ART are transferred to the IRD. As explained in the previous chapter, affinities that have only outgoing arrows are called primary drivers. They are located in the extreme left zone of the SID topology. Affinities that have only ingoing arrows are called primary outcomes and they are located at the extreme right of the SID topology. The other affinities are arranged from left to right, depending on whether they are Secondary Drivers (both Ins and Outs, but more Outs than Ins) or Secondary Outcomes (both Ins and Outs, but more Ins than Outs). In the IRD, the In and the Out arrows are tallied horizontally and the totals entered into the delta column. The delta column determines the order in which the affinities are placed in a SID. Owing to the fact that the same topology may have infinitely many representations, affinities may be arranged so that the SID best communicates the structure of the system (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:180). The rule is that no links may be broken.

The SIDs for each of the four focus group interviews are illustrated in 5.3.3.1 to 5.3.3.4 below. The SIDs are described incrementally in the order of the number of affinities that they each contain, starting with the SID containing six affinities and ending with the one with the most affinities generated, which were nine. In reality, each Uncluttered SID starts with its cluttered version.   However, the Cluttered SID will only be demonstrated once as an illustration in Figure 5.1 but thereafter, only the Uncluttered SIDs will be shown since that is the version that will be used for the analysis (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:177) as well as the interpretation that follows. The composite is also based on the uncluttered version of the SIDs.

5.3.3.1   Group 2(b) Systems influence diagram (six affinities)

Firstly, by using this group's IRD, the In and the Out arrows were drawn to create a Cluttered SID as illustrated in Figure 5.1.
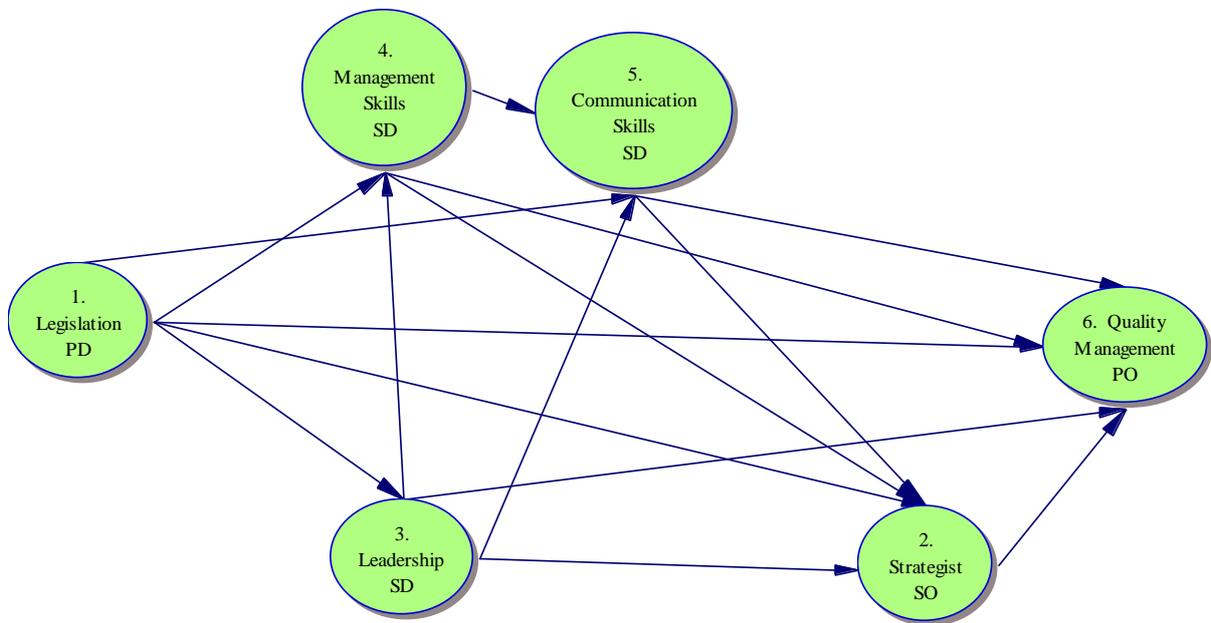
Figure 5.1   Cluttered SID with six affinities (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:179)

The letters PD, SD, SO and PO represent the four zones of the affinities as they will be represented in the topology of the SID, namely the primary driver, secondary driver, secondary outcome and primary outcome. The positions in the Cluttered SID are dictated by the tentative SID assignments in the IRD (see Table 4.3).

With only six affinities, the SID generated by Group 2(b) was linear with no branching, the simplest form of the SID (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:29), as can be seen in Figure 5.2.
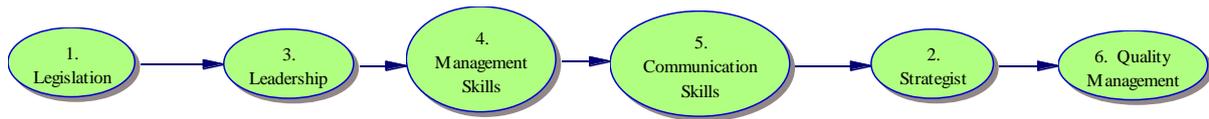
Figure 5.2   Uncluttered SID with six affinities (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:182)

Legislation is the primary driver and Quality Management the primary outcome of this SID. Legislation has an indirect influence on Quality Management through the mediation of the other affinities, namely Leadership, Management Skills, Communication and Strategist respectively. Quality Management does not influence any affinities and Legislation is not influenced by any other affinity. These are the characteristics of a primary driver and primary outcome respectively.

5.3.3.2   Group 1 (a) Systems influence diagram (seven affinities)

The following Uncluttered SID with seven affinities resulted from its cluttered version.
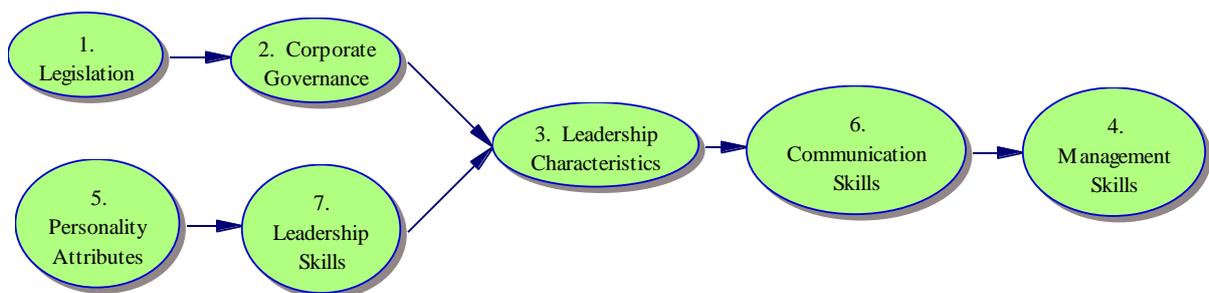
Figure 5.3   Uncluttered SID with seven affinities (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004: 182)

This Uncluttered SID is not as simple as the six-affinity one since it has two primary drivers, legislation and personality attributes. This is an example of 'branching' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:29) as the system is no longer linear as in Figure 5.2 but indicates that there are different paths through the system. Legislation and Corporate Governance form one branch and Personality Attributes and Leadership Skills the other (the latter two both being secondary drivers), before directly influencing Leadership Characteristics (as the first secondary outcome) in the influence chain which ends with Management Skills as the primary outcome.   Legislation and Personality Attributes are the two primary drivers. Legislation, mediated by Corporate Governance, has an indirect influence on Leadership Characteristics on the one hand, and Personality Attributes, mediated through Leadership Skills, has an indirect influence on Leadership Characteristics on the other. Leadership Characteristics, mediated through Communication Skills, has an indirect influence on Management Skills.

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5.3.3.3　　Group 1(b) Systems influence diagram (eight affinities)

This group generated eight affinities. In this SID, we see our first feedback loop followed by a second feedback loop. Unlike the illustration in Figure 4.2 in the previous chapter, this is not a simple feedback loop containing only three affinities, but contains six affinities in two feedback loops.
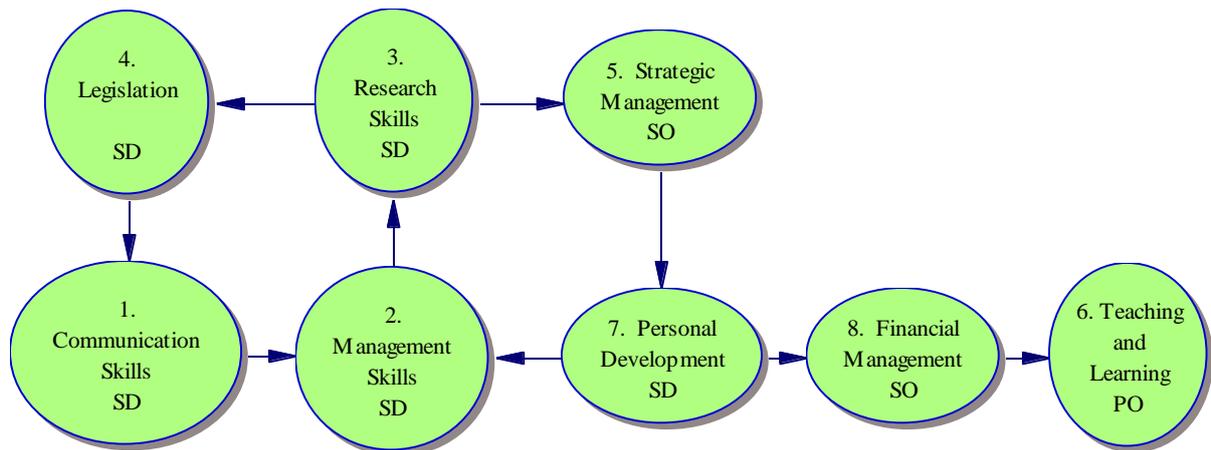
Figure 5.4　　Uncluttered SID with eight affinities (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:182)

This group's Uncluttered SID in Figure 5.4 generated two feedback loops in the secondary driver zone. It does not matter with which affinity one starts, as the influence goes full circle and ends back to where it started. It has no start and no end and all the affinities influence one another. In the first feedback loop, Affinities 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all secondary drivers that influence one another. They influence the second feedback loop, Affinities 2-3-5-7, linked to the first feedback loop by Affinities 2-3. These recursive feedback loops indirectly influence the primary outcome, Affinity 6, through the mediation of Affinity 8, which is a secondary outcome. This group thus decided that Research Skills, Legislation, Management Skills, Strategic Management, Personal Development and Communication Skills all share a mutual influence on one another either directly or indirectly. As two feedback loops of affinities driving the system, they all have an influence on the primary outcome, Teaching and Learning through the mediation of Financial Management.

5.3.3.4　　Group 2(a) Systems influence diagram (nine affinities)

The last of the four focus group interviews generated a nine-affinity SID with three feedback loops, two simple ones both leading off one more complicated one.
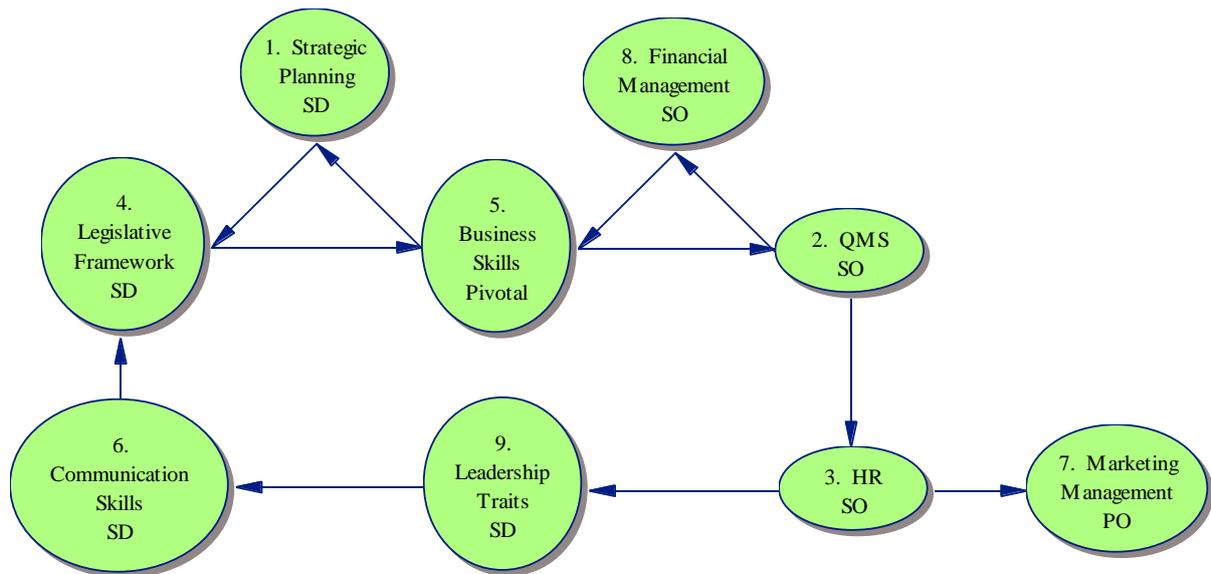
Figure 5.5   Uncluttered SID with nine affinities (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:182)

This Uncluttered SID is visually complex. There is no primary driver and there are three feedback loops in which the affinities influence one another directly or indirectly. The first feedback loop consists of six affinities, 4-5-2-3-9-6 and, together with two additional, simpler feedback loops, it drives the system. Legislative Framework (Affinity 4) and Business Skills (Affinity 5) form part of the first simple feedback loop with Strategic Planning (Affinity 1). Business skills is a pivotal affinity which links the two simple feedback loops to one another. It also forms part of the second simple feedback loop together with Quality Management Systems (Affinity 2) and Financial Management (Affinity 8). The larger feedback loop consists of secondary drivers, a pivotal affinity and secondary outcomes. The first smaller feedback loop consists of secondary drivers and the pivotal affinity links this feedback loop with the second smaller feedback loop which consists of secondary outcomes. They all have a combined influence on the primary outcome, Marketing Management (Affinity 7).

It needs to be noted that although it is the purpose of the SID to sort out the affinities in the system from relative causes (drivers) to relative effects (outcomes), from left to right, the distinction between drivers and outcomes becomes blurred in a feedback loop as they all influence one another. Even though their meanings are independent of one another as can be seen in the different names of the affinities, their 'interconnectedness' gives them another meaning as 'a dynamic set of affinities' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:335). An interpretation of these four SIDs follows in 5.3.

5.2.4 Developing a focus group interview composite

In order to represent a focus group interview composite for all four groups, the Pareto Protocol (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:156) was followed. Forming a focus group interview composite by using the Pareto Protocol and the MinMax criterion has been included in Addendum 5. The first step in developing a composite is to prepare a combined ART. The clarification of the questions asked during the individual interviews determined how affinities could be re-named or become sub-affinities of affinities. The result was a six-affinity table as presented in Table 5.3. The relationships were counted and entered into a new composite ART.

Table 5.3 Combined ART for focus group interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:151)

Affinity Name
1. Legislation (+ Corporate Governance)
2. Communication Skills
3. Management Skills (Finance & HR etc.)
4. Strategic Planning
5. Leadership (Knowledge, Styles, Skills, Attributes)
6. Teaching and Learning

Possible Relationships
A → B
A ← B
A <> B (No Relationship)

Affinity Relationship Table
Affinity Pair   **Relationship**
1 → 2
1 → 3
1 → 4
1 → 5
1 → 6
2 → 3
2 → 4
2 ← 5
2 → 6
3 ← 4
3 ← 5
3 → 6
4 ← 5
4 → 6
5 → 6

To start the rationalisation process, a theoretical code frequency table (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:158) was completed to identify any conflicts in the relationships. A conflict arises where the relationship between a pair of affinities is equal or very close. For example, seven participants could perceive the relationship to be $1 \rightarrow 2$ while eight could perceive the same relationship as $1 \leftarrow 2$. In this frequency table, there were no conflicts as can be seen in Table 5.4. Conflicts are usually indicated with a question mark in the Conflicts column where the conflict occurs (Table 5.9).

Table 5.4   Theoretical code frequency table: four focus groups combined with a Conflict Identification Table (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:158 and 286)

Affinity Name	Possible Relationships
1. Legislation 2. Communication Skills 3. Management Skills 4. Strategic Planning 5. Leadership 6. Teaching and Learning	$A \rightarrow B$ $B \leftarrow A$ $A <> B$ (No Relationship

GROUP 2(b) Frequency of Affinities Table					
Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency	Conflicts	Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency	Conflicts
$1 \rightarrow 2$	19		$3 \rightarrow 4$	6	
$1 \leftarrow 2$	8		$3 \leftarrow 4$	66	
$1 \rightarrow 3$	120		$3 \rightarrow 5$	32	
$1 \leftarrow 3$	0		$3 \leftarrow 5$	153	
$1 \rightarrow 4$	26		$3 \rightarrow 6$	16	
$1 \leftarrow 4$	0		$3 \leftarrow 6$	0	
$1 \rightarrow 5$	78		$4 \rightarrow 5$	6	
$1 \leftarrow 5$	6		$4 \leftarrow 5$	28	
$1 \rightarrow 6$	11		$4 \rightarrow 6$	10	
$1 \leftarrow 6$	0		$4 \leftarrow 6$	0	
$2 \rightarrow 3$	72		$5 \rightarrow 6$	15	
$2 \leftarrow 3$	8		$5 \leftarrow 6$	0	
$2 \rightarrow 4$	15				
$2 \leftarrow 4$	0				
$2 \rightarrow 5$	23				
$2 \leftarrow 5$	56				
$2 \rightarrow 6$	7				
$2 \leftarrow 6$	0				
			Total	**781**	

For the sake of parsimony (as used in IQA terminology and explained in 4.5.2.1) the Min/Max criterion was applied (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004: 160). This involves creating a

spreadsheet where all the relationships are entered. This spreadsheet accounts for maximum variance (indicated by the cumulative percent based upon frequency) but minimises the number of relationships which do not appear to have much of a relational role for the sake of parsimony (indicated by the cumulative percent based on relations). True to Pareto's concept, relatively few of the relationships accounted for the most variance. The MinMax criterion can also answer the question as to which of the pairs of affinities need to be selected where the direction of the influence is shown to emanate from each of the pairs or when there is a tie, but there was no conflict to be resolved here. The combined focus group interview affinities in descending order of frequency with Pareto and Power can be seen in Addendum 5.

