

# **AN ANALYSIS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated *kubobonke amantu baseMzantsi Africa* and may there be many to follow.

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## DECLARATION

I, Tobile Mc-Henry Gqili, hereby declare that this research study entitled “**An analysis of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework in South Africa**”, is my own original work and as far as I’m aware, has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification and that any references included herein duly acknowledged.

.....

Signature

T M Gqili

25426291

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Date

## ABSTRACT

The dissertation, “An analysis of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework in South Africa” describes the South African Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF), one of the sub-frameworks of the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The OQSF provides for occupationally-focused qualifications and serves to consolidate the South African Vocational Education and Training (VET) system within the context of the NQF.

The study sets out to develop an analytical framework to guide decision makers in support of the VET system in South Africa. The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is the Quality Council (QC) responsible for the OQSF and therefore much reference is given to this QC. The study examines the QCTO approach to occupational qualification development and the policy environment that the QCTO operates within that could enable the consolidation of the South African VET system. Seminal to this approach is the necessity of dialogue between the QCTO and other NQF entities including the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

The primary focus of the study is the OQSF as the principal policy instrument to consolidate the South African VET system. The policy direction taken in order to ascertain whether the policies adopted in support of the OQSF does in fact lead to systemic coherence within the South African NQF and broader skills development landscape is examined. The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III is the overarching strategy for skills development in South Africa and this study argues that the consolidation of the South African VET system can assist in the achievement of the goals enshrined in the NSDS III and ultimately the National Development Plan (NDP).

The NSDS III focuses on the Sector Education and Training Authorities (21 SETAs currently) and the National Skills Fund (NSF). It emphasises partnerships between training institutions, SETAs and employers. The sectoral qualifications which are registered on the NQF and are utilised within the SETA landscape are on the OQSF which is the responsibility of the QCTO.

The study asserts that the eight goals of the NSDS III are intrinsically linked to enabling South Africa to become a developmental state much like the East Asian states and that the consolidation of the South African VET system is an essential part of the achievement of this national objective.

## ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AQP	Assessment Quality Partner
ANC	African National Congress
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
BIBB	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (German: <i>Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung</i> )
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CEP	Community of Expert Practitioners
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
DPA	Directorate for Programme Accreditation
DQP	Development Quality Partner
DRR	Directorate for Recognition and Registration
EWSETA	Energy and Water Sector Education and Training Authority
EXCO	Executive Committee
FET	Further Education and Training
FLC	Foundational Learning Competence
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation (German: <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> )

GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework
HU	Harvard University
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council
HRDSSA	Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IBM	International Business Machines
IGR	Intergovernmental Relations
IGRFA	Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MinMec	Minister and Members of Executive Council
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
MoHET	Minister of Higher Education and Training
NAMB	National Artisan Moderation Body
NASCA	National Senior Certificate for Adults
NCV	National Certificate (Vocational)
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NPA	New Public Administration
NPM	New Public Management
NPS	New Public Service

NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NLRD	National Learners' Records Database
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSBs	National Standards Bodies
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSoG	National School of Government
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFO	Organising Framework for Occupations
OQD	Occupational Qualification Development
OQSF	Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework
PALAMA	Public Administration, Leadership and Management Academy
PB	Professional Body
PCC	President's Co-ordinating Council
PIF	Provincial Intergovernmental Forum
PIVOTAL	Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning
POA	Programme of Action
PPA	Public-Public Agreement
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
QC	Quality Council
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
QDF	Qualification Development Facilitator
QSC	Qualifications and Standards Committee
REAL	Centre for Researching Education and Labour
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning

SDPs	Skills Development Providers
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SACP	South African Communist Party
SAIVCET	South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGBs	Standard Generating Bodies
SUWI	Stellenbosch University Water Institute
UMALUSI	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework for South Africa
VE	Vocational Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VET-NET	Vocational Education and Training Network
WIL	Work-integrated Learning
WPPET	White Paper for Post-School Education and Training
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development
YALE	Youth and Adult Learning and Education

## FIGURES

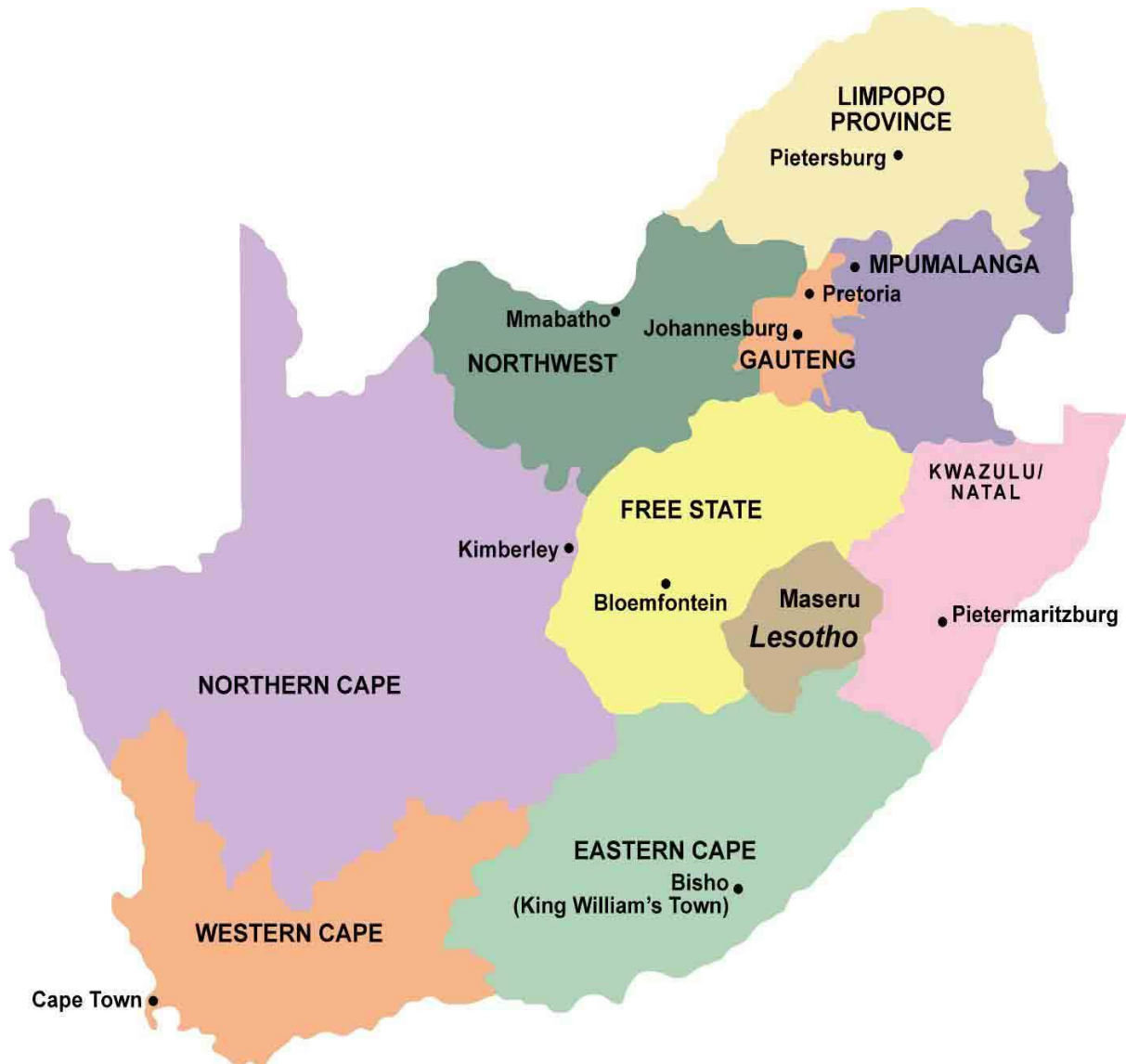
Figure 1.1: Map of Gauteng depicting the location of the University of Pretoria