To illustrate the findings visually, two graphs were created based on the information in the spreadsheet: a chart to show maximum variance (Figure 5.6) and a chart to show the power analysis (Figure 5.7).
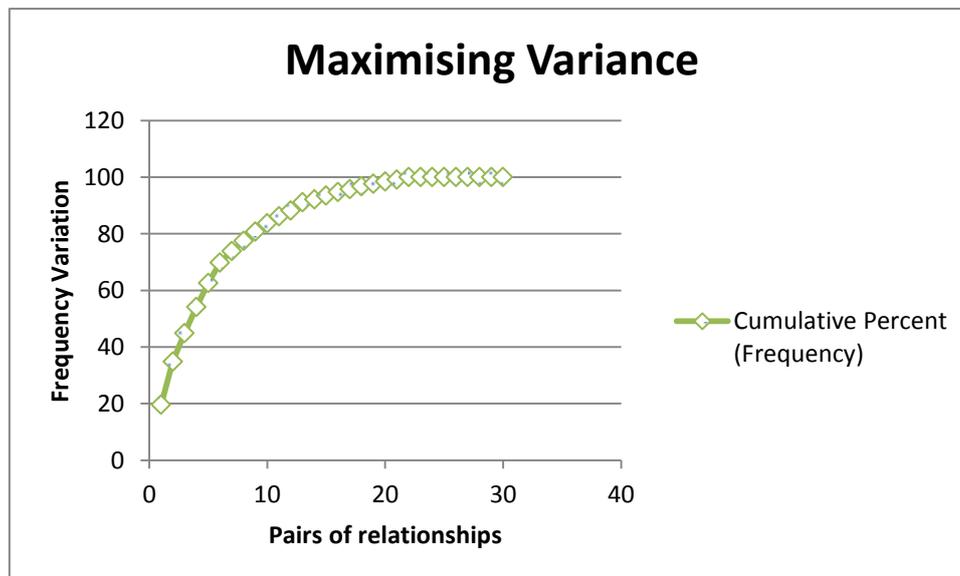
Figure 5.6 Maximising variance – focus group interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:161)

As has been demonstrated, the graph evens out at 80.8% as indicated in the spreadsheet. Any affinities above 80.8% do not necessarily have to be used in the SID as using them would only be useful if there were numerous affinities, which is not the case here.
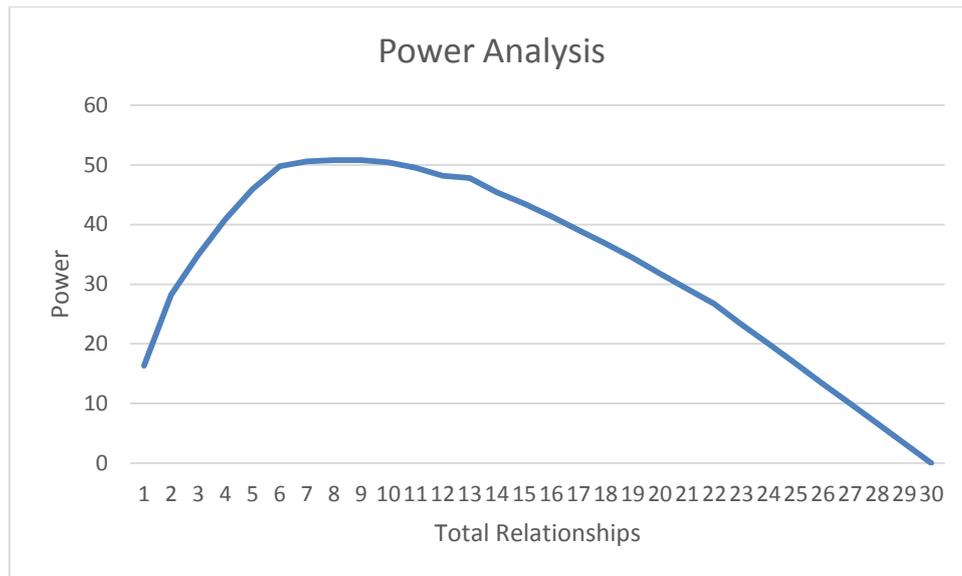
Figure 5.7   Power analysis – focus group interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:161)

This graph indicates that out of the 30 affinities, the relational power peaks at 50 and then loses power.

Now that it is clear which affinities count and which are irrelevant, rationalisation can take place where the relationships in the ART are transferred to a combined group IRD as illustrated in Table 5.5. This step is preparatory to drawing the SID according to the tentative SID assignments.

Table 5.5   Six-affinity tabular focus group interview composite IRD (based on Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:170)

Affinity Name
1. Legislation
2. Communication Skills
3. Management Skills
4. Strategic Planning
5. Leadership
6. Teaching and Learning

Tabular IRD									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**OUT**	**IN**	**Δ**
1		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	5	0	5
2	←		↑	↑	←	↑	3	2	1
3	←	←		←	←	↑	1	4	-3
4	←	←	↑		←	↑	2	3	-1
5	←	↑	↑	↑		↑	4	1	3
6	←	←	←	←	←		0	5	-5

The relational arrow is placed in the table and the reverse repeated in the mirror image below the shaded blocks as in double-entry bookkeeping. The arrows are tallied in the last two columns and delta is calculated by subtracting the IN from the OUT. The next step is to sort out the IRD in order of delta so that the tentative SID can be assigned. Where there are zero Ins, the affinity is regarded as a primary driver, as can be seen with Affinity 1. The positive valued numbers are then arranged before the negative valued ones. The negative value with zero Outs, is the primary outcome as can be seen in Affinity 6 in Table 5.6. This data informs the tentative SID assignments in Table 5.7.

Table 5.6   **Six-affinity tabular focus group interview composite IRD in descending order of delta (based on Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:173)**

Tabular IRD – Sorted in descending order of Δ									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**OUT**	**IN**	**Δ**
1		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	5	0	5
5	←	↑	↑	↑		↑	4	1	3
2	←		↑	↑	←	↑	3	2	1
4	←	←	↑		←	↑	2	3	-1
3	←	←		←	←	↑	1	4	-3
6	←	←	←	←	←		0	5	-5

Table 5.7   **Tentative SID assignments – focus group interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:174)**

Tentative SID Assignments	
1	Primary Driver
5	Secondary Driver
2	Secondary Driver
4	Secondary Outcome
3	Secondary Outcome
6	Primary Outcome

The SID can now be created according to the tentative SID assignments, from left to right, starting with the primary driver and ending with the primary outcome (Figure 5.8).
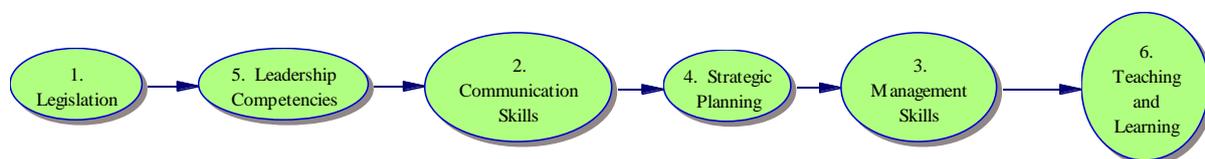
Figure 5.8   **Composite focus group interview SID (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:182)**

This final focus group interview SID is a simple, straightforward linear mindmap similar to the six-affinity SID in Figure 5.2, with no branching or feedback loops. The primary driver is legislation, which is external and influences all the other affinities namely leadership competencies, communication skills, strategic planning, management skills and teaching

and learning. These affinities all have an influence, either directly or indirectly, on teaching and learning, the core business of the college. This finding corresponds with the findings in the affinity analysis above.

5.2.5 Developing an individual interview composite

A decision was taken to compare the composites only. The same process was followed as that described in the protocols used to create the composite focus group interview SID. First, a combined ART was created (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8   Combined ART for individual interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:151)

Affinity Name	**Possible Relationships**
1. Legislation (+ Corporate Governance) 2. Communication Skills 3. Management Skills (Finance & HR etc.) 4. Strategic Planning 5. Leadership (Knowledge, Styles, Skills, Attributes) 6. Teaching and Learning	$A \rightarrow B$ $A \leftarrow B$ A <> B (No Relationship)

Affinity Relationship Table
Affinity Pair Relationship
$1 \rightarrow 2$
$1 \rightarrow 3$
$1 \rightarrow 4$
$1 \rightarrow 5$
$1 \rightarrow 6$
$2 \rightarrow 3$
$2 \rightarrow 4$
$2 \rightarrow 5$
$2 \rightarrow 6$
$3 \rightarrow 4$
$3 \rightarrow 5$
$3 \rightarrow 6$
$4 \leftarrow 5$
$4 \rightarrow 6$
$5 \rightarrow 6$

The frequency in affinity pairs was then examined for conflicts. Two conflicts were found in affinity pairs 2 and 4 and affinity pairs 3 and 5 and indicated with question marks in the Affinity Frequency Table 5.9. Usually, the affinity that receives the most 'votes' or arrows pointing in the same direction is given preference. Another way of resolving conflicts is to do

the Pareto Principle with the MinMax criterion, which confirms whether the conflict has been resolved. A final method of resolving a conflict is to draw both SIDs, discarding the one that does not work. All these steps were followed to resolve the conflicts that emerged.

Table 5.9   **Theoretical code frequency table: individual interviews combined with a conflict identification table (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:158, 286)**

Affinity Name
1. Legislation
2. Communication Skills
3. Management Skills
4. Strategic Planning
5. Leadership Competencies
6. Teaching and Learning

Possible Relationships
A → B
B ← A
A <> B (No Relationship

GROUP 2(b) Frequency of Affinities Table					
Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency	Conflicts	Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency	Conflicts
1 → 2	15		3 → 4	13	
1 ← 2	0		3 ← 4	7	
1 → 3	20		3 → 5	9	?
1 ← 3	0		3 ← 5	10	?
1 → 4	15		3 → 6	9	
1 ← 4	0		3 ← 6	1	
1 → 5	13		4 → 5	3	
1 ←5	1		4 ← 5	12	
1 → 6	10		4 → 6	10	
1 ← 6	0		4 ← 6	0	
2 → 3	14		5 → 6	10	
2 ← 3	5		5 ← 6	0	
2 → 4	8	?			
2 ← 4	7	?			
2 → 5	10				
2 ← 5	4			**216**	
2 → 6	8				
2 ← 6	2				
			Total	**216**	

In order to resolve this conflict, the Pareto Principle, as explained above, was applied. Firstly, a spreadsheet was prepared. The combined interview affinities in descending order of frequency with Pareto and Power (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2005:159) can be seen in Addendum 6.

This step was followed by the creation of the cumulative percent (frequency) and the Power Analysis charts.
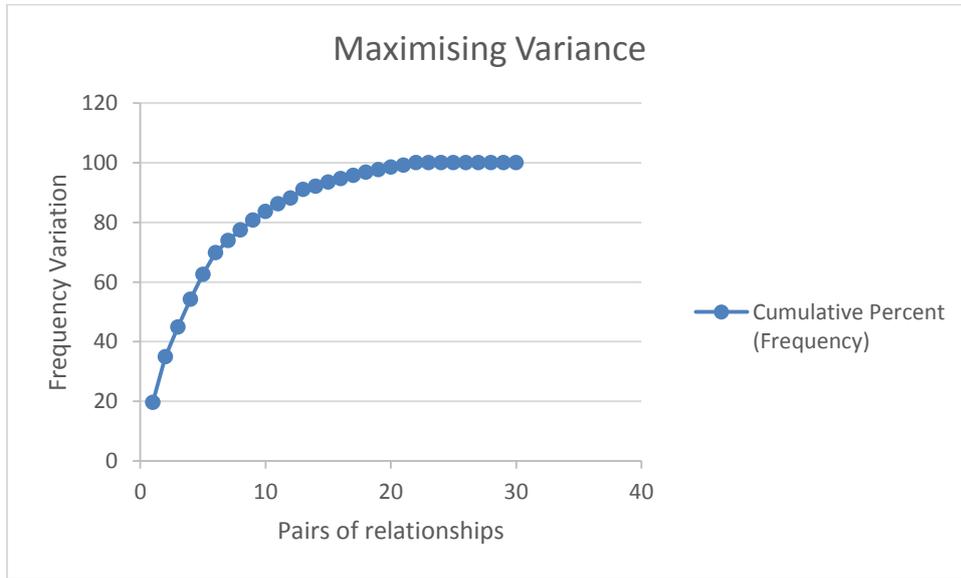
Figure 5.9 Maximising variance – individual interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:161)
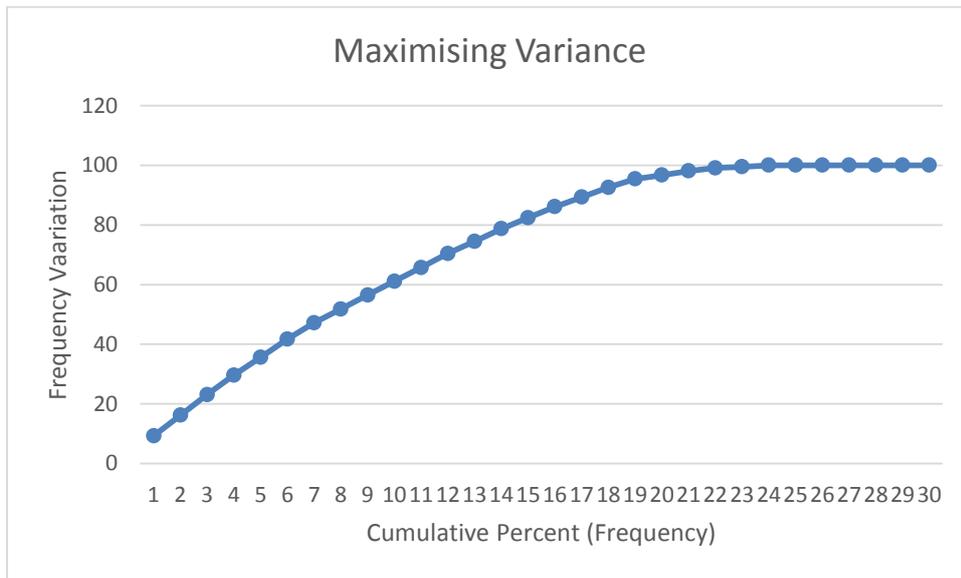
Figure 5.10 Power analysis – individual interviews (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:161)

On the basis of the Pareto Principle, the affinity conflicts could be resolved as shown in Table 5.10:

Table 5.10   **Individual interview composite relationship conflict summary (adapted from Northcutt and McCoy, 2004:288)**

Relationship Conflict Summary		
Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency	Use (indicate affinities to be used in the IRD)
2 → 4	8	Use
2 ← 4	7	
3 → 5	9	
3 ← 5	10	Use

The composite IRD for the combined individual interviews could now be developed by transferring the relationships in the ART to the IRD as can be seen in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11   **Six-affinity tabular focus group interview composite IRD (based on Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:170)**

Affinity Name

1. Legislation
2. Communication Skills
3. Management Skills
4. Strategic Planning
5. Leadership
6. Teaching and Learning

Tabular IRD									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**OUT**	**IN**	**Δ**
1		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	5	0	5
2	←		↑	↑	↑	↑	4	1	3
3	←	←		↑	←	↑	2	3	-1
4	←	←	←		←	↑	1	4	-3
5	←	←	←	↑		↑	2	3	-1
6	←	←	←	←	←		0	5	-5

The IRD is then rearranged in order of delta as can be seen in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Six-affinity tabular focus group interview composite IRD in order of delta (based on Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:173)

Tabular IRD – Sorted in Descending Order of Δ									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**OUT**	**IN**	**Δ**
1		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	5	0	5
2	←		↑	↑	↑	↑	4	1	3
3	←	←		↑	←	↑	2	3	-1
5	←	←	←	↑		↑	2	3	-1
4	←	←	←		←	↑	1	4	-3
6	←	←	←	←	←		0	5	-5

The tentative SID assignments can be seen in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Tentative SID assignments (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:174)

Tentative SID Assignments	
1	Primary Driver
2	Secondary Driver
3	Secondary Outcome
4	Secondary Outcome
5	Secondary Outcome
6	Primary Outcome

The combined Group 1 and 2 individual interview SIDs resulted in the following composite SID (Figure 5.11):
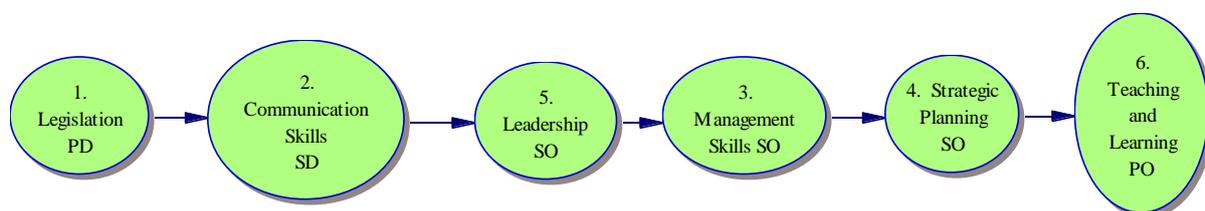
Figure 5.11 Composite individual interview SID (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:182).

This SID is almost identical to the composite focus group interview SID in that both are linear, both have the same primary driver (legislation) and primary outcome (teaching and learning) but the other affinities are not in the same order. Communication is in the third position in the focus group interview SID while leadership is in the second position. The two

affinities have changed places in the individual interview SID where Leadership is now a secondary outcome and not a secondary driver. In the focus group interview SID, Management is in the fifth position and Strategic Planning in the fourth, so these two affinities have changed places in the individual interview SID. This situation is discussed further in the next section.

5.3   INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

The final phase of IQA was that of interpreting the results or findings of the study. Interpretation proceeded not only from the descriptions of the affinities produced by the respondents but from two other sources as well. The first of these sources are the respondents' judgments of the cause-and-effect relationships among the affinities and the system created by these judgments. The second are the mindmaps or SIDs created either by the focus group interview composites or the individual interview composites of the different constituencies or at the individual level where individual mindmaps are examined for variability within a constituency (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). In the next section the systems created by the focus group interviews and the individual interviews are compared.

5.3.1   Comparing the affinities

An interpretive interrogation of affinities consists of two questions. The first question is what kinds of affinities make up the systems and what does this mix imply? The second question is how do the affinities compare across constituencies? This refers to the extent that the elements of the system are the same or different and what these similarities or differences imply (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004).

The affinities generated by both constituencies can be seen in Table 5.2 and represent what the focus group interview participants believed were necessary to be included in a curriculum framework if a TVET college leader was to be adequately prepared to lead the new TVET college as required by legislation. In essence, the affinities generated by the two constituencies were the same, for example Legislation, Communication Skills, Management Skills, Strategic Planning and Leadership. There were differences in naming and placing, but otherwise, the affinities that were listed were similar.

Even though a similar list of affinities was shared at both levels of leadership at the TVET colleges, there was a difference in the way the relevant leadership perceived each of the six affinities. This difference is a manifestation of how constituents who are situated further away from the phenomenon wield greater power over the phenomenon while constituents who are closest to the phenomenon have less power over it. The constituency with greater power over the phenomenon has been referred to as Group 1 and consists of the present executive leaders at the colleges: the principals and the vice-principals. Group 2 is made up

of constituents who are close to the phenomenon in their capacity as campus managers and heads of department.

The main differences were two affinities, namely Teaching and Learning and Quality Assurance. Teaching and Learning was an affinity that was suggested by only one of the four focus group interviews belonging to Group 1 but at the individual interviews, all the respondents were unanimous in adding Teaching and Learning to the list of affinities. The differences in perceptions about Teaching and Learning are discussed further in 5.3.1.6.

Quality Assurance was an affinity that was suggested by both Group 2 participants but as a sub-affinity by both Group 1 participants. During the individual interviews, both constituencies were unanimously in favour of placing quality assurance as a sub-affinity of Management Skills. A possible reason for the difference in the positioning of Quality Assurance as an affinity or a sub-affinity was scalar. The reason could be that Group 2 are closer to the phenomenon and are expected to implement the requirements of a quality management system (QMS). This is why it received more prominence than was the case with the Group 1 constituency, who had more power over the phenomenon and had to ensure that there was compliance. Group 1 acknowledged that Quality Management was critical but thought it should rather be a leadership or management skill as the leader had to ensure that quality took place as it was 'cutting across' all the other affinities without having to become involved at the implementation stage. Group 2 added that whatever one did at the college was 'quality-inclined' and in that way the college would 'comply'. It is not clear with what quality management should comply, but it is possible that it is with legislation. Quality management, like legislation, 'guides you in your day-to-day working processes'. The goal of quality management does thus not really appear to be to improve teaching and learning but to comply with legislation. At the one end of the scale was Group 2, the constituency that had to implement the QMS; at the other end of the scale was Group 1, who ensured that there was compliance. The extremes here are those who have the authority and those who lack it. The division of labour within the college determined whether the affinity was an affinity or a sub-affinity of Management Skills.

Besides the affinity Legislation, which indicates how and why the colleges need to transform, and the affinity Teaching and Learning, which refers to the core business of the colleges, the other affinities refer to various skills that a leader in this environment requires in order to be able run the colleges as determined by government and to create the right environment for teaching and learning. The order in which the affinities were arranged in the SIDs confirms this finding.

In some cases, the naming of the affinities differed to some extent. For instance, Legislation was named Legislative Framework or Leadership was part of Personal Development or Management was referred to as Advanced Management Skills, but during the individual interview phase, respondents were able to agree easily on a common set of affinities and a common description for each. This suggested that the differences did not lie in the elements of the system but either in the timbre of the elements, the extremes in which they were experienced or the way in which they were connected to one another.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Northcutt and McCoy (2004) state that disparate constituencies vary primarily in the way in which the relationships among affinities are perceived rather than in the affinities themselves. Constituents sometimes name the same affinity differently, but there is always a 'common core of affinities' across constituencies (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:213). It is for this reason that they suggest that the affinities belonging to different constituencies are first reconciled where affinities are similar. A single reconciled protocol 'that incorporates the commonalities between the two while maintaining the integrity of each of the original systems' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:213) was thus prepared. This is the list that was used in this study for the purpose of comparison. Direct quotations from the voices of the participants themselves are often used in IQA to support the researcher's interpretation but the rules of punctuation and voice proposed by Northcutt and McCoy (2004) to describe the affinities were not followed in my study in the comparison phase either.

5.3.1.1　　Legislation

The two constituencies' perceptions of Legislation differed in timbre and scale. Group 1 leaders saw the first constituency, Legislation, as external governmental guidelines governing the running of the colleges which the leader needed to know, understand and interpret so that the information could be disseminated to all levels of the college. Group 2 leaders, on the other hand, saw Legislation as something that those 'higher up' should know so that mistakes would not be made. At this leadership level, they needed to know 'what is expected' of them and something 'we must comply with' so that 'they do not end up making mistakes'. While Group 1 had a broader view of Legislation as the provision of guidelines for the college in terms of policies and procedures which had to be developed, Group 2 saw Legislation more narrowly, at a more personal level such as staff and student disciplinary measures and how a staff member was expected to conduct him- or herself. Legislation afforded a new staff member the opportunity to 'know what his rights are and what is required of him'. Group 2 appeared to experience Legislation as a top-down approach to how the college should function where 'people in FETs must be capacitated in terms of it'. A staff member is expected to 'resort under' Legislation, as it was 'something that is essential

so that you know what governs you'. Ironically, Group 1 also perceived Legislation to be top/down as in the 'national directive'. There thus appear to be different power structures in the TVET colleges, namely DHET and executive leadership on the one hand and executive leaders and campus or departmental leaders on the other.

Legislation also raised feelings of discomfort and unease with Group 1 in regard to the power issue which were not shared by Group 2. Many of the staff came to the colleges with a school background and did not understand the TVET college sector and the dynamics of the various stakeholders and this made them feel vulnerable. Group 1, some of them being the accounting officers at their colleges and therefore feeling exposed to criticism, described experiencing difficulty in interpreting Legislation strategically in a way that all public colleges had a 'common guiding implementation at college level. They perceived the promulgation of various forms of Legislation as being something that external bodies 'do' with little consultation with those who are most affected by it. Since they had not been involved in the drafting of the legislation which was subject to interpretation, it was difficult to design internal policies and procedures for the college according to the official regulations. They regarded this lack of consultation as the reason why so many colleges were unable to comply fully and were thus placed under administration by the higher order of power as the staff had not been trained in the implementation of the policies. Non-compliance appeared to be dealt with punitively. One respondent remarked:

> *And if you don't want to, then we will suspend you. I don't know how many suspensions there are in the country right now, because everyone is just suspended. [*Respondent *3]*

5.3.1.2   Communication Skills

Both constituencies listed Communication Skills as an affinity, but they also perceived this affinity differently in a scalar sense, which appears to perpetuate the power issue alluded to in the previous two paragraphs. Group 1 experienced communication between DHET and the colleges first hand. They experienced it as authoritarian and uncaring. They were left feeling abandoned and isolated, to cope without support or guidance. As Respondent 3 pointed out:

> *You just get instructions that you will do this or you will do that by tomorrow or the day after that … and if you don't want to, then we will suspend you … you are just there … you really get that feeling they feel absolutely nothing for you …there is no support … [we feel as though we have been thrown to the lions at this level … it is really just a feeling of they're hunting us down.*

Leaders of the colleges believed that they 'are the last people to hear about the legislation'. Most of them had come from a teaching background and felt that they were inadequately trained for the potentially explosive situation in which they now found themselves. External bodies such as unions had been involved in staff deliberations at the bargaining councils and so had a better grasp of the implications which they passed on to the staff. Unions thus appeared to have the upper hand at the colleges, causing disruptions at staff and student level and holding this group of leaders to ransom. This state of affairs was particularly relevant during what the colleges call 'staff migration' from provincial to national positions. Staff who felt that their jobs were being threatened were asking these leaders questions which they could not answer as they were not in possession of the relevant legislation or instructions. Emails and SMS communications to DHET for clarification were ignored or they were simply told to 'do with it what you like' or 'handle it' while the unions were exhorting staff to strike as their interpretation of the subtleties of the law differed from the leaders at the colleges.

The lines of communication were also not clear, so this constituency did not know where to turn for advice or information. In the recent past, colleges had been regional competencies which meant that they did not report directly to the old Department of Education nationally, but at a regional level. From 2012, colleges had started operating as national competencies but the process of closing the regional departments of education was not clear. Information was sometimes communicated to the provinces and from there to the colleges as had happened previously, but in other instances, DHET had communicated directly with the colleges and vice versa. It was therefore not always clear what the reporting lines of communication were, as highlighted by Respondent 3:

> *There's no communication in the province anymore. We do not know at this point whether the province people have been seconded to DHET or whether we still work through them or whether we don't work through them. One day we'll hear no, you still fall under the province. You've got to work through the province, yet all the correspondence comes straight from DHET and you've got to reply to DHET. So, where does it leave us? Province is cross with you because you sent things straight to DHET, but DHET require it and then DHET say remember, you need to work through your province. But the requests come directly from DHET and the returns must go directly to DHET and every time we do not know whether these people have been seconded or not. Not all of them want to be seconded either so there's a communication problem. And not only that, but it also leads to a communication problem between management and staff.*

Neither of these situations was reported by Group 2 but they did feel that they were at the receiving end of the lack of communication at college level between leaders at executive

level and themselves. They regarded themselves as the buffer between the staff and the executive. Group 1 felt that they had been put into this situation as a direct result of the lack of adequate communication from the employer (DHET) as they did not know what to communicate to the staff in certain instances, such as when staff would be migrating: As Respondent 3 mentioned:

> *It also leads to a communication problem between management and staff, for example, the migration. Staff will come and say to me when are we migrating? I cannot give them an answer because there was a meeting last week now, I'm talking in general, but for months we didn't know what was happening with migration – there was no email.*

Even though Group 1 leaders acknowledged that there was a communication gap, they also blamed the staff for being dependent on them and not recognising that they were now part of higher education even though the staff insisted on reacting to certain situations by saying 'we're not schools'. Campus staff still insisted on meeting with executive management on a regular basis, needing constant reassurance and recognition: 'They still want a pat on the back every day.' Campus managers were expected to be the go-between. Since campus managers formed part of Group 2, they felt that they did not always receive the information that was necessary for managing the campuses. They referred to an 'us and them' situation that prevailed in the communication channels between the central office and the campuses at the colleges. In order for 'us' (the leaders at mid-level at the campuses) to be compliant, they needed some directive or reassurance from 'them' (the executive leaders at the central office). This is the way Group 1 also felt but in the other power relationship, 'them' (executive leaders at the colleges) became 'us' and the new 'them' became DHET.

Both constituencies agreed that good communication skills were central to leadership and that they went hand in hand with values and ethics. However, Group 1 generally saw themselves as the communicators passing on information and emphasised the importance of first analysing the target groups (internal and external) before choosing the right communication style, while Group 2 concentrated on how important it was for communication to be accurate and to be communicated in the right way in order to get co-operation. They also stressed the fact that communication was often one-directional with no feedback, with the result that important information could 'fall into gaps'. It was not always clear what the message was. This begs the question: would this message have something to do with the core business, teaching and learning, or did it rather have something to do with compliance with legislation?

5.3.1.3   Management Skills

There was general consensus about the inclusion of Management Skills as an affinity. Three out of the four initial focus group interviews indicated Management Skills as an affinity. The fourth group preferred to list the support functions of management, like Human Relations, Business Skills, Financial Management and Marketing Management, as separate affinities. Everyone in the individual interviews agreed that Management Skills should be the affinity and the support functions, the sub-affinities. The two constituencies, however, experienced 'management' differently. The term 'management' was also used interchangeably with 'leadership' especially by Group 2, but it was acknowledged that the terms had different meanings and Group 1 felt that 'we must make a distinction between a manager and a leader'. The majority saw management skills as incorporating all the various support-service departments such as Finance and HR, which were generally seen as the most important in the college context. They were described as 'functional management' or 'strategic functions' by Group 1. Management Skills also included 'soft skills' such as conflict management, change management and problem-solving.

Group 1 and 2 saw themselves as being associated with Management Skills at different levels, the former in an oversight role of an 'overarching theme' and the latter being more involved at the operational level, 'managing the day-to-day processes'. Their perceptions were thus different in terms of scale. Group 1 saw Management Skills as the domain of a process owner or functionary (which was not them) while the leader of the college needed basic knowledge of the various functions or felt that the leader needed 'to know a little bit' about all these functions in order to be able to make decisions and not to micromanage as 'you can't have the CEO that is the manager'. The danger was that by appointing a manager for these processes, the leader tended to 'drop his guard on finances ... the same with HR'. One Group 1 respondent conceded that there was a slight overlap 'whether you're a manager or whether you are a leader'. Group 2 saw these skills as being 'in addition to your normal job requirements'. It was also stated that 'people personalise things that should not be personalised' and 'It is actually work-related but unfortunately because you are sitting in that position it talks to you ... as a manager in a particular portfolio.' This implies that Group 2 found themselves in positions where they were open to criticism. Group 2 appeared to be closer to the function than Group 1 who viewed management from a distance, the way 'you deal with management is key', resorting to 'we' and 'they' language as in 'they get appointed', 'they don't have the proper qualifications' and 'we need to train the people'. Group 1 believed that 'the managers are equipped to manage things'. Group 2 also tended to single out HR skills as being the most important as this aspect went hand in hand with motivating the staff by incentivising them and looking after their interests. They

commented that a happy staff corps improves productivity. A respondent suggested that Communication Skills could become a sub-affinity of Management Skills. All respondents were in agreement that management skills were required to ensure that effective teaching and learning took place.

5.3.1.4   Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning was seen as being critical by both constituencies as it linked all the other affinities in the affinity list. Strategic Planning was driven by Legislation and was aimed at Teaching and Learning, involving Communication and Management Skills as well as Leadership competencies. Strategic Planning was compulsory at the colleges. However, the constituencies experienced strategic planning differently in terms of power. Group 1 acknowledged that strategic planning was linked to the funding through the programme (learning area). It was the responsibility of Group 1 to ensure that there was a plan, linked to an operational plan, which had to be submitted to DHET, to source that funding through the appropriate qualifications mix. It therefore had to get done. The strategic plan was designed to 'push us in the right direction and to help us in that direction'. Group 1 recognised that it was an essential leadership skill but one that not all leaders had. For this group, a strategic plan ensured that 'you plan ahead … so everything has to be planned for, not haphazard'. This respondent added that a strategic plan was 'like a rudder – it keeps you in the right direction'. The respondents noted that it was the leader's role to constantly 'bring your management back to the strategic plan and always reflect on it' so that it did not become 'something that is in the cupboard'. Group 1 also acknowledged that it had to be a team or combined effort, involving all the stakeholders and there had to be 'buy-in from all your staff'. Yet, these were not the experiences of Group 2 as all of them saw the strategic plan as something necessary but something with which they had not been directly involved.

One respondent remarked that strategic planning was important but 'here I am sitting and I am supposed to be on leave'. This suggested that the college was not running according to its plans and he or she was at the receiving end. Another respondent from Group 2 agreed that it was important 'for management to have a strategic plan but it must be followed up', suggesting that the plan came from somewhere other than him or her and that someone else should be doing the following up. There was no agency, personal involvement or buy-in and suggests that the development of the plan had probably not been a 'combined effort'. One of the respondents commented, 'When managers are observing strategic planning the staff below you have no idea what a strategic plan is.' The leaders in this group were expected to communicate the strategic plan to the staff (one-directional) but believed it would carry more weight if executives had interacted with the staff, explaining the vision and inviting staff to 'come in' and respond to 'what's on your mind?' They would then feel as though they were

'part of this whole thing' instead of 'strategic planning comes from there and it goes down'. The course of action was thus experienced as a top/down exercise. One respondent admitted that there was 'a serious lack of strategic planning' and that the exercise merely consisted of adopting the national strategic plan without addressing local and regional needs. This respondent added that they needed someone around that asked them 'where do you want to see you at this college?' but that their 'management is not up to doing strategic planning'. It was a case of 'no input, no buy-in'. This respondent concluded with 'top down – that is the sad reality'.