Sourced: <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=4276>



Figure 1.2: Map of South Africa



Source: <http://www.towns.bookingsouthafrica.com/>

**Figure 1.3: NQF landscape 14 December 2012.**

	NQF Level	Qualification types		
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework under the CHE	10	Doctoral degree / professional	-	Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework under the QCTO
	9	Master's degree / professional	-	
	8	Bachelor of Honours degree / Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's degree	-	
	7	Bachelor's degree / Advanced Diploma	-	
	6	Diploma / Advanced Certificate	Occupational Certificate level 5	
	5	Higher Certificate	Occupational Certificate level 5	
General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework under Umalusi	4	National Certificate / Grade 12	Occupational Certificate level 4	
	3	Intermediate Certificate / Grade 11	Occupational Certificate level 3	
	2	Elementary Certificate / Grade 10	Occupational Certificate level 2	
	1	General Certificate / Grade 9	Occupational Certificate level 1	

**Figure 1.4: NQF landscape 30 August 2013.**

	NQF Level	Qualification types		
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework under the CHE	10	Doctoral degree / professional	-	Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework under the QCTO
	9	Master's degree / professional	-	
	8	Bachelor of Honours degree / Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's degree	Occupational Certificate level 8	
	7	Bachelor's degree / Advanced Diploma	Occupational Certificate level 7	
	6	Diploma / Advanced Certificate	Occupational Certificate level 6	
	5	Higher Certificate	Occupational Certificate level 5	
General and Further Education and Training Sub-framework under Umalusi	4	National Certificate / Grade 12	Occupational Certificate level 4	
	3	Intermediate Certificate / Grade 11	Occupational Certificate level 3	
	2	Elementary Certificate / Grade 10	Occupational Certificate level 2	
	1	General Certificate / Grade 9	Occupational Certificate level 1	

## TABLES

**Table 1.1: NQF landscape as enshrined in the NQF Act and the determination by the Minister of Higher Education and Training (MoHET).**

<u>NQF Sub-Framework</u>	<u>Quality Council Responsible</u>
General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF)	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi)
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework (HEQSF)	Council on Higher Education (CHE)
Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework (OQSF)	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

**Table 1.2: Three Types of NQFs**

Type of NQF	Communications	Reforming	Transformational
Starting point	Existing system	Existing system	Future system
Purpose	To increase transparency; To provide a tool for rationalising the system, increasing coherence and facilitating access, transfer	To achieve specific reforms e.g. fill gaps, enhance quality, extend ATP; To provide a tool for rationalising the system and increasing coherence	To transform education/training and lead development of new system



	and progression (ATP)		
Design	Loose, outcomes referenced, varies across sub-frameworks	Tighter, but varies across sub-frameworks	Tight, outcomes-led, more uniform
Leadership and control	Voluntary, 'Bottom up' Education institutions share leadership Substantial decision-making at level of sub-framework	Compulsory 'Top-down': led by central agency/government Education institutions are key partners; Control may vary across sub-frameworks	Compulsory 'Top down': led by central agency/government (sic) Education institutions among partners Centralised control
Expected role in change	Tool for change: requires complementary drivers to ensure tool is used	Drives specific changes; requires complementary drivers for other impacts	Expected to drive transformation of system (sic)

Sourced from: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/eu-australia/doc/peer/raffe.pdf> Accessed: 27 November 2013.

**Table 1.3: OQSF - Qualifications Summary**

<u>NQF LEVEL</u>	<u>NUMBER OF QUALIFICATIONS</u>
Level TBA: Pre-2009 was L6	26
Level TBA: Pre-2009 was L7	4
NQF Level 7	18

NQF Level 8	11
Total	59

Sourced from: <http://www.saqa.org.za/> Accessed: 06 March 2014.

**Table 1.4: QCTO Delegation Authority**

<b>National Qualifications Framework Act (no. 67 of 2008) section 32</b>	<b>Skills Development Amendment Act (no. 97 of 2008) section 26 (l)(1)(a-e)</b>
The QCTO may delegate any of its functions to:	The QCTO may delegate any of its functions to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A Committee</li> <li>b. CEO of the QCTO</li> <li>c. Committee of the QCTO</li> <li>d. National Artisan Moderation Body established in terms of Section 26A of the SDA</li> <li>e. A SETA</li> <li>f. Any other suitable body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. CEO of the QCTO</li> <li>b. Committee of the QCTO</li> <li>c. National Artisan Moderation Body established in terms of Section 26A</li> <li>d. A SETA</li> <li>e. Any other suitable body</li> </ul>

**Table 1.5: W.E.A.L.T.H. - A synopsis of the National Development Plan (NDP)**

<b>W</b>	Welfare, Water
<b>E</b>	Equality, Education, Economy, Employment, Energy, Environment
<b>A</b>	Administration, Agriculture, Accountability
<b>L</b>	Labour, Legacy
<b>T</b>	Technology, Training, Transformation, Transport, Trade
<b>H</b>	Health, Housing



**Table 1.6: Proposed NQF nomenclature**

<b>POSSIBLE NQF NOMENCLATURE</b>		
NQF Level	Traditional Academic System	VET System
10	Doctorate Professional Doctorate	Doctorate Occupational Certificate
9	Masters Professional Masters	Masters Occupational Certificate
8	Bachelor Honours Degree Postgraduate Diploma Bachelor's Degree	Postgraduate Occupational Certificate
7	Bachelor's Degree Advanced Diploma	Advanced Occupational Certificate
6	Diploma Advanced Certificate	Diploma Occupational Certificate
5	Higher Certificate	Higher Occupational Certificate
4	National Certificate	National Occupational Certificate
3	Intermediate Certificate	Intermediate Occupational Certificate
2	Elementary Certificate	Elementary Occupational Certificate
1	General Certificate	General Occupational Certificate

## CHAPTER ONE: HISTORICAL REVIEW TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN VET SETTING

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The apartheid legacy left the South African education system in a state of inequality and segregation which still persists today. Education was used as a tool of oppression in that the education in the *Bantu* education system was inferior in order to keep the black majority unskilled and illiterate. The Manpower Act (no. 56 of 1981) was the first attempt to try and combat the ill effects of a segregated education and training system and deliberately inferior education delivery to the black majority.

The Manpower Act (no. 56 of 1981) was an attempt to upskill the entire labour force because the lack of skills was beginning to effect the economic growth of the country as a whole. The deliberate attempt to keep the black majority illiterate and unskilled was no longer sustainable by the 1980s and this Act (no. 56 of 1981), which is the predecessor to the Skills Development Act (no. 97 of 1998), was designed to address the critical skills gap that existed in the South African labour market.

The unbanning of political parties such as the African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party (SACP) together with the release of political prisoners in the early 1990s and which culminated in the 1994 elections, was the beginning of a new reformed political environment and therefore would require reform in the education system. An education system that would cater for all the training and education needs of all South Africans.