5.3.1.5 Leadership

With both constituencies, Leadership was made up of a number of different styles and skills and it was generally acknowledged that the leader would need all these as well as the knowledge to do his or her work efficiently and effectively. Three out of the four groups mentioned that the leader should lead by example, suggesting that the leader should be a person who is deserving of respect, with the appropriate qualities and ethical and moral standing.

Group 1 saw themselves in a leadership role – someone who motivated and got the best out of people, keeping them focused on the vision which was a transformational role. Ethics and values were important aspects of a leader's make up which would find favour with ethical leadership. There was general consensus that the leader should be a team player which could be associated with shared or distributive leadership, leading in a 'flatter system'. The general feeling was that there were different styles of leadership and a specific style was appropriate in certain but not all situations: 'If you stick with one style, then the colleges will crumble.' It was acknowledged that followers played an important role and that the leader should ensure that there was the necessary support but they did not supply any detail in this respect. A leader needed to be a good communicator, a good manager but also a good planner. Leadership therefore was seen as pulling together all the other affinities in order to comply with legislation with the purpose of supporting teaching and learning. The respondents believed that a good leader should have emotional intelligence. Group 1 therefore recognised all the 'textbook' requirements of a good leader.

Group 2 concentrated more on the leader's attributes especially with regard to how the staff would experience this person than the competencies of a good leader. Some of the qualities named were approachability, being open to advice, someone who drew people to him or her, empowering, prepared to listen, a decision-maker, a visible leader, trusting and assertive. They expressed frustration at the lack of leadership since they were not experiencing the fulfilment of an interaction with someone who manifested these attributes that they needed in

the relationship. They did not see themselves as leaders but needed someone they could look up to. The predominant metaphor used was that of a leader being the captain of a ship. If he or she did not steer the ship or college correctly, using the strategic plan as a rudder, the ship would sink. The importance of the leader in a TVET college was thus recognised and emphasised but Group 2 did not see themselves in that position.   The two constituencies' perceptions about leadership were thus scalar and related to positions of power or lack thereof.

5.3.1.6   Teaching and Learning

Only one constituency recognised Teaching and Learning as an affinity yet all four groups acknowledged that it was the primary outcome of the system. Group 1(b) listed it as an affinity and Group 1(a) listed it three times as a sub-affinity of Management Skills – as 'teaching and learning' as well as 'creating a teaching and learning environment' and 'understanding education and training systems'. When I asked members of the three other groups what they thought about Teaching and Learning as an affinity, they all expressed surprise at its not having been listed as an affinity since it was the college's core business. They all agreed that it should definitely be one of the affinities and suggested that the reason why they had not listed it as an affinity in the first place was because once you were in a leadership position at the college, you tended to focus on other aspects of running a college and forgot what the main business of the college was. Leaders 'lose touch'. A respondent suggested an analogy:

> *If you sell hamburgers, you need to make sure you have all the machinery for the hamburger but if you do not sell a good product, then you'll have all the machinery and you won't even make money. So from a business perspective, [teaching and learning] need to be zoomed in. [Respondent 5]*

The question arose whether the leaders were so busy complying with legislation that they had forgotten why they were actually there, namely to provide quality education and training for the economic and social future of the country. They appeared to have become distracted by the operational needs of the colleges, which may also explain why the support functions such as Finance and HR as well as other management skills had received such prominence in the card generation stage of IQA.

A respondent used the metaphor of an 'ever-changing life cycle' to describe how he or she had perceived working at the college. It started with the rules as determined by legislation which influenced life at the college and it ended with teaching and learning before beginning with amended legislation or a new set of rules once again. In the past 10 years, there had been three significant changes to the rules. If leaders did not 'stay abreast', they were in

danger of 'losing it'. A respondent saw all the other affinities as being integrated and would 'culminate to be able to manage teaching and learning'. However, the other functions had to be complied with first even though they were really subsidiary to teaching and learning and were enabling supporters of this function. The situation at the colleges did not support this core function as staff 'don't understand the context' in order to take the 'job more serious to make sure this happen on time more effectively'. People employed to perform the support functions 'think they are actually the core business' and worked in 'silos'. The attitude was often that 'it's an academic matter', suggesting that it was only the concern of those employed to focus on the academic matters at the college. This shift in focus could be another reason why teaching and learning had been omitted as an affinity since they had had no trouble identifying Finance, HR, and other Management Skills, the support functions of Teaching and Learning, as affinities.

The two constituencies experienced teaching and learning differently. Group 1 was clear that the leader needed an 'overview of what is happening because you must know, not the detail' while Group 2 saw Teaching and Learning as an affinity at a vocational level because the 'parent must pay' so 'we must treat that student with respect' and teach with 'passion' and not simply because it was a 'way of earning a salary'. Leaders should 'make sure that things happen as they should'. Teaching and Learning is 'why we're here' but 'we tend to forget this'.   The emphasis seemed to change once leaders moved away from the classroom. Teachers were regarded as being at a 'lower level' and once some of these teachers moved from the 'ranks of the educator' into a 'management position', they tended to forget what they had had to deal with at the 'lower level'. This respondent added that as a leader, you were 'removed from the situation' so that it was not 'so at the forefront of your thinking anymore'.

Group 2 was concerned at grassroots level that the colleges were not effective at teaching and learning and that 'we can't be using the old method. OBE has proved not to have worked for us.' Group 1 also felt that more needed to be done to make the learning experience an innovative, modern one and that leaders should 'start doing something' since they were not 'meeting the students at their own level'.   There was thus an acknowledgement that leaders had somehow lost focus. The responsibility was moved to the classroom while leaders only needed to 'understand why someone wants a projector in his classroom'. They still thought 'pen and paper' while the students were 'doing it a different way'. The lecturer in the class should also be supported to 'make sure teaching and learning does take place'. The colleges should also communicate with DHET to 'say things are not done in the old way anymore' to precipitate curriculum change. Leadership at the colleges was thus not only a conduit for ensuring compliance but also for keeping DHET

in the picture. If teaching and learning is not taking place, it would be like 'missing the bus' as failure would have an impact on the finances and HR at the college. So, leaders needed to 'look after your core business' to ensure that the colleges operated effectively. 'Missing the bus' did not necessarily mean that the students were being disadvantaged but that the support functions were compromised.

Group 1 respondents were concerned about the staff not being adequately trained for the classroom. Those who came from industry did not have the 'didactics and methodology and then the ones who come with all that, have not been exposed to industry'. It was the leader's role to collaborate with industry to ensure that what was being produced was actually 'what's wanted out there'. This also meant ensuring that the programme qualifications mix was in line with supply and demand and that the college did 'not offer programmes for unemployment'. If ensuring that the outcome of teaching and learning was indeed employment, then the leader would be playing a transformative role as was expected of him or her.

In the next section, the relationships among the affinities are explored further in a comparison of the composite SIDs that were created by the focus group interviews and the individual interviews.

5.3.2   Comparing the systems

Of the four groups, Group 2(b) produced the simplest SID, a six-affinity SID which is illustrated in Figure 5.2. This SID was linear with no branching or feedback loops. The primary driver was Legislation and the primary outcome was Quality Management. It was also visually the most similar to the composite SIDs which were also linear. In this SID, as in both composite SIDs, the primary driver was unequivocally Legislation but since Quality Management is a sub-affinity of Management Skills, the primary outcome can be renamed Management Skills as the one is a sub-affinity of the other as confirmed by the individual interviews.   Strategist is a feature of Leadership, so Strategist can become part of Leadership. Thus, by following Northcutt and McCoy's (2004:335) process which they call 'zooming' in or out, the zoomed-in version of this SID looks as depicted in Figure 5.12.
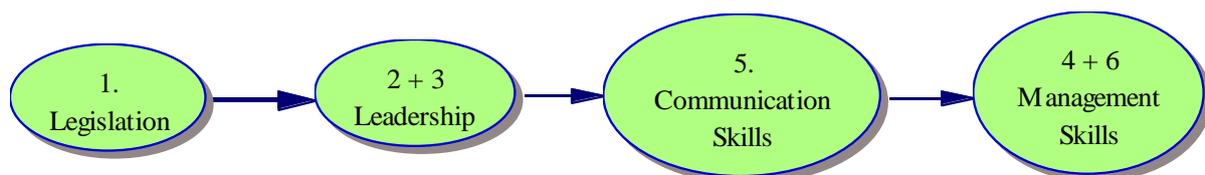
Figure 5.12   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of a Systems Influence Diagram (Group 2b)

Zooming out can continue 'for as long as there are feedback loops or sequences of affinities and relationships that have some underlying semantic dimension' (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004:336). In this simplified, zoomed-in view, Legislation is the driver of the system but Management Skills is the primary outcome, with Leadership and Communication Skills mediating the relationship between Legislation and Management Skills. In this form, it more closely resembles the SIDs produced by the other groups.

Group 2 (a), which was in the same constituency, produced a much more complex SID initially, which is illustrated in Figure 5.5. This group did not produce a primary driver but a complex feedback loop (affinities 4-5-2-3-9-6-4) with two additional feedback loops: 4-1-5-4 and 5-8-2-5 as part of the larger six-affinity feedback loop. The complexity of this SID is possibly due to the fact that the three secondary outcomes, Financial Management, Quality Management and HR as well as the primary outcome, Marketing Management, could all be sub-affinities of Management Skills. This was confirmed by the individual interviews. Business Skills, which is pivotal, is also a sub-affinity of management skills. If this is the case, then the affinities could be reduced to a sub-category called management skills, also following Northcutt and McCoy's (2004:335) process which they call 'zooming' in or out. If one zooms out, the SID would look as represented in Figure 5.13.
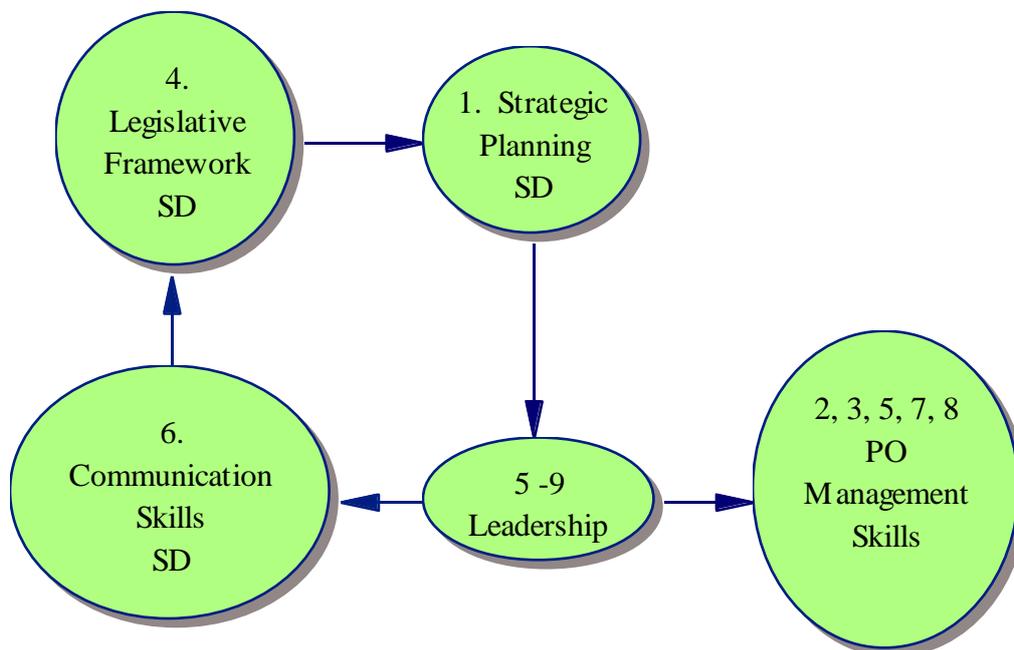
Figure 5.13   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of a Systems Influence Diagram (Group 2a)

In this less complex SID, Legislation is part of a feedback loop with Communication Skills, Leadership and Strategic Planning, directly influencing Management Skills.

These two SIDs are different in that the first SID was linear, without branching or feedback loops, while the second SID was more complex. The first SID started with a primary driver, Legislation, and ended with a primary outcome, Management Skills. The second SID did not have a primary driver, but in the zoomed-out version, the function of the primary driver was replaced with two feedback loops containing Legislation in the primary driver zone. These feedback loops all influenced one another indirectly and had an indirect influence on the primary outcome which in this case was Management Skills. Since this constituency confirmed that Quality Management was a sub-affinity of Management Skills, it could be said that the two SIDs share a common primary outcome. The SIDs can thus be interpreted as being similar in that Legislation, although it does not share a primary driver position, but is an affinity that bears an influence, directly or indirectly, on the other affinities in the system, having an indirect influence on management skills.

Group 1(a) produced a seven-affinity SID (illustrated in Figure 5.3) with two primary drivers whereas Group 1(b) produced an eight-affinity SID with no primary driver. These SIDs also differed in that Group 1(a)'s SID identified Management Skills as the primary outcome, as did Group 2. Group 1(b), on the other hand, identified Teaching and Learning as a primary outcome.   Since Group 1(a) identified Teaching and Learning as a sub-affinity of Management Skills, the SID could be interpreted as being similar.

Group 1 (a)'s SID could also be zoomed out, reducing its complexity as can be seen in Figure 5.14.
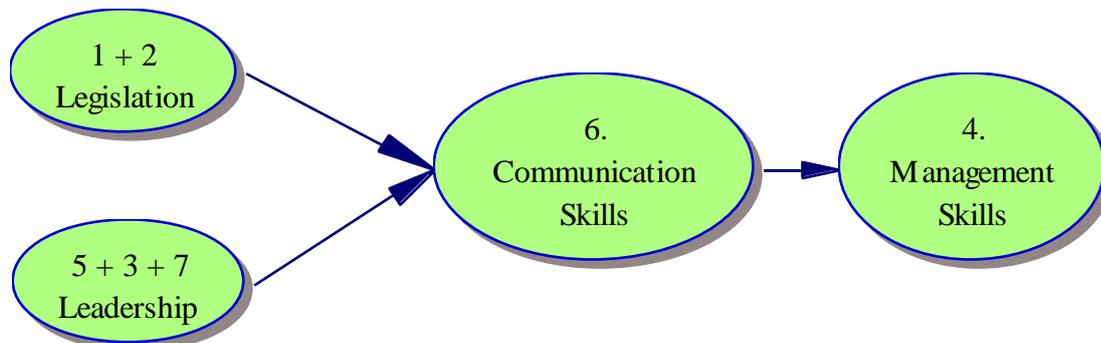
Figure 5.14   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of a Systems Influence Diagram (Group 1a)

Corporate Governance is a sub-affinity of Legislation. Personality Traits, Leadership Skills and Leadership Characteristics all form part of Leadership. In the simplified or zoomed-out version of this SID, the two primary drivers are Legislation and Leadership that directly influence the type of Communication Skills that influences Management Skills, of which Teaching and Learning is a sub-affinity.

Group 1(b) produced a more complex SID as illustrated in Figure 5.4. The zoomed-in version of this SID looks as follows (Figure 5.15):
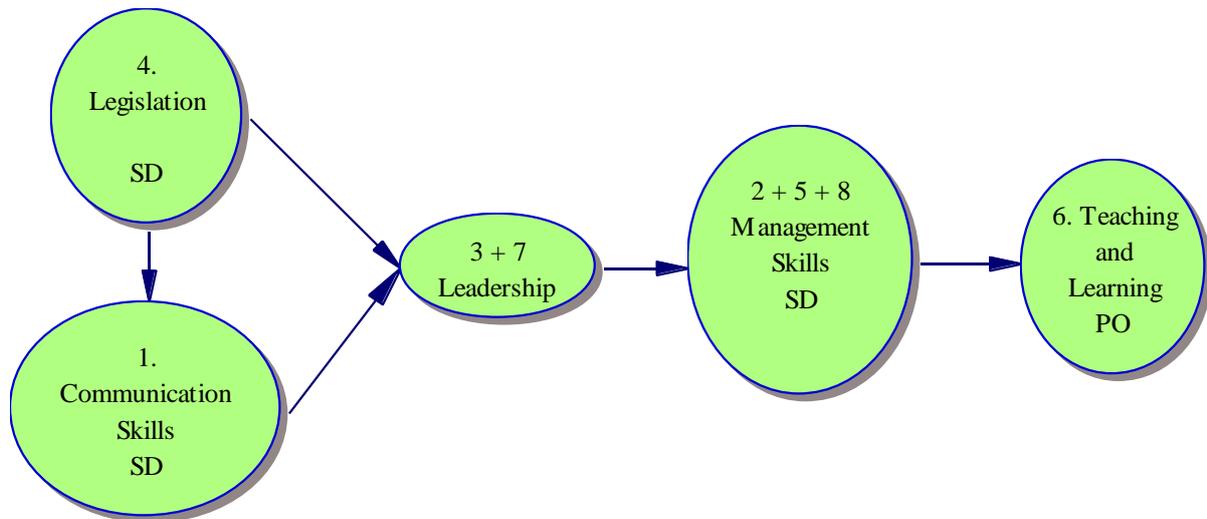
Figure 5.15   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of a Systems Influence Diagram (Group 1b)

In this version, the similarity to the SID produced by Group 1(a) can be seen. A feedback loop is formed with Legislation, Communication and Leadership all influencing one another. They ultimately influence Management Skills and all have an indirect influence on Teaching and Learning.

In all four SIDs, the affinities driving the system are similar and the affinities which are the outcomes of the system are also similar. These SIDs also support the interpretation of the affinity comparison in 5.3.1.

After the zooming-out exercise, it can now be seen that collapsing all four SIDs into the composite focus group interview SID can be justified (see Figure 5.8) and that this SID was confirmed as being correct during the individual interviews. Three out of the four SIDs either chose Legislation as the primary driver or Legislation formed part of a feedback loop in the secondary driver zone together with Communication and Leadership Skills, driving the system.   Group 2(a) had the most complicated feedback loop in which Legislation, Communication and Leadership Skills was situated, including two other affinities, Strategic Planning and Business Skills, in a second feedback loop.   In essence, therefore, all participants shared the belief that Legislation was the driver in the system, either in a primary or a secondary role. This view was verified by the individual interviews. Three of the four groups chose Management Skills as their primary outcome.   Only Group 1(b) chose Teaching and Learning as their primary outcome. For this group, Management Skills had a

direct influence on Teaching and Learning. All the other affinities for all four groups were arranged in more or less the same indirect order of influence on the primary outcome.

The final focus group interview composite SID is illustrated in Figure 5.16.
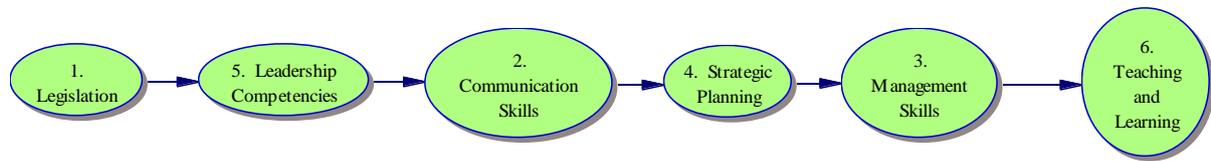
Figure 5.16   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of the composite individual interview Systems Influence Diagram

The final interview composite SID conforms to the group view and confirms the results of the IQA which can be seen in Figure 5.17.
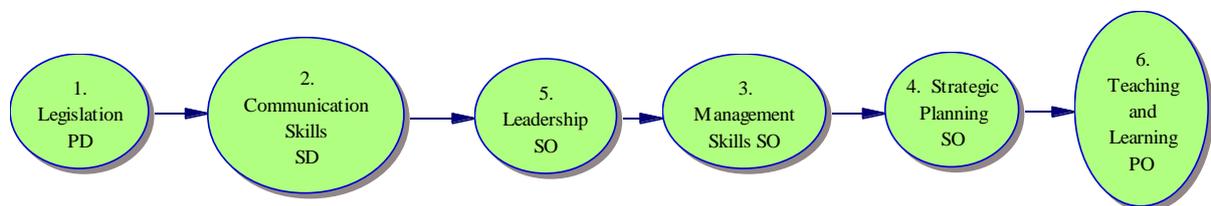
Figure 5.17   Zoomed-out or 'telephoto view' of the composite interview Systems Influence Diagram

Even though the order in which the affinities have been arranged in the secondary driver and outcome positions differ, both mindmaps are linear and topologically similar, both have Legislation as their primary driver and Teaching and Learning as their primary outcome. The order in which the other affinities differ is minimal, with Affinities 2 and 5 (Communication Skills and Leadership) having changed places in the driver zone and Affinities 3 and 4 (Management Skills and Strategic Planning) having changed places in the outcome zone. Legislation still drives the system, influencing Teaching and Learning, the outcome of the system, through the mediation of Communication Skills, Leadership, Management and Strategic planning. These six affinities have thus been confirmed as being elements of the proposed curriculum framework for leadership development of TVET college leaders.

In the next section, the following aspects of activity theory are examined to interpret the findings further: the TVET college as an activity system, the multivoicedness and historicity of the TVET college system, its contradictions and the possible expansive transformation of the system.

5.3.3 Examining the system through the cultural historical activity theory lens

It is Northcutt's (2014) view that activity theory is consistent with IQA since IQA, like activity theory, is also concerned with the dynamics of formal organisations. Activity theory is concerned with human practices as developmental processes at the individual and the social level, the rules that mediate the interaction of the community and the individual and how the division of labour interacts with these rules. IQA could be seen as 'a conceptual subset of activity theory since activity theory applies the constructs of phenomenology and systems thinking to an organisation whereas IQA is a methodology for understanding how a constituency draws meaning from a phenomenon' (Northcutt, 2014) and for describing the important dimensions of that phenomenon within an organisation, in this case, the TVET college. IQA's notion of constituency addresses the important organisational characteristics of community, rules and division of labour in that the Group 1 constituency is tasked with leading the college at the executive level and the Group 2 constituency is more involved at the operational, campus or head of division level. In the different ways in which each constituency has perceived the affinities and their relationships, it is evident that they each bring their own perspectives and roles to the study.

By examining the colleges and the challenges they face through an activity theory lens, provided me with more clarity. As has been described in Chapter 3, an activity system is anything that is bounded, like a family, a workplace or a learning institution. A learning institution as an activity system was illustrated in Figure 3.5 as a TVET college. It is useful to view the college in this way as it has a history and there are commonly understood rules that have come a long way. Respondent 4 noted that working at a college was 'a life cycle for an FET – it starts, ends, but [is] ever-changing. It's changed three times in 10 years. The life cycle is influenced by legislation and it ends with teaching and learning. We must keep abreast or lose it.' Legislation initially showed the way and then, legislation changed and there was a new set of rules and the leader had to start finding the way all over again. There is constant construction, a renegotiation within the activity system as the object keeps moving and changing, allowing a new transformed activity system to take the place of the old one. The one activity system is therefore interlinked with another. Tasks are reassigned and re-divided, rules are often bent to accommodate new circumstances (this is often the first sign of the system changing) and there is movement between the nodes of the activity. What may start out as the object, may soon be transformed into an outcome which could then even be used as a tool, or perhaps, later, a rule (Edwards, 2011). An activity system allows us to look at an old system like the pre-millennium technical college that has changed to become something new, first an FET college, and now a TVET college, requiring a new

set of tools. Activity theory allows us to look at the configuration of the different aspects of a system in a systematic and systemic way. Activity theory is about the development of common knowledge and how to use it to bring about organisational change. This point is particularly pertinent for this study since the need for leading change, as acknowledged by the respondents, is the crux of the matter.

In this study it is contended that common knowledge needs to be developed through customised leadership development. Respondent 1 saw the curriculum framework for leadership development of a TVET college leader as understanding the various pieces of a puzzle: 'So at the end, it must look like a puzzle, you know, how the pieces fit into each other but at the end you see the picture, what it should be.' It is believed that common knowledge could lead to greater understanding of the individual and institutional transformation that should take place.

New demands for expertise in a changing world means that people are no longer engaged in singular tasks but are involved in multiple simultaneous tasks. It is expected of today's leader of a TVET college to be able to cross boundaries and to know something about other areas of management such as finance and HR. Respondent 6 felt that '[leaders] need to know a little bit about the different areas'. This entails crossing the boundary from one community of practice to another in the same activity or from one activity system into another, a concept which Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young (2008:3) call 'polycontextuality', which is also known as boundary-crossing or border-crossing. As mentioned previously, the participants felt that the leaders should have general knowledge about all the support functions that take place in the TVET college as well as of teaching and learning, which is the core business of the college. Leaders will thus be continuously crossing boundaries into a new form of expertise. Respondent 3 recognised the fact that boundary-crossing formed part of a TVET college leader's work and suggested that '[y]ou don't have to be an expert in everything to be a leader but then at least surround you with the people who are the experts and not feel threatened by those people and push them away because they know more than you'. Legislation has moved the TVET college from the FET sector which it had shared with schools, to higher education, where the leaders of these colleges are expected to interact with colleagues at universities and universities of technology. This interaction is also a form of boundary-crossing. A curriculum framework should assist the leader in interacting in this new environment. It is in this space that learning will take place by means of someone whose knowledge is more advanced than theirs in a theoretical or a practical situation: the 'more knowledgeable other' (Bitzer, 2004:47). The college leader will eventually be able to construct meaning on his or her own

by applying acquired knowledge to something more abstract in the workplace (Garraway, 2011).

Another form of boundary-crossing for the TVET college leader would be the interaction with potential employers in industry in order find practical workplace opportunities for staff and students. Respondent 5 contended that 'you have to make sure that you encourage collaboration with industry to ensure that what you're producing is actually what's wanted out there'. Respondent 9 supported this by saying, 'You are basically the person who must go out and get partnerships from people in business and industry.' The leader of a TVET college therefore needs to be able to operate in different contexts. In Chapter 2, it was mentioned that Edwards (2011) pointed out that as people move from one area of expertise to another, they acknowledge the expertise that already exists but also bring their own expertise or, what she calls 'relational expertise' (Edwards, 2011:33) to the working environment. The leader thus learns to manage expertise rather than experts. As Respondent 7 acknowledged, 'You have to have the skill of negotiating'.

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Engeström (Engeström, 1999b:6; Warmington *et al.*, 2004; Daniels, 2008) identified five principles which are fundamental to activity theory:

1. The object-orientated, artefact-mediated collective **activity system** is the primary unit of analysis in cultural-historical studies of human conduct.
2. **Multivoicedness** of participants with their various points of view depending on the community involved is the chief source of movement and change in an activity system. This includes the rules and conventions that bind them, the division of labour that directs their actions and the artefacts that they use, with diverse histories and different traditions and interests.
3. **Historicity** shows that activity systems are not static but change or transform over time. Problems or challenges can only be understood in terms of the history that has shaped them.
4. Inner **contradictions** bring about change and development. (These are not problems and conflicts but are the result of the many voices of the participants in the system, led by their different perspectives.)
5. Activity systems make **expansive transformation** possible over time. As contradictions increase, individuals begin to question them and may move away from the established norms. This may trigger a collective attempt to change the system.

An interpretation of some of the data described and analysed in this chapter is explored further in the light of these five principles.

5.3.3.1 The technical and vocational education and training college as an activity system

Activity is a unit of analysis for explaining learning and development. It can be used to analyse work and adult learning (Engeström, 1999a). There are six components in an activity system but the activity needs to be examined as a whole as its individual parts cannot account for the psychological structure of a person's performance on his or her own. The components are (1) the subject who is the leader of the TVET college or the leader as learner of this study, (2) the object (the TVET college) which motivates the activity, (3) the tools (the curriculum framework) that are used by the subject in the activity and devised according to the IQA exercise, (4) the diverse community involved with the activity, (5) a division of labour that defines the roles that the community play in the activity and the (6) rules that determine that interaction. This has already been illustrated in Figure 3.5.

The relationships among the six components in the triangle are not direct, but are always mediated by the tools or artefacts through which interaction with the world takes place. Mediation is regarded as important in activity theory. In this study, the mediating instrument is the proposed curriculum framework. Respondent 1 suggested, 'They [TVET college leaders] need to understand the holistic picture of what they will be trained for and, secondly, how that integrates with each other.' As was explained in Chapter 2, Vygotsky (1981) saw mediation as being developmental. His focus was on how cultural tools and artefacts could be used to bring about qualitative transformation. The purpose of this study was to develop a curriculum framework as a tool or artefact that can be used to bring about qualitative transformation in the TVET college sector as will be seen in Chapter 6.

5.3.3.2 Multivoicedness of the technical and vocational education and training activity system

As mentioned in 5.3.3.1, activity theory situates human practice in context with the focus on interactions that happen within the activity. The activity forms part of a collective work process. By understanding the dialogues, the multiple perspectives, the voices and the networks of interacting activity systems one can conceptually analyse the system. The study of an activity system suggests a collective, multivoiced collaboration which has its origins in the past, experiences the present and looks into the future; in other words, in its historicity which is discussed further below.

Not everyone reacts to change in the same way since there are many different perspectives and voices in the system. Participants referred to internal and external stakeholders, each with their own perspectives, needs and interests. Respondent 7 noted that not all leaders 'know the dynamics and they don't understand the influence of the different stakeholders –

how to manage them' in the sector. Respondent 4 pointed out, 'We as colleges are responsible to parents and students and companies and other stakeholders.' According to Respondent 6, 'You need to know how to deal with your internal stakeholders as well as your external stakeholders. We deal with different stakeholders at different events.' Respondent 8 agreed: '[With communication skills] most important of all is to identify the different stakeholders – internal [and] external stakeholders. Who are they, what is it that you want to communicate, how and how often will you communicate?'

More than one respondent referred to the trade unions who appeared to know more than the college leaders and who were causing disruptions on the campuses. Respondent 3 contended, 'Unions are obviously involved in the deliberations because their people who sit in the chamber or wherever they decide these things, they communicate down to the provinces, provinces communicate down to their members, but from our side, we don't get it … we have got unions here that are threatening me … the unions just run riot.' Respondent 8 concurred: 'Unions are one of the biggest role players at this stage and it might be one of the biggest reasons why we have tension within it [the college].' This view was also supported by Respondent 10, 'It's sad that the college management is significantly influenced by the unions to the degree that people say that the unions are managing this institution.'

Each stakeholder group has its own perspectives which contribute towards the multivoicedness of the system. It is important for leaders of the colleges to recognise the different voices in order to gain support or consensus. Multivoicedness would entail an understanding of the need for boundary-crossing.

One way in which to galvanise support from the external stakeholders was to 'involve the stakeholders and the community itself, and what's happening in your area specifically,' according to Respondent 5. To get support from internal stakeholders means including staff in planning and decision-making, making a team effort. Mention was also made of the leaders surrounding themselves with experts. Respondent 3 commented, '[At]t least surround [yourself] with the people who are the experts and not feel threatened by those people and push them away because they know more than you.' Respondent 5 suggested using different leadership styles which complement that of the principal, including 'people that have other types of leadership styles, in terms of maybe not people-orientated but task-orientated so that one understand one another. Make sure that you infuse the team with other people that think otherwise.' Respondent 7 suggested, 'You want to also be transparent; also consultative. To me, those are the styles that you have to bring in.' Respondent 2 added, 'We use a mixture of all these styles and it's necessary to make use of a variety because you cannot achieve anything unless if you are going to stick with one

style, then the colleges will crumble.' It was also mentioned that if the leader is a visionary who motivates his or her staff by communicating this vision, the followers are inclined to be supportive, especially if they look up to the leader. Respondent 10 said, 'A manager in an institution in 2013 and beyond has to be a visionary manager.' This vision would have to be shared with the various stakeholders to get buy-in.

5.3.3.3   Historicity and the technical and vocational education and training college

All activity systems have diverse histories. The history of the TVET college sector has been discussed in 1.5. An activity system therefore contains layers of history imprinted on all the different elements that make up the system. In Chapter 1, the historical development of the colleges was described, highlighting the change the sectors have undergone with each successive minister of education. The change in focus occurred on a four-yearly basis over 20 years, as highlighted by Respondent 6's comment that '[i]t's changed three times in ten years'. Learning is thus influenced by the history and the culture of its participants. It is evident from the research that the leaders of the technical colleges that became the FET colleges and then the TVET colleges need to recognise who they are, where they came from and where they have to go. Activity theory focuses on current practice in society and learning and development in the vocational sector, all of which are linked to change. A system is bound to change in time. The danger is when the external conditions have changed and the system's rules and tools become outmoded such as continuing to use an autocratic style of leadership and perpetuating the old racial and gender discrimination in HR practices of the TVET colleges of the past. This was highlighted by the participants who pointed out that the rules of engagement with DHET versus regional education departments had blurred, causing a breakdown in communication. It was also pointed out that the ways in which teaching and learning were taking place had become outmoded. Activity is embedded in and structured by a social-cultural-historical context as people's actions occur in the context of the activities of other people and by implication also in their own and professional lives.

Through IQA, the participants identified six main affinities or mediating tools that would be useful in a custom-designed curriculum framework, namely Legislation, Communication Skills, Management Skills, Strategic Planning, Leadership and Teaching and Learning. The only two fixed positions on the list were Legislation as the driver of the system and Teaching and Learning as the outcome of the system. The selection of these affinities or artefacts was influenced by the participants' experiences in the sector which they had internalised in the context of their own lives, as well as in the context of the circumstances in which they were working and learning. The relationships among the affinities created the mindmaps

which represent the individual and group realities, situating the major source of change as legislation, the primary driver of the system. The affinities and the mindmaps are visual representations of how these leaders perceive this system.

5.3.3.4 Contradictions in the technical and vocational education and training college system

Engeström (1999b) uses contradictions to explain change in an activity system. A contradiction must not be confused with conflict but be examined as a tension between the components of the activity system. Contradictions, which are common in social interactions, accumulate structurally over time within and between the systems. All the respondents noted that over the years, the situation at TVET colleges had changed dramatically. Respondent 4 said, 'We need to get involved to say things are not done in the old way anymore. It's changed.'

Changes in legislation have been the major source of change. Legislation, which is a change initiative in educational policies, has created major contradictions over the years. As participants stated, as soon as the sector has become used to one major form of change, the sector has had to adapt to new changes once again. This situation refers to Respondent 4's quotation above: 'It's changed three times in ten years.' The FET Act alone has been changed with far-reaching effects three times since 1998 (Act 99 of 1998, Act 16 of 2006 and the Amendment Act 3 of 2012) with a number of government gazettes in between making further changes. There has also been other relevant legislation such as the NQF Act (RSA, 2008) as well as the various amendments to the original Skills Development Act (RSA, 2011). Labour laws and policy requirements such as those revised in the King III report on corporate governance in South Africa (RSA, 2012) have also had an influence on how the sector has been expected to perform.