The South African NQF, which, as a social construct was to be developed as a transformational NQF, the regulatory framework in which this reform would be made a possibility. According to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act (no. 58 of 1995) the NQF is to:

- a) create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- b) facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within the education, training and career paths;
- c) enhance the quality of education and training;



- d) accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby
- e) contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) are important imperatives of the educational reform to eradicate poverty and ensure a high standard of living for all South Africans.

VET originates from the word vocation (Latin: *vocare*) which according to Macdonald (1981: 1519) means “a calling, summons (rare): a calling by God to His service in special work or in a special position, or to a state of salvation: fitness for God’s or other specified work: a way of living or sphere of activity to which one has been called by God, or for which one has a special fitness: one’s occupation, business, or profession”.

Vocational, according to Macdonald (1981: 1519), is therefore “pertaining to, concerned with, or in preparation for, a trade or occupation. Vocational Education (VE) or VET, also called Career and Technical Education (CTE), provides skills and knowledge for work through a standardised national training system”.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

In the South African context, the VET standardised national training system was called Further Education and Training (FET), VET and FET are therefore used synonymously in South Africa. The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPET) provides for a policy shift away from the notion of FET and embedding the notion of Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Previous research on the topic of VET has been conducted by Akoojee, Gewer, McGrath (2005), Gustafsson and Pillay (in Mclean and Wilson 2009). In the research, conducted on behalf of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), entitled “Vocational Education and Training in Southern Africa” Akoojee, Gewer, McGrath (2005) focuses on Southern Africa and not specifically on South Africa providing a

focal point on the formulation of VET systems in the entire Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

Akoojee et al (2005: 108) stated that “despite the specific role of FET colleges in providing vocationally oriented education and training, there is currently no requirement for colleges to expose learners to practical experience in a workplace or work-related environment and this is further confounded by the problems of coherence between the Department of Education and the Department of Labour”.

Gustafsson and Pillay (Mclean et al 2009) in their chapter, in the International Handbook of Education for the Changing World of Work, entitled “Financing Vocational Education and Training in South Africa” focus on the potential costs for implementing VET. Gustafsson and Pillay (Mclean et al 2009: 1106) added that linking the two systems (skills development and FET) would raise both the quality and the quantity of vocational training. This would resolve the coherence problem mentioned by Akoojee et al (2005) above.

McGrath’s (Mclean et al 2009) contribution entitled “Reforming Skills Development, Transforming the Nation: South African Vocational Education and Training Reforms, 1994-2005” the focus is on the post-1994 skills development policy, the challenges to educational reform after 1994 including the NQF, FET colleges, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and all relevant pre-1994 legislation (i.e. Manpower Training Act of 1981) up until 2005.

McGrath also advocates for a more coherent national VET system where the system does not fall within the operational activity of two different departments namely the Department of Labour (DoL) and the Department of Education (DoE).

Akoojee (2007) submitted a thesis entitled “Private Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and national development: The South African reality” and addressed the contribution of the private sector to TVET and national development. Akoojee (2007: 244) suggests public-private partnerships (PPPs) of mutual benefit highlighting that important lessons can be learnt by colleges in their development

responsibility by considering the practices of private providers and more significantly suggesting the establishment of a regulatory authority within the DoE.

Akoojee focuses on PPPs and overlooks the potential that also exists between public-public agreements (PPAs) for example the potential benefits of a partnership between a public TVET college and a public University/University of Technology. The University/University of Technology could benefit by conducting research (research output) on the TVET college sector whilst the research results and recommendations could add value to the operational processes within the TVET colleges. A good example of this PPA is between the Stellenbosch University Water Institute (SUWI) and the Energy and Water Sector Education and Training Authority (EWSETA), the SUWI is conducting research on TVET college lecturers in the water sector and the project is sponsored by EWSETA.

The research project is to upskill TVET lecturers in the water sector and is to result in the development of an Advanced Diploma for TVET lecturers in the water sector which will be offered at the Stellenbosch University. SUWI has the subject matter experts and the research will increase the University's research output and ought to have a high-impact in the specific sector. EWSETA is meeting its sectoral developmental objectives by contributing to the development of the skills of TVET lecturers in the water sector.

Paterson (2008) in the article on education and training entitled "Training in the South African public sector" examined training through new initiatives such as learnerships, internships and mentorships in the South African Public Service (Paterson 2008: 322). This author seems to suggest the establishment of a single institution or "regulatory body" (Akoojee 2007: 244) to help in consolidating the VET system in South Africa.

According to McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 8) the core function of VET is promoting employment chances and has resulted in a growing focus on the need for a radical curricular overhaul and better relationships with the world of work. There is therefore a need for improved relationships between the newly formed Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET - established April 2010), the skills development

providers (SDPs) including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and employers to facilitate the consolidation of the VET system in South Africa.

McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 4) states that the reason VET is neglected relating to third world nations is because the emphasis on the international agenda for third world aid is on basic education. McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 5) further add that because VET did not become a Millennium Development Goal (MDG), it (VET) was not a priority on the donor agenda whilst it moved up the domestic agenda of donor recipient countries (developed nations).

In the German skills development system for example the Germans have the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB - German: *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*) which in 2010, was in existence for four decades already; this illustrates how some developed nations value their VET systems. The contradiction in policy between the developed nations and developing nations was justified by the need for basic education amongst poor countries and therefore the commitment to skills development of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) was no longer relevant.

The WSSD and the subsequent declaration (Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development) had committed to (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 1996):

- a) Create an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development;
- b) Eradicate absolute poverty by a target date to be set by each country;
- c) Support full employment as a basic policy goal;
- d) Promote social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights;
- e) Achieve equality and equity between women and men;
- f) Attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care;
- g) Accelerate the development of Africa and the least developed countries;

- h) Ensure that structural adjustment programmes include social development goals;
- i) Increase resources allocated to social development;
- j) Strengthen cooperation for social development through the UN.

Pertaining to basic education, Gustafsson and Pillay (Mclean et al 2009: 1091) contend that participation in education in South Africa is high therefore basic education should not be the primary focus for South Africa. In 2004, around one-third of all South Africans were enrolled in some form of educational institution on a full-time basis (Mclean et al 2009: 1091).

According to Perry and Arends (in Moleke 2005: 5) school enrolment, particularly amongst the African majority in South Africa, increased by 111.4% between 1975 and 2000, primary school enrolment increased by 66% and secondary school enrolment by 329% in the same period. Despite higher enrolment, poor quality in education and training is perceived as a problem in the South African context.

To address this issue, government responded by splitting education into two Departments, namely the DHET and the Department of Basic Education (DBE). These departments now had different policy and functional directives to improve the quality of education thereby addressing basic education (DBE), VET and skills development separately (DHET). VET in turn has been identified and prioritised as the vehicle for skills development in South Africa.

McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 4-5) suggests the following four main reasons as the rationale for governments to pay more attention in establishing an integrated VET system:

- a) Firstly, VET is an essential tool of economic development; policy-makers internationally have seen the development of better technical skills as a fundamental element of improving economic performance.
- b) Secondly, a lack of skills at the individual level is broadly seen as a chief element in poverty. Lacking skills to sell on the labour market, or to make a

feasible living in subsistence or self-employment activities, individuals are far more likely to be in poverty.

- c) Thirdly, VET over the past four decades has been linked with addressing the problem of youth unemployment. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, the expectation that VET systems could solve escalating youth unemployment developed strongly in the 1970s as the advanced economies went into a period of economic weakness that ended the full employment era of the 1950s and 1960s. By the late 1970s and 1980s, VET systems were being revolutionised in these countries, most spectacularly in the Anglophone countries.
- d) Lastly, recently VET systems have also become linked to debates about responding to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Syndrome (AIDS) pandemic; it is argued that the position of public VET providers as important social institutions places on them the responsibility to address the issues of AIDS education and prevention.

With the establishment of the DHET, the post-school public institutions of learning and the institutions of skills development will be under one department. The responsibilities which were formerly shared by the DoL and DoE will be managed and implemented by the DHET.

This study will analyse the OQSF as a policy intervention in consolidating the VET system in South Africa. The VET system in South Africa has moved from a segregated pre-1994 system (along racial demarcation) toward a non-racial post-1994 system encompassing equality and guided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (no. 108 of 1996 - specifically chapter 2 - the Bill of Rights).

The NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) makes provision for a single integrated NQF, the sub-frameworks in which the South African VET system resides is the OQSF and General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF), the GFETQSF on the basis that it is mandated with the TVET colleges and the OQSF

because it is mandated with the development and quality assurance of occupational qualifications between NQF Levels 1-8. The entire NQF landscape as depicted in the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) and the determination of the Minister of Higher Education and Training (MoHET) with the three sub-frameworks and the QCs that are responsible for each is illustrated in table 1.1.

### 1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

The third democratic elections in April 2004 according to McGrath (in Akoojee 2005: 103) provided former ANC and President Thabo Mbeki an opportunity to re-craft the party's national development vision in his speech to the opening of parliament (21 May 2004) and outlined four key areas:

- a) halving unemployment;
- b) halving poverty;
- c) improving employment equity; and
- d) accelerating broad-based black economic empowerment.

This national development vision 2014 would envisage a clear role for the establishment of an integrated VET system to tackle the above mentioned key areas. Chisholm (2009: 3) describes the post-1994, pre-2009 system and mentions four main elements of this new VET system which characterise the policy directives pertaining to such system:

- a) An integrated education and training system through the National Qualifications Framework that was intended to enable the portability of skills and qualifications across different paths informed by an outcomes and competency-based system of training. But the fact that the Department of Education and Department of Labour did not integrate meant that for the first decade initiatives were run separately. Only with the launch of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) in 2005 and the proposed Human Resource Development Strategy (II) was a new approach undertaken that was intended to co-ordinate activities across all departments.

- b) A new institutional environment was created that intended to transform inherited; i) weak and racially fragmented education-led, college-based system linked to an outdated apprenticeship system poorly articulated to the workplace; ii) late apartheid reforms that created Industry Training Boards using competency-based modular training and conceded a substantial role to the market and private sector. The environment was influenced by the fact that the Departments of Labour and Education did not integrate. So (sic) the Department of Education has worked on reforming the industry-based training system that developed from the 1980s under the National Manpower Act, 56 of 1981 (sic). The Department of Education can be seen to be working on supply-side and the Department of Labour on demand-side strategies.
- c) The Department of Education system remains education-led and has undergone a number of changes over the last decade since the Further Education and Training Act, 98 of 1998. In 2001 this was followed by the *New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges* document (DoE 2001) which set out a vision that would enable changes in size and structure, access, delivery, governance, financial recapitalisation and curriculum and assessment, and articulation with higher education and the labour market.

From 2004 onwards, with President Mbeki's second term, 'it became clear that the college sector was no longer seen as a marginal and problematic part of the Human Resource Development System' (Akoojee, McGrath and Visser, 2008: 225). In 2006, government launched a R1.9b 3-year programme to recapitalise FET colleges, tackle vital and long neglected curriculum reform and investment in staff training and development, infrastructure and equipment.

- d) The Department of Labour-led programme was initiated by the National Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998; the Skills Development Levies Act, 9 of 1999 and the 2001 National Skills Development Strategy. The approach established industry and labour consensus-driven Sector Education and Training



Authorities (SETAs) and learnerships (courses or modules) intended to provide training for pre-employed, currently employed as well as the unemployed.

The policy framework for the VET system in South Africa in the post-2009 era had been attempting to adapt to the needs of the South African society thereby having a new policy directive leading into the second and third decade of democracy. President Jacob Zuma in the 'state of the nation' address (2010) emphasised the need of Higher Education to enrol 175 000 first-time entry students in Higher Education institutions by 2014.

Though this was a daunting task for the DHET, this goal focuses on higher education enrolment specifically and not on the training which can be provided specifically through the VET system. There is an existing perception in South Africa that the only way for an individual/learner to succeed is in Higher Education (the traditional academic University route) and a mental shift is needed towards recognising the potential in VET.

In examining the mandate of the sub-frameworks of the NQF, the statement made by the president implies that the focus is on the HEQSF developed and managed by the CHE rather than the OQSF developed and managed by the QCTO. The HEQSF represents the traditional academic system which is well established, South African HEIs are globally recognised. The VET system however had been neglected post-1994 and pre-2009.

According to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for South Africa 2007-2010 (2007: 7) (UNDAF) in the post-2009 VET environment, ASGISA will see the implementation of better-focused policies and government programmes, improve public administration and provide well-targeted regulation, as well as stronger partnerships between government, business and civil society. UNDAF (2007: 7) also mentioned that the South African government is working on a ten-year Programme of Action (POA) for sustainable growth and development and this indicates the long-term objectives of the South African government.

The DHET (SETA 2010: 9) launched the new Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDSSA) II in April 2010 and was, for the first time, steered by the Deputy President with a Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) comprising members of government, organised business, organised labour and civil society (including from institutions of education and training). The Council oversees all issues pertaining to the NSDS III including reporting on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy pertaining to Human Resource Development. According to SETA (2010: 9) the Framework for the NSDS III was launched on 29 April 2010 and with it a new five-year strategic plan, in an attempt to integrate the VET system in South Africa.

The NSDS III is the overarching strategy for skills development in South Africa. The NSDS III focuses on the 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and the National Skills Fund (NSF). The emphasis is on partnerships between training institutions, SETAs and employers. The sectoral qualifications which are registered on the NQF and are utilised within the SETA landscape are on the OQSF which is the responsibility of the QCTO.

The pillars of NSDS III (SETA 2010: 8-9) are:

- a) Sector strategies.
- b) Relevant sector-based programmes.
- c) Professional, vocational, technical and academic learning (PIVOTAL) programmes.
- d) Programmes that contribute towards the revitalisation of vocational education and training.
- e) Incentives for training and skills development capacity.
- f) Partnerships between training providers and SETAs addressing cross-sectoral and inter-sectoral needs.
- g) An increased focus on skills for rural development.

The developmental and transformational imperatives of the NSDS III (SETA 2010: 7-8) are:

- a) Race - prioritise skills development for previously disadvantaged South Africans.
- b) Class - provide skills to reduce the social inequalities in the economy and society.
- c) Gender - promote gender equality.
- d) Geography - prioritised the training of rural people for the development of rural areas.
- e) Age - prioritise training of the youth for employment.
- f) Disability - increase skills training for people disabilities.
- g) HIV and AIDS pandemic – manage HIV and AIDS in the workplace.