The challenges facing TVET college leaders can be seen as contradictions and it is a major challenge for leaders to motivate all the roleplayers to share a vision of a changed and transformed college since not everyone experiences change in the same way. Innovation and transformation are often the result of contradictions. One of the many challenges facing these leaders is to keep pace with change in the teaching and learning environment. Leaders have acknowledged that they need to keep up to date with technological developments since their students have changed and no longer respond to outdated modes of acquiring knowledge. Most of these leaders come from a teaching background and lack the necessary skills to run their colleges more effectively as required by legislation. It is also a logistical challenge to ensure that staff and students are exposed to industry, that the curriculum meets the needs of industry and that the students are prepared for employability.

Contradictions need to be confronted in order for new developments to take place through expansive learning.

The challenges and issues in the TVET college sector and how they are going to be addressed, and by when, have not been given the same acknowledgement as has been given to other learning institutions. This lack of direction was discussed in greater detail in 1.5 where it was pointed out that in the White Paper (RSA, 2014), similar challenges and issues facing TVET colleges had been recognised at universities and ways in which these would be addressed had been mentioned, while colleges' challenges and issues were alluded to but no mention was made as to how they would be addressed. TVET college leaders had been forced to become innovative in trying to deal with these issues themselves, acknowledging that leaders with new skills were needed or the colleges would not survive. Respondent 3 suggested, 'We need a person who can really be business wise otherwise we are not going to survive, which brings us back again to also the financial skills and also the HR skills, but not so much the pyramid style.' Respondent 6 felt that 'leadership is a balancing act of harmonising your day-to-day business so that everybody is happy with what you are doing at the end of the day'. Respondent 5 added, 'We are measured on our pass rates and there will be a claw back mechanism if we do not comply with the minimum standards so it will have an impact on the financial aspects of the college. If it has an impact on the financials, it could have an impact on employment because people will be retrenched and you can't expand. So, you need to look after your core business. People are not [always] knowledgeable about the core business itself or they lose touch with it and I think it is good to brush up on that.' Leaders appear to have accepted that the issues have become their problem and that there would be no assistance forthcoming from the employer.

There is thus a contradiction between what is expected from government and the available resources with which colleges are expected to achieve this. This contradiction may explain why only one out of the four focus groups had recognised Teaching and Learning as an affinity. While the White Paper (RSA, 2014) is vocal about what the colleges should do, it is fairly silent on how this can be achieved. The need to focus on addressing so many new issues and challenges in operational matters possibly explains why Teaching and Learning was not recognised as being a core affinity by all participants but the focus had rather been on financial and resource management. Respondent 3 noted, 'You come with those ideas, but then you're bogged down by legislation.' In order to be compliant, college leaders first needed to ensure that they were able to run the colleges (like businesses, as more than one participant suggested) before they could consider providing the type of education and training that was expected of them. Respondent 3 added that 'we really need that dynamic, business leadership [with a] more modern style'. Leaders at these colleges are so busy

keeping an eye on the balance sheet and on other operational pressures, that they are unable to concentrate their efforts on improving teaching and learning. Yet, they all recognise that teaching and learning is their core business. Leaders need to recognise that their efforts should primarily be on teaching and learning.

Trying to cope with so many diverse aspects of running a TVET college, a leader may be enticed to ask questions that have to be asked, resulting in a deliberate effort to change in a collaborative and innovative way. Any instance of innovation, then, produces further contradictions that could become a major source of change and development. Innovation is thus a continuous process which results in expansive learning. Participants learn to respond in increasingly innovative ways which means that the learners as leaders need to change their attitudes and practices to adapt to changing conditions.

5.3.3.5   The technical and vocational education and training college and expansive learning

Transformation and change have been highlighted as two major themes in the legislative requirements of TVET college leaders and they themselves acknowledge this. However, if leaders were successfully implementing what was required of them, the colleges would not be described as largely dysfunctional in the White Paper (RSA, 2014). Engeström (1999b) suggests that when change becomes difficult where people cannot let go of the past and accept the future (the historicity principle discussed above) development can only take place once the old has been rejected. In other words, the object must change. It is evident that the old technical college system, embedded in the old ways of operating, needs to make place for the new, transformed TVET college.

Transformation cannot only be the responsibility of an individual, but must take place collectively. Only once contradictions or inconsistencies between the old object and the demands of the revised object have been acknowledged, can the implications of change be recognised. In this study, the TVET college leaders all acknowledged that legislation has changed in the past 20 years, forcing the colleges to bring about change. This has caused leaders to re-examine the structures at the colleges. The organograms have changed and leaders have ensured that process owners have been appointed to drive the various support functions of the colleges. Participants of this study have also recognised the need for leaders to have some knowledge of all these support functions in order for them to make decisions. As Respondent 10 commented, 'We need to put processes in place.' The participants also noted that it is strange that they had lost their focus on teaching and learning while they ensured that the colleges transform since it can no longer be a case of 'business as usual', according to Respondent 6. Respondent 5 admitted that 'people lost a

little bit of touch on that because it's more at the level of the educators and not at the level of the managers'. They realised that they themselves would need to transform if they are concerned with improving and transforming practice. The proposed curriculum framework may be the mediating tool which could motivate this internal and external transformation.

5.4   CONCLUSION

Northcutt and McCoy (2004:298) state that results and implications are 'a distinction without a difference'. This chapter focused on a description, analysis and interpretation of the results or findings generated by this IQA study. The affinities generated by the focus group interviews of each of the two constituencies were described and a composite list of affinities was created for each of the two groups. These composites were shared with the respondents in the individual interviews, who verified the group reality by explaining how they perceived the meanings of the affinities in their own words. These meanings or axial codes were thus described in the words of the participants. The relationships among the affinities were then described, also by using the words of the participants. A composite list of affinities for both groups could subsequently be compiled. Thereafter, the SIDs of the four focus group interviews were discussed and compared. Composites of the affinities were created of the focus group interviews as well as of the individual interviews, and these composites were compared.

Once the final phase or the results phase of IQA had been completed, some of the findings were examined through an activity theory lens, where it was acknowledged that the planned curriculum framework could be beneficial to leaders who needed the necessary tools to lead the TVET colleges in future.

The question that Northcutt and McCoy (2004:298) pose: '*What is this study good for*?' will be answered in Chapter 6 when the implications of this study will be examined. Relevant aspects of other chapters in this study, such as leadership theory and activity theory, will be linked to the discussion with the purpose of proposing a curriculum framework for the development of TVET college leaders which will be illustrated in 6.3.3. This will answer the research question posed in Chapter 1, namely: *What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment?*

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1   CONCLUSIONS

In Chapter 1, new legislation pertaining to South African public TVET colleges (RSA, 2014) in which the colleges had become the main focus of the post-school higher education and training sector was discussed. The colleges were described as being largely dysfunctional and were expected to change and transform in the new social and economic environment of South Africa. As newcomers to the higher education system, the TVET colleges were expected to adapt in order to become a part of this system. Internationally, the leaders of similar colleges in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector are able to enrol for custom-designed, sector-specific training programmes, as described in Chapter 2, that prepare them for challenges that are seemingly similar throughout the world in the sector. By addressing the challenges and the contradictions that arise from these challenges, through expansive learning, leaders are able to find innovative solutions.

In Chapters 1 and 2, the first subsidiary question, namely the current status of leadership development in the TVET sector in South Africa, was answered. In South Africa, as was mentioned in 2.6.5, besides programmes in various operational fields being offered on an ad hoc basis and not forming part of a longer strategic developmental goal or strategy at a policy level, even though the need has been recognised, there are no custom-designed, contextualised qualifications for leadership development of TVET college leaders. This used to be the case in other countries too, but the status of leadership development in these countries has since become a priority (Callan *et al.*, 2007; Foley & Conole, 2004; Falk, 2003). The purpose of this study was thus to address this gap by developing a curriculum framework for leadership development of present and future public TVET college leaders.

In Chapter 2 and 5, the second subsidiary question, namely what kind of TVET college leader is needed to meet the challenges and demands of the future of the sector, was answered. Leadership theory was explored in an attempt to find a leadership model or framework that would be suitable for leadership development of TVET college leaders. The model that was found to be ideally suitable was a combination of a blended type of leadership which Collinson and Collinson (2009:365) describe as a combination of both heroic and post-heroic characteristics of leadership, which includes transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass *et al.,* 1987*;* Bass & Riggio, 2006). They report that FE

employees in the UK often value practices that combine these elements. Change and transformation has become a recurrent theme and TVET college leaders are under pressure to respond to the requirements of legislation in order to transform the colleges in the sector into the type of colleges required by the country.

There is also evidence to show that a more inclusive, shared or distributed form of leadership model (MacFarlane, 2014) is preferable, where teamwork and the recognition of the value of followers were recognised. This is what Falk (2003:193) calls 'an emerging theory of enabling leadership', also referred to as participative, distributive, shared or democratic leadership. The move should thus be away from the responsibility of leadership falling on the individual, but allowing different people to take the lead at different times (Yukl, 2010). Power is therefore shared rather than the sharing of operational responsibilities (Gleeson & Knights, 2008).

Even though respondents in this survey indicated that they perceived the leader's role as a visionary who gave direction to the organisation, by communicating this vision to get the staff on board, they preferred a participative, collaborative and a shared style of leadership to develop strategies and plans to achieve these goals. Eddy (2010) and Nevarez *et al.* (2013) both support the idea of a shared leadership model. Shared leadership supports the view of Edwards (2011:34) who suggests that 'common knowledge' needs to be developed which is shared and which could be used to bring about organisational change.

The third subsidiary question, namely what competencies (including knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes) will be needed by TVET college leaders to engage meaningfully in the new DHET environment, was partly answered in Chapter 2, when the capabilities required by leaders in the vocational sector were explored. The rest of the question was answered when the data obtained from the participants, using the IQA methodology, were analysed and described in Chapter 5. These competencies are listed under the affinity, Leadership, in Table 6.1.

The proposed curriculum framework for leadership development of TVET leaders in South Africa as determined by the participants themselves and described and analysed in Chapter 5, is proposed and discussed in 6.3.3 below. The curriculum framework is based on Steketee *et al.*'s (2013) integrated model for curriculum development. Thus, in the context of this study, the research question, *What could constitute a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment?* has been answered.

A significant finding in this study, based on the data provided and the rigorous process of description, analysis and interpretation that IQA affords, was that both groups of leaders proposed a curriculum framework which would help them to conform to legislation rather than transform teaching and learning at the TVET colleges. Even though the participants acknowledged that teaching and learning were the prime focus of their institutions, their raison d'être, their focus was directed at the operational aspects of the colleges such as finance and HR and not on how to ensure that the appropriate teaching and learning was taking place in the classroom. This may have possible implications for theory, policy and practice, which are discussed below. The way in which this study supports the conceptual framework of activity theory was also explored in Chapter 5 and the implications thereof are discussed further in 6.3.1 below.

6.3   POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

6.3.1   Possible implications for theory

6.3.1.1   Leadership

Government as well as the participants in this study recognise that the only way in which the South African public TVET colleges may be able to transform is through strong and capable leadership. In order to be capable, leaders need to adopt a more shared and distributive form of leadership which has transformational leadership at its core since followers need to be motivated to perform beyond expectations, as proposed by Bass (1985). Everyone in the organisation has the potential of being a leader, not only leaders who have been appointed in that role. 'Everyone is the leader' suggests a more integrated leadership model (MacFarlane, 2014:3).

With shared or distributed leadership, those who are led receive more consideration. It requires a flatter organogram rather than a hierarchical one. Teams also start becoming important (Van Wart, 2011; Eddy, 2010). As has been pointed out in Chapter 2, the efficacy of hierarchies where senior managers are separated from middle managers and classroom practitioners has been questioned and it has been suggested that a more integrated or distributed type of leadership would be more suitable in VET institutions (Muijs *et al.*, 2006). Gittens (2008) agrees that there is a critical need to explicitly develop this type of leader but it remains a challenge for leaders to create a culture of shared leadership.

Without leadership development, capable leaders will remain the ideal and will not become the reality. Present and future leaders in the South African public TVET colleges have provided the elements of a curriculum framework. By using these elements or affinities as the building blocks of a custom-designed leadership curriculum, the needs of the sector

could be met. The type of leadership explored in Chapter 2 and re-visited in 6.1 remains the ideal and should become the prime objective of the curriculum framework model.

6.3.1.2   Activity theory

Activity theory recognises that people are shaped through culture and their history. This is discussed in 5.3.3.3.   In order for people to change or to be agents of change, transformation has to take place at the individual level first. It is helpful to view the TVET college as an activity system with a history and commonly understood rules that have developed over time, changing to accommodate new legislation. The leader of a TVET college has had to adapt to change as the object keeps moving and changing, with a new activity system replacing the old one. With every change, tasks may have to be re-divided and reassigned. The activity system allows one to examine an old system which requires new tools to develop into a new system. Activity theory is about developing common knowledge to bring about organisational change. This common knowledge is embedded in the curriculum framework proposed in this study. The way in which common knowledge can be developed, has been discussed in detail in 3.5.5.5.

Contradictions are one of the five principles as suggested by Engeström's version of activity theory (see 5.3.3.4).   Each stakeholder in the activity system has his or her own perspectives which they bring to the system and most stakeholders recognise the need for change. The contradictions that arise allow leaders to question whether what they are doing is right in terms of transforming their colleges and providing innovative solutions. Activity systems make expansive transformation possible.

Having framed the TVET college as an activity system, the objective of the curriculum framework is that TVET college leaders, the subjects of the activity system, need to be transformed through learning and new knowledge suggested by tools provided by the curriculum framework. This will ensure that the leaders see things differently and will, together with and through the interaction with their staff, want to do things differently to bring about a transformed TVET college as envisaged by the new White Paper (RSA, 2014).

6.3.2   Possible implications for policy

An overview of the White Paper (RSA, 2014) for a legislative position on teaching and learning yielded little on how this aspect could be improved in the post-school system at TVET colleges. In the executive summary, a key objective is to strengthen colleges which would include 'improving TVET colleges' management and governance, developing the quality of teaching and learning, increasing their responsiveness to local labour markets, improving student support services and developing their infrastructure' (RSA, 2014:xii).

However, even though teaching and learning is a key objective, it is not clear how quality teaching and learning will be achieved.

The quality of education offered and consequently the success of the students were the most important success indicators of a college. Success required a 'well-educated, capable and professional teaching staff' (RSA, 2014:16). The White Paper (RSA, 2014) acknowledges that the number of lecturers should keep up with expanding student enrolments as has been legislated, but that classrooms should not be over-full as this would 'compromise the quality of instruction' (RSA, 2014:16). There should also be enough lecturers to cover all the disciplines at the college. Even though this would be an ideal situation, it is not clear how this will be accomplished with limited resources in an apparently dysfunctional sector. The initial Green Paper noted that 'despite the advances made since the advent of democracy, the education system continues to replicate the divisions of the past' (RSA, 2014:2), which could be seen in the lack of infrastructure, teaching facilities and staffing at TVET institutions, especially in rural areas of the former Bantustans.

According to the White Paper (RSA, 2014), regulations for minimum qualifications for vocational educators in colleges have already been developed, but nothing has been said about minimum qualifications for leaders of the public TVET colleges. Even though capacity-building efforts of lecturers have been recognised – such as improving their teaching skills, identifying developmental needs, developing programmes to address the issue of qualifications and capabilities and prioritising workplace experience – the only mention of developing staff at a management level is to make opportunities for lecturers to be trained as managers and to move into other functional areas available. Incentives will also be made available to lecturers in the system to specialise in subject areas. The legislation (regulations) for TVET college lecturer qualifications are available, but little else appears to be available besides a programme that has been started to improve the infrastructure at the colleges since the facilities and equipment that they need must be available in order for lecturers to provide 'the type of education that is expected of them' especially with regard to the practical training required by the curricula (RSA, 2014:17).

The new South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) will have certain responsibilities phased in over time, and one of these would be to initiate research on the TVET colleges, community colleges and the college system, focusing on 'applied research and innovation to ensure excellence in teaching and learning' (RSA, 2014:26). The intention to improve the teaching and learning situation at TVET colleges is thus being considered but it is not clear how or when this is going to be implemented. On the other hand, the White Paper (2014) is much clearer about recognising

the challenges facing the university system and how some of these issues will be addressed. The challenges that are listed include publication pressures, corporatisation of universities, greater administrative responsibilities, resources constraints, pressure to bring in outside funding growth and use of technology to support academic work and the pressures of teaching in a context of low throughput rates. It is also acknowledged that these issues need to be 'properly understood when planning for changes to university staffing in South Africa' (RSA, 2014:36). The White Paper (2014) states that a plan to address 'the future staffing of South African universities will be developed without delay' and then lists the specific areas that will be focused on. In contrast, even though the focus is on vocational education and specifically the public TVET colleges that have been singled out, there is no official organogram at the colleges as yet (mentioned by Respondent 3 line 133, Respondent 5: line 123 and Respondent 8: line 130 of the transcriptions during the interviews). The TVET college sector has also not been given the same acknowledgement of the challenges that they face or how these challenges are going to be addressed and by when.

This possibly explains why teaching and learning was not recognised as being a core affinity but the focus had rather been on financial and resource management. In order to be compliant, college leaders first need to ensure that they are able to run the colleges before they can consider providing the type of education and training that is expected of them. Leaders at these colleges are so busy keeping an eye on the balance sheet and on other operational pressures that they are unable to concentrate their efforts on improving teaching and learning. Therefore, a possible implication for policy is to provide answers to some of these issues.