The goals of the NSDS III (SETA 2010: 11) are to:

- a) Establish a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning.
- b) Increase access to occupationally-directed programmes.
- c) Promote the growth of a public FET college system that is responsive to sector, local, regional and national skills needs and priorities.
- d) Address the low level of youth and adult language and numeracy skills to enable additional training.
- e) Encourage better use of workplace-based skills development.
- f) Encourage and support cooperatives, small enterprises, worker-initiated, NGO and community training initiatives.
- g) Increase public sector capacity for improved service delivery and supporting the building of a developmental state.
- h) Build career and vocational guidance.

At least five of the eight goals of the NSDS III could arguably be achieved through a consolidated VET system aided by the QCTO approach:

- a) Access to occupationally-directed programmes.
- b) Growth of a public FET college system that is responsive to sector, local, regional and national skills needs and priorities.
- c) Better use of workplace-based skills development.

- d) Cooperatives, small enterprises, worker-initiated, NGO and community training initiatives.
- e) Public sector capacity for improved service delivery and supporting the building of a developmental state.

The NSDS III goals are linked to the creation of a developmental state and during the 2004 pre-election period Thabo Mbeki and Trevor Manuel started introducing the term 'development state' in the South African political sphere. The idea of the developmental state originated in the South East Asia states such as Japan, Singapore and South Korea and the economic success these states achieved without free market capitalism principles, like the United States had used for its success. These South East Asia states used a hybrid system of free market capitalism principles which were adapted to better suit their Asian societies (culture and customs). Landman (2000: 66) outlines the main characteristics of a developmental state as:

- a) Social and economic development is seen as the over-arching purpose of government.
- b) Public and private sector elite's work together intimately to pursue this goal. Government assist business even with direct investment and overheads; and business assist government to meet social goals. "Crony capitalism" that became so infamous after the 1998 financial crisis in South East Asia, can be traced back to this characteristic.
- c) A highly educated and efficient bureaucracy is created that facilitates growth and development. The famous MITI in Japan and the equally famously well paid and efficient civil service of Singapore can be traced back to this characteristic.
- d) A non-challenging civil society does not interrupt the process - this is where the "strong state" element of Latin America came from. No applications to the High Court to stop construction of a stadium or a Gautrain station etc. Once government has decided what will be done you shut up (sic) and go along. A developmental state does not necessarily prize the rule of law.

The goals enshrined in the NSDS III are an essential element in building a developmental state. The Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning

(PIVOTAL) five-year strategic plan proposed by the DHET was to facilitate a merger between workplace learning and institutional learning. PIVOTAL (SETA 2010: 9) which according to the directives in the NSDS III encourages high level engagement between senior leadership in the Public Service and social partners to foster good working relations through professional placements, work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, learnerships and internships. This is an attempt to match skills (qualifications) with the operational requirements of employers (labour market) and close the disjuncture between the competencies gained through a qualification and the competencies needed to do the job.

This workplace learning or workplace-based learning is not uncommon in developed nations, McSwite (2002: ix) in the preface to his book, mentioned University second-year Public Administration students who had completed their course work and were now in professional internships.

This workplace learning envisaged by the NSDS III would help graduates to be absorbed into the world of work and resolve graduate unemployment and provide the Public Service with qualified personnel. Within the OQSF (QCTO approach) occupational qualifications have three components; a theory/knowledge, a practical skills and a work experience component consisting of theory/knowledge modules, practical skills modules and work experience modules leading to an external integrated summative assessment (RSA 2014: 23).

The three components in the QCTO approach are important in order to assist in solving the disjuncture between graduation and employability that exists in the training provided through the HEIs within the HEQSF. The practical skills and work experience component will make the qualifying learner/holder of the occupational certificate immediately employable without the need for additional training before the successful learner is workplace competent.

An additional feature of the QCTO approach is the external integrated summative assessment that the learner must successfully complete before the occupational certificate is conferred/awarded, this external integrated summative assessment can

be managed by a professional body (PB), where a body exists within that sector/industry/profession. The external integrated summative assessment will resolve the parity of esteem problem between SDPs and create some uniform standard within the specific sector/industry/profession.

The NQF is reliant on collaboration, cooperation and coordination between stakeholders and the QCTO approach is attempting to foster these ideals. The Development Quality Partner (DQP) in the development of the occupational qualification can be a SETA/professional body/employer organisation/employer association and can therefore also be the future employer of the qualifying learner/graduate. The Assessment Quality Partner (AQP) is responsible for the management of the external integrated summative assessment and is an independent body that is not a SDP. In both the DQP and AQP roles the authority is delegated by the QCTO and the delegated authority is enshrined in both the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) and the Skills Development Amendment Act (no. 97 of 2008) depicted in table 1.4.

In view of the NQF landscape and the envisaged relations, the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) cannot be overlooked because it is a system used by governments to achieve its co-operative government objectives.

The policy process also operates within the IGR system, for example, the legislature passes an Act which needs coordination and collaboration between several state entities in order for such a law to be implemented. This process of information sharing and consultation between the state entities (public officials) is the application of co-operative government principles.

Section 41(1) of the Constitution (RSA: 1996) sets out the following principles for co-operative government and IGR stating that all spheres of government and all organs of state within each sphere must:

- a) preserve the peace, national unity and the indivisibility of the Republic;
- b) secure the well-being of the people of the Republic;

- c) provide effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for the Republic as a whole;
- d) be loyal to the Constitution, Republic and its people;
- e) respect the constitutional status, institutions, powers and functions of government in the other spheres;
- f) not assume any power or function except those conferred on them in terms of the Constitution;
- g) exercise their powers and perform their function in a manner that does not encroach on the geographical, functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere; and
- h) co-operate with one another in mutual trust and good faith by:
  - i) fostering friendly relations;
  - ii) assisting and supporting one another;
  - iii) informing one another of, and consulting one another on, matters of common interest;
  - iv) co-ordinating their actions and legislation with one another;
  - v) adhering to agreed procedure; and
  - vi) avoiding legal proceedings against one another.

With the emphasis to intergovernmental instruments facilitating the effective practice of IGR (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2006: 7), this period represents an era in which the IGR system in South Africa is in the process of consolidating into a fully integrated system. It takes time to establish an integrated (consolidated) VET system and South Africa has only introduced desegregated government policies just over two decades ago (1994) after five decades of segregated policies, preceded by colonialism.

The VET system operates within the broader IGR system and therefore is a system within a system and a functioning IGR system is therefore essential for the success of the OQSF within the NQF landscape.

Leon (2007) in her speech stated that IGR is intended to promote and facilitate co-operative decision making and make sure that policies and programmes of

government across all spheres encourage service delivery that meet the needs of citizens in an effective way. The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, no. 13 of 2005 (IGRFA) is relatively new legislation in South Africa and guides the three spheres of government in terms of effective collaboration.

This study will analyse and describe the OQSF which is meant to facilitate the consolidation of the VET system within the NQF landscape. This encompasses the goals enshrined in the NSDS III utilising the NSF, SETAs and PIVOTAL.

The study will address the role the OQSF can play in the forming of an integrated VET system to respond to the national development needs enshrined in the National Development Plan (NDP). The research will assess the policies within the South African OQSF by evaluating the purpose enshrined in such policies and assessing the implementation of such policies (policy analysis) in order to meet the needs of the South African society.

The study will also look at LLL as an overarching NQF principle, to facilitate integrating the South African VET system in order to ascertain how the DHET policies encourage systemic coherence within the NQF landscape. The research provides the perspective within which the QCTO functions, focusing on the OQSF and LLL, in order to identify the implementation barriers preventing the development of an integrated VET system.

The VET system has been neglected in South Africa unlike in the developed nations where it is a fundamental part of their societies for economic development, particularly for skills development, combating unemployment, poverty alleviation and for growth.

It is clear that co-operation and IGR is essential to facilitate administrative co-operation within the NQF and South African government in its entirety. According to Konig (1983: 303) administrative co-operation is associated with efforts to provide advanced training for adults in the Public Service. The research will focus primarily on the OQSF and public policy environment within the South African NQF. Cross-sectoral (vertical and horizontal) co-operation is an essential element of government. In a well-functioning



IGR system, the NQF social partners are required to be inter-dependent in their efforts to establish an integrated VET system.

## 1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The current VET system in South Africa has, according to McGrath (2009: 453), been made particularly complex and challenging by the legacy of apartheid. Apartheid in the VET context continues to hinder progress due to the imbalances and inequality in education and training it had caused.

Another disadvantage of apartheid is that it can also be used by the government as an excuse for lack of progress claiming that progress is more problematic than it really is (Akoojee et al 2005: 115). König (1983: 303) states that administrative co-operation also seeks to effect long-term improvements in development policy, a policy field in which, however, it has become customary to expect short-term results.

The regrettable situation and dialectic problem in South Africa is that twenty years is a long time in the lives of the people who need the support provided through VET systems and yet it is not enough time to establish new institutions, transform systems, attitudes and perceptions in order to have an effective VET system.

South Africa is struggling with high youth unemployment and is said to be having a skills shortage in the labour market. Gustafsson and Pillay (Mclean et al 2009: 1091) stated that high unemployment rates have been a feature of the South African economy since at least the 1970s therefore this is not a new phenomenon in South Africa.

Gustafsson and Pillay (Mclean et al 2009: 1091) further state that VET is essential for social and economic development in the democratic South African state. VET is enshrined in all the FET policy documents and FET legislation and existed between economic policy (Department of Labour) and education policy in the pre-2009 policy environment in South Africa.

The establishment of the DHET in the post-2009 era, and more specifically the establishment of the QCTO, is an attempt to formalise a state entity to assist VET in South Africa.

Nzimande (DHET: 2010) stated that the DHET is to explore ways of improving data collection, management and integration in all areas of work, including the vocational college sector, adult education and skills areas. This he stated, is part of a process to improve the skills planning mechanisms and competence, and will include a strategic skills intelligence system.

Paterson (2008: 322) also stated that analysis of the public sector training domain is limited by the quality of data available and to provide for better understanding of public sector skills development and training, improved data collection and data systems remain a fundamentally important goal in South Africa. The establishment of the QCTO is an attempt by government to form a new institutional environment for education and training and in so doing also improve data collection.

Additionally, the proposed establishment of the South African Institute for Vocational, Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) illustrates a paradigm shift in the thinking on VET in South Africa and puts VET at the epicentre of the country's skills development priorities. On the 19 March 2013 there were amendments to the FET Colleges Amendment Act (no. 1 of 2013), Chapter 7A states that "the Minister must establish a South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training as a juristic person". Section 43 B in the FET Colleges Amendment Act (no. 1 of 2013) outlines the functions of SAIVCET and to briefly review the stipulated functions and ascertain how they will affect the VET system, NQF landscape, SAQA and the QCs is important.

Within the chapter 7A there are 18 core functions which have been listed [s 43 B. (1) a-r] as the SAIVCET's legislative directive. These have various implications for the role of SAQA and the QCs within the VET system in South Africa. It is noted that some of the 18 functions are overlapping with the functions of the QCTO, Umalusi, other state

entities such as the National School of Government (NSoG formerly PALAMA) [i.e. section 43 B. (1) (m)] and even to a certain degree SAQA.

Does the establishment of the SAIVCET mean that SAQA failed in its coordinating function? Does this mean that the QCTO and Umalusi have failed to deliver on their mandates? Is the establishment of the SAIVCET a mechanism by the Minister (risk management) to try and mitigate the risk brought about by the perceived failure of the SAQA, QCTO and Umalusi within the VET system in South Africa?

The answer to the above questions seems to be “no” because the mandate of the SAIVCET is beyond just quality assurance related responsibilities but is more about the management of the entire VET system to “assist and support” the Minister, SAQA and the relevant QCs to have the TVET public colleges working in order to try and eradicate the high youth unemployment, alleviate poverty and promote economic growth in the country. What is to be noted here is that the emphasis is not on ‘all’ the QCs but only the ‘relevant’ QCs which possibly suggests that this does not include the CHE and the HEQSF. This could be problematic considering that HEIs also have occupational (vocational) qualifications.

A concern is that South Africa is perceived to be good at producing well written policy documents but when it comes to the implementation of such policies it fails. The establishment of the SAIVCET (RSA 2013: 10) can be a move towards unravelling the socio-economic crises that the country is faced with, but implementation remains vital for the accomplishment of such an institute (RSA 2013: 10). A possible remedy to this inability to implement policy would be to have better monitoring and evaluation processes in place in order to foster a culture of accountability. It ought to be noted that with proper monitoring and evaluation processes in place implementation is managed and therefore progress or lack thereof is easily detected and corrective remedies sought. The potential in the monitoring and evaluation processes is that the output/outcomes of a specific policy or policies can be quantitatively assessed.

Some of the mandated functions (RSA 2013: 10) that have shifted to the SAIVCET possibly suggest that there could possibly be a shift in the NQF landscape especially pertaining to the VET system. The institute (RSA 2013: 10) seems to be envisaged as a single coordinating and management or regulatory body for the countries entire VET system as the literature seems to suggest. VET is believed to be able to resolve the disjuncture which exists between purely academic higher education and the labour market needs. Due to the work experience component, absent in higher education, the VET learner is employable immediately and therefore VET has become a major focus in most developed and developing countries around the world. There is a dire need for vigorous coordination for the VET system. The quality of education and training within the current VET system has been questionable. The systems in place seem not to address the problems and possibly the establishment of the SAIVCET is a positive step in the right direction for the VET system in South Africa.

It seems that the SAIVCET will provide focused support for institutions and individuals within the VET system in order to improve youth unemployment; alleviate poverty and grow the South African economy. If implemented correctly the VET system could yield positive results for the South African economy and improve the standard of living of the citizenry.

Section 43B of the FET Amendment Act (no. 1 of 2013) states that the Institute must:

- a) Assist and support the Minister, SAQA, the relevant Quality Council and colleges in the provision of opportunities for and encouraging lifelong learning;
- b) Assist and support the Minister in the development of distance education and training, including open learning;
- c) Assist and support colleges in the development of learning, teaching and assessment materials;
- d) Assist and support the development of public colleges and the development of a skills system;
- e) Assist in the development of a curriculum for every public college and ensure that curriculum development is institutionalised within a technical and

- vocational education and training college or a community education and training college, as the case may be, with long term capacity;
- f) Conduct research and contribute to innovate development in continuing education and training;
  - g) Undertake and promote research in the areas of teaching and learning in vocational and occupational programmes that would lead to qualifications or part-qualifications;
  - h) Advise the Minister on any matter in respect of vocational and continuing education and training;
  - i) Develop material for career guidance;
  - j) Develop capacity and upgrade college teaching staff skills in vocational and continuing education and training;
  - k) Provide management training in every college;
  - l) Provide management, leadership and operational training at all levels for Services Education and Training Authorities established in terms of section 9 of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998);
  - m) Provide management, leadership and operational training for officials of the Department;
  - n) Promote dialogue between colleges and between employers and Sector Education and Training Authorities;
  - o) Interact with professional councils and promote dialogue between those councils and education and training institutions and the Department;
  - p) Publish a journal containing information in respect of continuing education and training and skills development;
  - q) Establish and maintain a library information service in order to support the Institute and the institutions served by the Institute; and
  - r) Conduct and promote labour market research.