As pointed out in 2.5, another policy issue would be that leadership development should become a deliberate and planned activity which is driven by strategic and organisational objectives. It should form part of a longer strategic developmental goal or strategy at policy level (Callan *et al.,* 2007; Foley & Conole, 2004: Falk, 20303). In the first place, leadership development should become an investment (Callan *et al.*, 2007) to address the challenges of succession planning. In the second place, leadership development should be goal-driven to ensure that there are career paths for leaders, offering specific training programmes aimed at developing leaders at every level. Possible guidelines and standards should be developed for these programmes to ensure quality, coherence and curricular quality (Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2014). Thirdly, the necessary skills and capabilities required by leaders in TVET colleges should be identified continuously to ensure that the programmes developed remain current and relevant and keep pace with constant change (Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2014; Coates *et al.*, 2013). Leadership development programmes should also be guided by what the participants think they need (Gentry *et al.*, 2014).

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6.3.3   Possible implications for practice

From the data, it is evident that the six topics listed in Table 6.1 need to be covered in the curriculum framework for leadership development of TVET college leaders, as described by the participants. IQA requires that the relationships between pairs of affinities are examined to determine the perceived causes and perceived effects of the system. Figure 5.17 illustrated the mindmap or SID that was generated in this study. Legislation was identified as the main driver of the system, having a direct or indirect influence on the other elements or affinities, namely communication, leadership, management skills and strategic planning. The primary outcome of the system was teaching and learning. The order in which the other affinities present themselves in the system are not fixed except that communication skills was indicated as being a secondary driver while leadership, management and strategic planning were secondary outcomes, according to the topology of the system.   The curriculum framework suggested by the participants thus reflected the affinities or the topics of the curriculum in this manner, with legislation driving the system by influencing the other affinities directly or indirectly towards meeting the primary outcome, teaching and learning.

Table 6.1   Topics to be covered in the curriculum framework

NUMBER	TOPIC	CONTENT should include:
1	Legislation	• Understanding and interpreting relevant legislation (including skills development) • Understanding of sector and the political context • Corporate governance (Terms of reference for Council Board and King III report) • Policy formulation, development and implementation • Internal auditing and risk management
2	Communication Skills	• Writing skills • Reporting and report writing • Presentation and speaking skills • Meeting skills • Research skills and knowledge management • Networking skills • People skills (including ability to put people at ease, share college policies with staff) • Share information with role players (including teamwork) • Know your clients • Problem solver • Computer literate • Conflict resolution

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NUMBER	TOPIC	CONTENT should include:
3	Management Skills	• Financial management (budgeting) • HR management (HR skills, mentoring and coaching, staff relational management, staff development, labour relations, disciplinary procedures) • Performance management (monitoring and appraisal) • Industrial relations (networking, partnerships and linkages, community and industry engagement) • Monitoring and evaluation • Macro-management skills • Operational management (infrastructural development, utilisation and maintenance) • Project management • Contract management • Change management • Diversity management (cultural awareness) • MIS knowledge (understanding), generation and management • Quality Management (quality auditing skills) • Generic Management (implementer, adaptable, organiser, record-keeper) • Business management (business skills) • Marketing management (branding, community and industry liaison, customer care) • Innovation management • Diversity management • Conflict management • Crisis management
4	Strategic and Operational Planning	• Development, implementation and management • Understanding the economic drivers • Forecasting, scenario creating and analysing

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NUMBER	TOPIC	CONTENT should include:
5	Leadership	• Knowledge (education, technology, multiple disciplines) • Styles (transformational, innovative, inspirational, goal-orientated, team-player, participatory, lead by example, caretaker, conciliatory, team-builder, pastoral, transformational, gets out of comfort zone, delegative, democratic, self-leadership, how to be a good steward, bottom-up leadership, be a PR for FET) • Skills (management, people skills, promote organisational culture, planning, life skills, survival, negotiation, ability to deliver, time management, decision-making, planning, motivational, problem-solving, stress management, decision-making, organiser, record-keeping, computer literate, counselling, business and negotiation, marketing and public relations, delegation, conflict and crisis management, administrative, advanced computer literacy, how to lead a college like a business, mediation skills, proposal writing, tendering processes) • Attributes (critical thinker, discerning, visionary, strategist, motivator, organised, adaptive, flexible, confident, optimistic, supportive, ethical, innovative, creative, human touch, accepting, influential, resilient, emotional intelligence, innovative, creative, big picture thinker, think out of the box, team player, transparent, thinker, results-driven, motivational, accommodating, know oneself, open-minded, proactive, change agent, confident, assertive, open to ideas, understanding, flexible, trusting, developmental, learner, human touch, realistic, passion for youth development, consistent, caring, caring about the staff's wellbeing, keep your word, passion and love of sector, self-motivational, trusting, empathetic, transparent, open, firm but fair, diplomatic, decisive, brave enough to make unpopular decisions, smart, mature, ability to forgive oneself, open-minded, resilient. implementer, adaptable, objective, analytical, entrepreneurial, multi-tasking, take risks, does things differently, planner for future, goal-orientated, organiser, visionary, hard worker, realistic, sensitive to needs, humble, committed, motivated by passion, assertive, competent, consistent, have emotional intelligence, a teacher and a learner, ethical, moral, value-driven, absolute integrity)
6	Teaching and Learning	• Academic management (education systems, creating a teaching and learning environment, planning, leading, organising, control, managing examinations and assessment, curriculum management, delivery) • Service delivery • Curriculum • Articulation and progression • Monitoring and evaluation • Student support and development • Analysis and interpretation of statistics (MIS, national targets) • Skills development • Lifelong learning

The six main areas to be covered are, therefore, legislation, communication, management and leadership skills, strategic planning and teaching and learning. The bulleted points in the third column in Table 6.1 provide the detail of what should be covered in these categories.

Since the need for change and transformation have been identified as dominant themes in this study, the proposed curriculum could be developed by taking the four dimensions of Steketee *et al.* (2013) as introduced in Chapter 3 (3.4) and as illustrated in Figure 6.1, into account.

Dimension 1
Future orientation of leadership curriculum: seeks to connect TVET leaders' practice needs to new and changing demands on the sector. Curriculum considerations take into account global reforms; how these link to the development of knowledge, competencies, capabilities and practices as well as local delivery conditions.

Dimension 4
Institutional development: focuses on the impact of local structure and culture on the shaping of the curriculum, design and delivery, such as timetabling, logistics and entry requirements. Loops back to D1.

Dimension 2
Knowledge, competencies, capabilities, practices: addresses how changing needs influence expertise, identities and practice, which ultimately influence the training and preparation of future TVET leaders.

Dimension 3
Teaching, learning and assessment: development of appropriate learning, teaching and assessment experiences, all of which have been guided by the messages inherent within D1 and D2.

Graduates

D1

D4

Multidimensional curriculum framework

Practitioners

Educators

D2

D3

Learners

Figure 6.1   Four-dimensional framework for curriculum development (Adapted from Steketee *et al.*, 2013:71)

This framework moves away from the traditional linear model and is an extension of Barnes and Coates' (2005) building blocks for curriculum design (discussed in 3.4), namely knowing, acting and being. Steketee *et al.* (2013:68) add the element 'becoming' and suggest that there is a dynamic interplay among these four elements. The model is multidimensional but integrated. Each of the four dimensions is interlinked and dependent on one another. Steketee *et al.*'s (2013) model also recognises the need to connect with political, social and economic issues, a principle which is supported by activity theory. As noted by Steketee *et al.* (2013:69), 'As each element within the dimensions moves from abstract to more concrete and practical considerations, it articulates the principles of the other elements.'   Each element conveys a message of what matters, namely what knowledge needs to be acquired (the what), what activities are involved (the how) and how these will be measured and evaluated.

Dimension 1 refers to the 'why' (Du Toit, 2011:59), the 'big picture decisions' (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:69). This dimension relates to activity theory where the knowledge and learning are influenced by the 'social, historical, political, economic, professional and educational forces'

(Steketee *et al.*, 2013:69) which are all shaped by the prevailing culture. The leader as learner acquires the necessary knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes needed by the sector as legislated and monitored by professional educational bodies. This dimension also contains a vision for the future and the values embedded in the discipline, which means that the dimension does not sit outside of curriculum but actively shapes and drives it' (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:70). This dimension was addressed in Chapter 3 when knowledge and learning theory was discussed.

In Dimension 2, the 'what' (Du Toit, 2011:59) is addressed, namely the competencies that include knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes of professional practice, expressed in terms of sets of learning outcomes and standards. As suggested by activity theory, learning happens through doing (Engeström *&* Miettinen*,* 1999). This dimension thus focuses on practice in the workplace as well as through reflection on practice. It is in this second dimension that the 'knowing, doing and being' of Barnett and Coate (2005) take place, which means that change is also part of the focus. This dimension was addressed in Chapter 2 when what knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes and aspects of professional practice are required by leaders of VET institutions was discussed. The 'what' was explored further in Chapter 5 when the participants of this study generated the data that informed the curriculum framework. It was also suggested that leadership development needed to target leadership skills required by the sector and various core capabilities were explored.

Dimension 3 is concerned with the 'how' (Du Toit, 2011:59), the actual design of teaching, learning and assessment activities. This dimension is still concerned with the other two dimensions, namely assumptions about the vision of the future reflected in the selection and sequencing of learning activities, the way in which practice is learnt best, the chosen pedagogy, the relationship between theory and practice, and so on. This dimension could also include the way in which the other stakeholders or communities in the activity system of the TVET college are involved in the development of the curriculum. These factors are all embedded in Dimensions 1 and 2. 'The underpinning theories and assumptions about learning and knowledge' need to be examined here (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:70). These theories and assumptions were explored in Chapter 3.

In Chapters 2 and 3, it was pointed out that the needs of the adult learner should be taken into account in the curriculum design (Knowles, 1984). There is a growing dissatisfaction with traditional models of professional development which includes generic courses and one-off in-service training packages delivered by external organisations. Learning also needed to be contextualised and should remain current. The VET learner had shown a preference for 'practice-based and self-managed' (Coates *et al.* (2013:819) forms of learning such as

mentoring, job shadowing and secondments (Muijs *et* al., 2006) rather than formal programmes. Transformative learning principles should apply which included critical thinking and reflection as well as a learner-centred approach (Madsen & Bell, 2012). New forms of curricular organisation in terms of modular programmes as well as different modes of delivery in terms of time and place needed to be considered. Adult learners should also be encouraged to reflect critically.   The curriculum should therefore be 'dynamic and responsive' (Daniels, 2007:316).

Dimension 4 considers how and why curriculum is 'shaped and constrained by local institutional and sectoral circumstances' of two different activity systems because of differing cultural norms, protocols and procedures of the institution where the curriculum is constructed (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:73); in this instance, for example, the university, DHET and the TVET college. This is where curriculum ideas are translated into curriculum practices and cannot be considered to be '"outside" curriculum design' (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:71). The curriculum developer is a powerful force giving shape to what is regarded as possible and desirable within the constraints of factors such as institutional politics, the mix of entry levels and so on. Dimension 4 then has to be configured into Dimension 1 and become part of curriculum design.

When designing the curriculum, the five principles of Engeström's (1999b) activity theory should be taken account as discussed in 5.5.5. By understanding the dynamics of the TVET college system, the leader will gain valuable insight. The leader needs to understand the historicity of the TVET college, where it has come from, its current status and where it needs to go. The intervention of expanded learning sequences or DWR as a methodology could be considered here. The multi-voicedness of the TVET colleges is reflected in the many different perspectives of its community. It is necessary for the leader of a TVET college to know something about the various components operating within the college activity system. This will mean that polycontextuality or boundary crossing will have to take place when these leaders interact with the various roleplayers or stakeholders. Some knowledge of how to manage different levels of expertise so that the emphasis lies on co-operative practices, is necessary. Different perspectives can create contradictions and it is by examining these contradictions that the possibility for real change and transformation lie. Finally, through expansive learning, expansive transformation can take place.

As was pointed out in 3.5.5.3, the process of expansive learning should be understood as 'the construction and resolution of successively evolving tensions or contradictions in a complex system that includes the object(s), the mediating artefacts and the perspectives of the participants' (Engeström, 1999:384). The tensions and contradictions in the system

should help to identify the mediating artefacts which will ensure that leaders of the proposed new TVET colleges are adequately equipped to lead the colleges of the future. The curriculum framework thus needs to respond to the different components or elements and underlying contradictions of the TVET college as an activity system.

Each element in the framework is thus a 'realisation of a particular vision of the future' and enables a curriculum developer to think about the interrelatedness of the dimensions as a 'set of issues entailed in developing curriculum' (Steketee *et al.*, 2013:71). Every competency framework implies a set of assumptions about what it means to be a transformational leader of a TVET college.

Steketee *et al.*'s (2013) four-dimensional curriculum framework model provides a simple template through which a curriculum for TVET college leadership development could be approached in a comprehensive manner which could account for the conceptualisation of a curriculum across multiple levels of activity. The steps are not prescriptive but assist with the identification of priorities, possibilities and constraints. This framework addresses factors that shape the design of the curriculum without accounting for it.

6.4   Possible implications for future research

There are a few possible implications that could be taken into account for further research. An analysis could take place at the policy level to determine to what extent teaching and learning at South Africa's public TVET colleges is the focus. Another possible field of study would be how the leaders at the TVET colleges could be assisted to transform the colleges at an education and training level by getting back the focus of the institutions, namely teaching and learning.

It does not appear as if a great deal of research has taken place to examine the relationship between leadership, leadership development and organisational improvement (Muijs *et* al., 2006). This could be another possible area for future research.

6.5   POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS TO THIS STUDY

A possible limitation to the study could have been caused by participants in the focus group sessions not turning up, but since allowance had been made beforehand not to limit the numbers, this problem could be avoided. Cohen *et al.* (2007) recommend that in qualitative research, the sample should be relatively small. Northcutt and McCoy (2004) recommend that there should be at least 12 to 20 participants in a focus group interview for IQA and this requirement was met with 61 participants in four focus group interviews.

Another possible limitation to the study was the availability of the participants. Even though participants had confirmed their attendance at the focus group interviews in advance, the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training convened a compulsory meeting with a few days' notice to discuss policy issues. This resulted in the participants either cancelling their attendance at the focus group interview at the last minute, or delegating someone else to take their places at the interview, reducing the number of principals or CEOs who could attend. The same applied to the individual interviews. Even though appointments had been made and confirmed more than once well in advance with participants with whom interviews had been arranged, on arrival at the venue, the researcher was informed at two different colleges that the person was unavailable but that a replacement was available. A decision had to be made rather to interview someone else who had not attended the focus group workshop, than not to interview anyone at that college at all. It turned out to be a wise decision as someone outside of the focus group could then verify the data generated by the focus group interview at which he or she had not been present, adding further validity to the findings.

6.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

No custom-designed leadership qualification or training programme exists to capacitate part and present leaders of the TVET colleges in South Africa. In many countries where the VET sectors are more developed, leadership development in this sector is regarded as a priority where specific training programmes and qualifications have been developed. These programmes are amended regularly to remain current as the challenges change in evolving social and historical contexts. This is the gap in knowledge that this study has addressed. This study has provided evidence of the necessity of leadership development of VET college leaders in general and more specifically, of TVET college leaders, present and future. This study investigated the type of leadership that has been regarded as fulfilling the need at other VET colleges in other countries. It has thus made tentative suggestions of what could be regarded as the ideal leader in the TVET college sector. These suggestions have been supported by the participants in this study.

The specific contribution of this study has been to propose a curriculum framework. This curriculum framework is the result of the views of present and future leaders of the South African public TVET colleges. There is still a great deal to be done in developing the curriculum based on the proposed curriculum framework in 6.3.3. It can only be hoped that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) will recognise the urgent need for leadership development of these leaders and that the proposed post-graduate curriculum

framework focused on leadership development for leaders at TVET colleges in the DHET environment will be regarded as a useful point of departure in addressing this real need.

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ADDENDUM 1

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
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RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH (NON-HEALTH)

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

2010

Application to the University of Stellenbosch Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Non-Health) for clearance of new/revised research projects

This application must be typed or written in capitals.

Name: Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms: Ms Catherine Robertson

Position/Professional Status: Full-time student

Affiliation: Research Programme/Institution: Stellenbosch University

Telephone and extension no.   021 808-2294

Fax: 021 808-2270

Email address: car@sun.ac.za

Title of research project: (*Do not use abbreviations*)

The development and verification of a post-graduate curriculum framework for Further Education and Training college leaders

Where will the research be carried out? South Africa

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All the following sections must be completed (Please tick all relevant boxes where applicable)

1. **FUNDING OF THE RESEARCH: How will the research be funded?** Scholarship

2. **PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:** To establish how a post-graduate curriculum framework focused on leadership development could create a career path for future leaders at Further Education and Training colleges in the Department of Higher Education and Training environment.

3. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH (*Please list objectives*)**

   To establish how a career path for Further Education and Training college leaders should look.

   To develop and to verify a post-graduate curriculum framework to equip Further Education and Training leaders to function at the same level of leadership as universities and universities of technology.

4. **SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH (*give a brief outline of the research plan – not more than 200 words*)**

   One of the biggest challenges for Further Education and Training college leaders in South Africa today is to function at the same level of leadership as universities and universities of technology as they now form part of the Department of Higher Education and Training. There is also concern that many of the veteran leaders in South African Further Education and Training colleges will retire shortly. This concern is shared internationally. There are many leadership development programmes in the rest of the world, yet there are no comparable FETC leadership development initiatives in South Africa. The recently published Green Paper (RSA, 2012) prioritises leadership development in the sector. Within three years, special programmes to train existing and new college leaders have to be developed. This study will address this gap.