South Africa's post-1994 FET policy agenda focused merely on training and basic education and not on workplace learning as this did not address issues of high unemployment, especially among the youth, and the skills shortage in the labour market. According to Nzimande (DHET: 2009) there are approximately three million

unemployed youth, between the age of 18-24 years old, who are not in a tertiary institution in South Africa.

The current VET system is therefore failing the youth of South Africa and needs to be revamped. VET is specifically perceived to be apt in improving employment rates and can help with the high unemployment problem.

Weimer and Vining (2005: 284) contend that policy analysis inherently involves prediction and, because the world is complex, we must expect to err. Theories about human behaviour are simply not powerful enough for us to have great confidence in most of our predictions due to the ever changing economic, social, and political conditions. Our initial accurate predictions about the consequences of adopted policies go far astray as time lapses.

The design of policies should acknowledge the possible error and allow for mechanisms to correct such error. The pre-2009 policies had challenges which produced lessons and hence the new policy environment or approach in the post-2009 era.

VET policy in post-2009 South Africa must adapt to the ever changing environment and this research seeks to detect the errors in the new DHET policies with a view to aid in the correction of such error. For the purposes of this study, the DHET-related policy that is the subject of analysis is the OQSF.

This study will contribute to the discipline of Public Administration in that it will attempt to clarify the new public policy directives (policy analysis) within the South African NQF and the implications of such policy in establishing the envisaged institutional relationships.

Within the OQSF, this will require workplace learning as well as partnerships between the key stakeholders such as DHET, SAQA, QCTO, Umalusi, CHE, SETAs, employers, recognised PBs, labour, HEIs and the other relevant SDPs and public sector departments.

## 1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The problem of youth unemployment is not only a phenomenon within the TVET college sector (GFETQSF - Umalusi) but also within the traditional academic University and University of Technology sector (HEQSF - CHE) in South Africa. The NSDS III is not legislated and therefore is not enforceable by law; this policy document is therefore a guiding principle which all organs of state are required to adhere to.

Entities such as the National Skills Authority (NSA) and the National Skills Fund (NSF) help the SDPs and the departments to be aligned with national policies but in order for programmes such as PIVOTAL to achieve the desired objectives senior management within the key stakeholder (ibid) institutions and departments must implement such policies in the best interests of the society. This means that national interests need to supersede institutional interests. The achievement of the below NSDS III goals can be aided by a consolidated South African VET system:

- a) Access to occupationally-directed programmes
- b) Growth of a public FET college system that is responsive to sector, local, regional and national skills needs and priorities
- c) Better use of workplace-based skills development
- d) Cooperatives, small enterprises, worker-initiated, NGO and community training initiatives
- e) Public sector capacity for improved service delivery and supporting the building of a developmental state

The title of this study is “An analysis of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework in South Africa”, the OQSF being a sub-framework of the South African NQF. The overarching question in this study is: how is the OQSF being configured in order to consolidate the VET system in South Africa? The DHET in implementing the NSDS III is seeking to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system which is what the VET system is (a skills development system). The new envisaged environment (within the NSDS III) has moved away from the traditional notion of VET being manual or practical activities which have a practical

tradition as opposed to the more academically inclined disciplines specific to traditional Universities.

Traditionally the public TVET colleges and Universities of Technology would reside within the traditional VET definition, but the NSDS III includes Comprehensive Universities and traditional academic Universities (SETA 2010: 9). This will require a change in perceptions and attitudes within the HEIs and broader South African society toward VET. The Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) landscape was meant to resolve the relations between employers and SDPs (including HEIs) through the learnership and apprenticeship model but the SETAs seem to be working in silos and there is no central mechanism or authority that coordinates the SETA landscape in relation to VET specifically.



## CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) was the first piece of education legislation passed after the South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 and formally introduced the South African NQF. This was even before the enabling Act of the South African Constitution (of 1996) was passed and this illustrated the importance placed upon the establishment of the South African NQF in the post-1994 era. In the post-2000 and pre-2008 era however the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) was reviewed twice and the reviews led to the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) being repealed by the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008).

The policy shift from the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) to the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) had major implications for the occupational qualification development process and the quality assurance of occupational qualifications within the South African NQF landscape and specifically within the OQSF. The review process however did not dispel the need for a single integrated national skills development and education system/framework and therefore the NQF survived within the ambit of its own Act (NQF Act no. 67 of 2008).

The study will evaluate the South African NQF landscape and the OQSF, the post-2009 policy directives of the DHET and determine the practical functionality of such policy in relation to the OQSF and QCTO. The study will analyse the present legislative imperatives between DHET, SAQA, the QCs, SETAs and the NQF recognised professional bodies in order to highlight any systemic anomalies.

This study specifically aims to analyse the OQSF and describe the policy environment in which DHET, SAQA, the QCs, SETAs, employers, labour, relevant departments and the NQF recognised professional bodies effect the OQSF. The research will briefly focus on skills development policy pre-1994, post-1994, post-2004, pre-2009 and post-2009. The scope will, however, be on the OQSF. The study will primarily examine the NQF landscape in relation to the OQSF which is meant to support the VET system in South Africa by developing occupationally focused qualifications on the sub-

framework. Once the occupational qualification is registered on the NQF within the OQSF the QCTO is responsible for the quality assurance of these occupational qualifications (occupational certificates).

### 2.1.1 Key Inquiry

The key questions were brought about by the MoHETs determination (14 December 2012) which had limited the OQSF initially to NQF Level 6; this was surprising considering that there were registered occupational qualifications on the NQF beyond Level 6. The NQF was envisaged to be a single integrated framework that would promote access, mobility, progression and furthermore facilitate the development of career pathways.

Limiting the OQSF to NQF Level 6 seemed to be a limit on access and therefore limiting LLL within the OQSF and ultimately the VET system. Even if there was just one occupational qualification beyond NQF Level 6 in a specific profession, would this not justify allowing the system to cater for this occupational qualification in order for the learners within that profession to have progression possibilities and thereby creating a clear career pathway for such learners?

The main question to be answered in essence is whether the South African NQF should have occupational qualifications and part-qualifications developed and registered at all levels of the South African NQF (1-10) in order to foster an environment which enables VET and LLL to flourish in South Africa. Additionally, any systemic changes within the OQSF should not prejudice any learner but ought to provide clear progression possibilities within each occupation.

The research questions are as follows:

- a) What is the QCTO approach?
- b) Which incongruities are potentially causing confusion and could negatively influence systemic coherence within the NQF policy environment?
- c) What mechanisms are in place to support systemic coherence within the OQSF and NQF?

- d) Should the OQSF have occupational qualifications at all levels of the South African NQF?

## **2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A variety of methods and techniques are used in the collection of data. Brynard and Hanekom (2006: 35) state that collection of data must be done, however, because without data, it would not be possible to broaden one's understanding, explain the "unknown", or add new knowledge to existing knowledge. The methods and techniques which will be utilised in the study are outlined below.