   Through Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA), an interpretive methodology grounded in systems theory (Northcutt & McCoy 2004) which uses an interpretive approach by means of focus groups and individual interviews with different constituency populations to gain an understanding of an identified problem. A focus group exercise will attempt to establish what challenges face Further Education and Training college leaders and the type of leadership that will be necessary to enable them to achieve the mandate of the Green Paper (RSA: DHET, 2012). Individual interviews will be conducted thereafter. The resultant data will be analysed.

   Please see research proposal

5. NATURE AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESEARCH

5.1 How should the research be characterised *(Please tick ALL appropriate boxes)*

5.1.1 Personal and social information collected directly from participants/subjects	√
5.1.2 Participants/subjects to undergo physical examination	X
5.1.3 Participants/subjects to undergo psychometric testing	X
5.1.4 Identifiable information to be collected about people from available records	X
5.1.5 Anonymous information to be collected from available records	X
5.1.6 Literature, documents or archival material to be collected on individuals/groups	X

5.2 Participant/Subject Information Sheet attached? (*For written and verbal consent*)

YES	
NO	X

5.3 Informed Consent form attached? (For written consent)

YES	
NO	X

5.3.1 If informed consent is not necessary, please state why:

Participants will be asked to participate and assured that their confidentiality and anonymity will be respected.

_____

_____

_____

NB: If a questionnaire, interview schedule or observation schedule/framework for ethnographic study will be used in the research, it must be attached. The application cannot be considered if these documents are not included.

5.4 Will you be using any of the above-mentioned measurement instruments in the research?

YES	✓
NO	

6. PARTICIPANTS/SUBJECTS IN THE STUDY

6.1 If humans are being studied, state where they are selected:

New and present leaders at Further Education and Training colleges in at least 7 provinces.

6.2 Please mark the appropriate boxes:

Participants/subjects will:	YES	NO
be asked to volunteer	√	
be selected		

6.2.1 State how the participants/subjects will be selected, and/or who will be asked to volunteer: Anybody in management at a Further Education and Training college who would like to volunteer, will be selected.

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6.3 Are the participants/subjects subordinate to the person doing the recruiting?

YES	
NO	√

6.3.1 If yes, justify the selection of subordinate subjects:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6.4 Will control participants/subjects be used?

YES	
NO	√

6.4.1 If yes, explain how they will be selected:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6.5 What records, if any, will be used, and how will they be selected?

N/A

6.6 What is the age range of the participants/subjects in the study?

Not specific but employees are generally between 21 – 65 years old.

6.6.1   Was assent for guardians/consent for participants/subjects obtained?

YES	
NO	√

If YES, please attach the appropriate forms.

6.6.2   If NO, please state why:

It is voluntary.

6.7 Will participation or non-participation disadvantage the participants/subjects in any way?

YES	
NO	√

6.7.1 If yes, explain in what way:

_____
_____

6.8 Will the research benefit the participants/subjects in any direct way?

YES	√
NO	

6.8.1 If yes, please explain in what way:

At present, there is no leadership development specifically for people in this sector. This study will benefit new leaders._____

_____

_____

_____

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Mark research procedure(s) that will be used:

Literature	√
Documentary	X
Personal records	X
Interviews	√
Survey	X
Participant observation	X
Other (please specify) _____	

7.2 How will the data be stored?

Focus group results will be interpreted. Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed.

7.3 If an interview form/schedule; questionnaire or observation schedule/framework will be used, is it attached?

YES	
NO	X

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7.4 Risks of the procedure(s): Participants/subjects will/may suffer:

No risk	√
Discomfort	X
Pain	X
Possible complications	X
Persecution	X
Stigmatisation	X
Negative labeling	X
Other (please specify) _____ _____	

7.4.1 If you have checked any of the above except "no risk", please provide details:

_____
_____

8. RESEARCH PERIOD

(a) When will the research commence: 2013

(b) Over what approximate time period will the research be conducted: 2013 - 2014

9. GENERAL

9.1 Has permission of relevant authority/authorities been obtained?

YES	
NO	X

9.1.1 If yes, state name/s of authority/authorities:

9.2 Confidentiality: How will confidentiality be maintained to ensure that participants/subjects/patients/controls are not identifiable to persons not involved in the research?

The focus groups do not have to identify their contributions (affinities are written and pasted up onto the wall and no-one claims ownership; forms are completed anonymously); interviews will be recorded and interviewees assigned codes instead of names.

9.3 Results: To whom will results be made available, and how will the findings be reported to the research participants?

The results will be made available in a doctoral thesis. The findings will not be reported to the research participants.

9.4 There will be financial costs to:

participant/subject	X
institution	X
Other (please specify) _Applicant_____ _____	√

9.4.1 Explain any box marked YES:

The applicant will cover financial costs by means of a scholarship.

_____
_____
_____

9.5 Research proposal/protocol attached:

YES	√
NO	

9.6 Any other information which may be of value to the Committee should be provided here:

_____None_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Date: **Applicant`s signature**

_____-   _____

Who will supervise the project?

Name: Dr Liezel Frick and Prof. Eli Bitzer

Programme/Institution/Department: Education, CHAE, University of Stellenbosch

Date: **Signatures:**_____

Director/Head/Research Coordinator of Department/Institute in which study is conducted:

Name: Prof. Magda Fourie-Malherbe

ADDENDUM 2

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Research Study 1:   *Towards a post-graduate curriculum framework for Further Education and Training College (FETC) leaders*

Research Study 2:   *Exploring transformative learning for leadership development in the Further Education and Training Sector*

You are asked to participate in a research studies conducted by Catherine Robertson, MA (Critical Linguistics) (US) *cum laude* and Tania Adams, HDE (Sec, Technology), B.Ed. (Honours), MPhil (Education and Training for Lifelong Learning)(US) *cum laude*. Both are PhD students from the Curriculum Studies Department of the Faculty of Education at the Centre for Higher and Adult Education (CHAE) at Stellenbosch University. The results of these studies will contribute towards PhD dissertations.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDIES

In the light of the announcement by Minister Blade Nzimande's announcement of a turnaround strategy for the Further Education and Training College sector, leadership development seems essential to capacitate leaders to deal with change and the challenges of leading within a complex organisational environment. Both studies are aimed at capacitating current and prospective leaders in the FETC sector with the necessary leadership skills – the first through the development of a curriculum framework for leadership development of leaders at Further Education and Training Colleges (FETC) in South Africa, and the second through the use of transformative learning as a capacity-building strategy within a leadership development initiative.

2. PROCEDURES

Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) will be used to determine which elements the curriculum framework should include and which elements should be excluded, followed by one-to-one interviews to verify the conceptual framework (or mindmap).

Transformative learning will be facilitated through an action research approach, which involves the facilitation of a leadership development workshop in the FETC sector to a group of current and potential leaders.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The participants in both studies are self-selected based on their registration for the workshops.   Participants will not be identified or identifiable in the reporting of the aggregated results and any follow-up interviews will occur with the assurance of confidentiality.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) Green Paper (2012) acknowledges that in this time of rapid change, huge demands have been placed on the leadership of FETCs. The policy recognises the need for a training programme for FETC leaders to be developed within the next three years. One of the benefits will thus be that the participants themselves can inform what they believe should be included in leadership development programmes.   Since so much focus is on the FETCs in the educational landscape, such leadership development programmes should be of benefit to the sector at large.

The activities in the action research project could capacitate FETC sector leaders to critically reflect on leadership challenges experienced in the internal and external working environment and to think of how they can use their experience and best practices to deal with these challenges. This could enhance and build leadership capacity and empower leaders to possibly find creative solutions to the leadership challenges experienced.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No payment will be made to participants, but attendees will be able to participate in the workshops free of cost.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law for both studies.

In the case of study 1, confidentiality will be maintained by means of anonymous contributions on index cards in the same colour pen, which will be pinned up on a board for grouping. The cards will not have to be ascribed to an individual. Each interviewee will be allocated a number and no names will be mentioned. Subjects' interviews will be recorded and transcribed in the case of both studies. Should the results be published, no names of either participants or colleges involved will be mentioned.

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7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Dr Liezel Frick at 021 808-2277.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to _____ [*me/the subject/the participant*] by Catherine Robertson and Tania Adams in English and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____

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Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

| **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR** |

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____
[*name of the subject/participant]* and/or [his/her] representative _____
[*name of the representative]. [He/she*] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any
questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

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ADDENDUM 3[3]:

AXIAL INTERVIEW

RESPONDENT 1

Line		AFFINITIES
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	**X:**	*Legislation for me is all relevant legislation acts that impacts on a college* and you need to *know* those legislation very well, you need to *interpret* the legislation and you need to *identify what does the legislation say that impacts on your college and the operations at your college*. *For example*, legislation also touch a little on your *governance structures* within your college if you look at the further education and training legislation but then you also have your various other legislations, like your Labour Relations Act, your Basic Conditions of Employment Act, your Educator's Act, all these acts impacts and *if there is a change in legislation, you need to know about that change because it impacts on your business in the institution*. So, for me, that is, *you need a good, thorough understanding of the legislation to determine where you exactly fit into the system*. Alright, can I move on to the next one or do you want me to explore, say a little more about legislation? And then not only the legislation that you as leader need to understand legislation, but how you cascade that legislation down to your various level because at the end, *everybody needs to understand how the legislation impacts on them. So you have a role to interpret it, you have a role to be up to date with all legislation and also to disseminate that information to all the different levels within your institution* and where a specific department, like your HR department, for example, will have to interpret their legislation, the Employment Act, the Skills Development Act, specifically, or even for training purposes, you need to make sure that people understand the right level of the legislation for them to do their work according to legislation.
	Q:	You mentioned **corporate governance**. Would you put it under legislation or would you …?
18 19 20 21	**X:**	I think that there is a portion regarding the structures required for a college. That is what I see as corporate governance under legislation and corporate governance from a council perspective and from your corporate structures perspective, your SRC, your Academic Board and your Council. From that perspective, that portion for me falls under Legislation.
	Q:	Would you like to see Corporate Governance as a separate theme?
22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34	**X:**	*I would prefer if Corporate Governance was a separate theme.* And I will tell you why because for me within the structures of a college, corporate governance almost sits at a higher level than a CEO's level. You know, him, the CEO, he or she, must report to Council. So Council need to guide regarding corporate, um, not management, but issues within the institution. So it is for me *you, as the leader, need to understand what Corporate Governance is* and then, for example, if you look at the King Report, there are specific themes that come through that. So that everybody in the corporate structures need to understand that very well. And the *leaders need to also understand what is the responsibility as leaders regarding Corporate Governance. So, wherever you put it, whether you put it as a separate heading I think for any development or curriculum or whether you incorporate it into something like your leadership skills but it needs a pertinent focus. Otherwise you will run into trouble and I think institutions run into trouble are not clear on what is governance.* So I think that is for me important. *Although it may not be a specific theme as such, because it may be a small theme, but wherever it is put, it needs a specific focus.*
	Q:	So it could be a sub-theme?
35 36 37 38 39 40	**X:**	Yes, *it could be a sub-theme maybe under legislation or under leadership skills because out of that, if I look at **Strategic Planning** as a theme perhaps, as a possible theme, if you really look at the legislation, the **strategic planning** of an FET college falls within the domain of the College Council. So, it's a – it's quite a complex issue to handle because things at the end are very integrated: Corporate Governance, your legislation and your governance and your strategic planning. All of them are outcomes that come out of your legislation. So, uh, governance can either be for me a sub-module or a sub-section of a theme.*

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[3] The rest of the transcriptions can be obtained from the researcher.

ADDENDUM 4[4]:

COMBINED INTERVIEW AXIAL CODE TABLE (ACT)

Affinity	*Transcript Line*	*Axial Quotations*	*Researcher Notes*
1. Legislation	1/1	**Legislation** is all relevant legislation acts that impacts on a college and you need to know those legislation very well, you need to interpret the legislation and you need to identify what does the legislation say that impacts on your college and the operations at your college. For example, legislation also touch a little on your governance structures within your coll. You need a good, thorough understanding of the legislation to determine where you exactly fit into the system. Also to disseminate that information to all the different levels within your institution and where a specific department, like your HR department, for example, will have to interpret their legislation, the Employment Act, the Skills Development Act, specifically, or even for training purposes, you need to make sure that people understand the right level of the legislation for them to do their work according to legislation.	Know, interpret and disseminate all relevant legislation that impacts on the college – everyone needs to know so that they can do their work according to the law.
	2/1	**[Legislation is]** the different policies that governs the FET sector - various pieces of legislation that drives us. We customise our internal college policies based on what they (national) developed. College managers should be work-shopped on the interpretation of those policies because we are policy implementers. Each college interpret legislation in their own way and I think that is part of the problem why we all do things differently, and read it differently because the internal policies are so different. We [need to] get common understanding so when we implement, it is a common implementation across the different colleges. It's mostly advocates and lawyers and people who do the policy for government. So those people are not into training but they could arrange for workshops with the lecturers at universities to do the training to come and give us the context. If we do not have understanding of the legislation, we cannot, like I said, implement quality, delivery of anything, whether it's finances, or [whatever]. That's why so many colleges are under administration because we don't understand or we were not trained how to implement those policies. That's where everything starts because if we don't understand legislation, we are going to make lots of mistakes further down with all the others, the strategic areas of the college.	Legislation is where it all starts (externally) and people need to be trained to interpret it correctly or else there will be problems.

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[4] The rest of this document can be obtained from the researcher.

ADDENDUM 5:

Combined focus group interview affinities in descending order of frequency with Pareto and Power (adapted from Northcutt & McCoy, 2005:159).

No.	Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency Sorted (Descending)	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent (Relation)	Cumulative Percent (Frequency)	Power
1	3 ← 5	153	153	3.3	19.6	16.3
2	1 → 3	120	273	6.7	34.9	28.2
3	1 → 5	78	351	10	44.9	34.9
4	2 → 3	72	423	13.3	54.2	40.9
5	3 ← 4	66	489	16.7	62.6	45.9
6	2 ← 5	56	545	20	69.8	49.8
7	3 → 5	32	577	23.3	73.9	50.6
8	4 ← 5	28	605	26.7	77.5	50.8
9	1 → 4	26	631	30	80.8	50.8
10	2 → 5	23	654	33.3	83.7	50.4
11	1 → 2	19	673	36.7	86.2	49.5
12	3 → 6	16	689	40	88.2	48.2
13	2 → 4	15	704	43.3	91.1	47.8
14	5 → 6	15	719	46.7	92.1	45.4
15	1 → 6	11	730	50	93.5	43.5
16	4 → 6	10	740	53.3	94.7	41.4
17	1 ← 2	8	748	56.7	95.8	39.1
18	2 ← 3	8	756	60	96.8	36.8
19	2 → 6	7	763	63.3	97.7	34.4
20	1 ← 5	6	769	66.7	98.5	31.8
21	3 → 4	6	775	70	99.2	29.2
22	4 → 5	6	781	73.3	100	26.7
23	1 ← 3	0	781	76.7	100	23.3
24	1 ← 4	0	781	80	100	20
25	1 ← 6	0	781	83.3	100	16.7
26	2 ← 4	0	781	86.7	100	13.3
27	2 ← 6	0	781	90	100	10
28	3 ← 6	0	781	93.3	100	6.7
29	4 ← 6	0	781	96.7	100	3.3
30	5 ← 6	0	781	100	100	0
		781				

ADDENDUM 6:

Individual interview composite with six affinities

No.	Affinity Pair Relationship	Frequency Sorted (Descending)	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent (Relation)	Cumulative Percent (Frequency)	Power
1	1 → 3	20	20	3.3	9.3	5.9
2	1 → 2	15	35	6.7	16.2	9.5
3	1 → 4	15	50	10	23.1	13.1
4	2 → 3	14	64	13.3	29.6	16.3
5	1 → 5	13	77	16.7	35.6	18.9
6	3 → 4	13	90	20	41.7	21.7
7	4 ← 5	12	102	23.3	47.2	23.9
8	1 → 6	10	112	26.7	51.8	25.1
9	2 → 5	10	122	30	56.5	26.5
10	3 ← 5	10	132	33.3	61.1	27.8
11	4 → 6	10	142	36.7	65.7	29
12	5 → 6	10	152	40	70.4	30.4
13	3 → 5	9	161	43.3	74.5	31.2
14	3 → 6	9	170	46.7	78.7	32
15	2 → 4	8	178	50	82.4	32.4
16	2 → 6	8	186	53.3	86.1	32.8
17	2 ← 4	7	193	56.7	89.3	32.6
18	3 ← 4	7	200	60	92.6	32.6
19	2 ← 3	5	205	63.3	95.4	32.1
20	2 ← 5	4	209	66.7	96.7	30
21	4 → 5	3	212	70	98.1	28.1
22	2 ← 6	2	214	73.3	99.1	25.8
23	1 ← 5	1	215	76.7	99.5	22.8
24	3 ← 6	1	216	80	100	20
25	1 ← 2	0	216	83.3	100	16.7
26	1 ← 3	0	216	86.7	100	13.3
27	1 ← 4	0	216	90	100	10
28	1 ← 6	0	216	93.3	100	6.7
29	4 ← 6	0	216	96.7	100	3.3
30	5 ← 6	0	216	100	100	0