### **2.2.1 Research Approach**

Qualitative methods will be used in the collection of data in the study and thereby create a better understanding of the OQSF in the post-2009 policy environment, moving towards a consolidated VET system in South Africa. According to Locke, Silverman and Spirduso (2010: 183) the purpose of qualitative research is to understand a situation from the perspective of the participants.

The researcher is concerned with understanding, rather than explaining (De Vos in Brynard and Hanekom 2006: 37) and qualitative research entails discovering novel or unanticipated findings and the possibility of altering research plans in response to these accidental discoveries (Brynard and Hanekom 2006: 37).

The findings would thus allow for the adaptation of new policy directives within the public sector. According to Johnson (2002: 6) public administrators tend to use applied research to find information to develop public policies and/or public programmes, measure programme performance, assess whether those programmes or policies are making a difference. This will in turn transpire to a better understanding of the policies and to facilitate detection and correction of error (Weimer and Vining 2005: 284).

The main reason for this study is to ascertain whether or not South Africa is meeting the requirements necessary for a consolidated VET system to meet the socio-economic needs of the public it serves.

Using the qualitative method according to Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004: 6), the researcher makes meaning from the data by seeing the bigger picture and by converting the “raw” empirical information into what is known as qualitative research as a “thick description”.

The strong point of the qualitative method seems to be that it is descriptive, thus the new policy directives introduced by the DHET, concerning VET, can be described and assessed and this is the focus of the study (new policy environment supporting VET).

### **2.2.2 Research Instruments**

The study will use secondary data sources such as national databases, government policy documents and; scholarly books, articles and journals.

A literature review (secondary data) will be conducted in which the relevant literature and government policy documents will be scrutinised (in relation to the VET, OQSF and NQF). The SAQA, the NQF recognised professional bodies, SETAs and the QCs are relevant to the study and are key NQF role players and will serve as an appropriate case study when reflecting on how these entities interact within the OQSF to support the consolidation of the South African VET system.

The literature review illustrates how the DHET policy is implemented at all the different classifications in the post-school system whether non-academic or academic. The SAQA, the NQF recognised professional bodies, SETAs and the QCs are relevant to the study and are key NQF role players and will serve as an appropriate reference point when reflecting on how these entities interact within the South African VET system. The OQSF and QCTO will constitute the case study to be utilised in this study.

## **2.3 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMS**

Concepts are defined to clarify and align the research with the discipline in Public Administration.

### **2.3.1 Public Administration**

Public Administration is the scientific discipline concerned with the implementation of government policy and also the University subject practised in the Social Sciences.

The Constitution (RSA: 1996) states in section 195 (1) that public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution. Public administration is the activity carried out by the public official or public servant. Leonard White in Gladden (1966: 13) wrote that, defined in broadest terms, public administration consists of all those operations having their purpose the fulfilment or enforcement of public policy.

Public administration relies on administration law (administration of justice, legislation and common law) to enforce its rules, Shafritz (2004: 173) states law as enforceable rules that apply to every member of society.

### **2.3.2 South African Public Service**

The Constitution (RSA: 1996) states in section 197 (1) that within public administration there is a Public Service for the Republic, which must function, and be structured, in terms of national legislation, and which must loyally execute the lawful policies of the government of the day.

The White Paper on Human Resource Management (1997) states that there needs to be a professional and impartial Public Service which is representative of all sections of society for efficient and effective government, and the achievement of South Africa's

democratic, economic and social goals. The Public Service therefore is the driver of government policy and priorities, the custodian of service delivery.

### **2.3.3 Vocational Education and Training**

The labour market has become more specialised due to globalisation and economies demanding higher skills levels, governments are now investing in VET through state funded training organisations and subsidised internships, apprenticeships, learnerships, mentorships or traineeship initiatives.

According to Quality Research International (2011), VET is any formal, post-compulsory education that develops knowledge, skills and attitudes linked to particular forms of employment, although in some interpretations this would exclude professional education. VET includes initial training and continuing professional development and is closely linked to lifelong learning.

### **2.3.4 Post-school Education and Training**

Post-school education and training is the recognition of education and training opportunities at all Levels of the South African NQF and not just the education and training opportunities beyond NQF Level 4.

The NQF standard glossary of terms (SAQA 2014: 51) defines post-school education and training as the education and training opportunities for people who have left school as well as for those adults who may never have been to school but require education opportunities (the term *Youth and Adult Learning and Education* [YALE] is also used in some sectors).

### 2.3.5 Intergovernmental Relations

IGR can be the relationship between states for example the relationship between Zimbabwe and South Africa. IGR for the purposes of this study will encompass the system within the state, three spheres of government and mainly the mutual relations between government institutions.

IGR is a system which according to Thornhill (2002: 8) consists of all action and transactions of the politicians and officials in the national, sub-national units of government and organs of state. The Constitution (RSA: 1996) in section 239 defines “organ of state” to mean:

- a) any department of state or administration in the national, provincial and local sphere of government; or
- b) any other functionary or institution -
  - (i) exercising a power or performing a function in terms of the Constitution or a provincial constitution; or
  - (ii) exercising a public power or performing a public function in terms of any legislation, but does not include a court or judicial officer.

The IGR system of any state fosters an environment for co-operative government which in turn needs to adhere to the principles of good conduct which according to Powell (2010: 3) are fair-dealing, inclusive and transparent decision-making, co-operation on matters of national interest and resolving disputes through political processes not courts.

### 2.3.6 Public Policy

The establishment of an integrated VET system is an initiative which is government driven and as such encompasses the implementation of public policy.

According to Birkland (2001: 9) public policy is the term that refers to the actions of the government and the actions that determine those intentions [...] furthermore public

policy is the sum of government activities, whether acting directly or through agents, as it has an influence on the life of the citizens. Public policy is therefore a written document articulating a goal that the executive and legislator intend pursuing, a memorandum of understanding (contract) between government and the people.

According to De Coning (in Cloete, Wissink and De Coning 2006: 19) there are three major public policies at a high level and include the following:

Firstly, political/executive policy which cabinet, assisted by the high ranking officials mostly situated within government department to make decision and implementation of government priorities.

Secondly, there are administrative policies which assist administrators to carry out the mandated role by cabinet to implement decided policies and other procedure such as budgeting.

Lastly, there are extractive policies such as taxes, which serve to redistribute resource in society.

### **2.3.7 Policy Analysis**

According to Fox, Bayat and Ferreira (2006: 89) policy analysis generally aims at either describing, as accurately as possible, the process followed to make a particular policy or determining what alternative actions can be taken to make the most advantageous policy.

### **2.3.8 Policy Implementation**

According to Pressman and Widasvky in Brynard (2005: 3) policy implementation is to carry out, accomplish, fulfil, produce and complete. This pertains to accomplishment, fulfilment and completion of a policy programme.



### **2.3.9 Policy Evaluation**

According to Dye (1998: 338) policy evaluation is the assessment of the overall effectiveness of a national programme in meeting its objectives, or assessment of the relative effectiveness of two or more programmes in meeting common objectives.

Policy evaluation research is the objective, systematic, empirical examination of the effects ongoing policies and public programmes have on their targets in terms of the goals they are meant to achieve.

### **2.3.10 Occupation**

According to the NQF standard glossary of terms (SAQA 2014: 47) an occupation is a set of jobs or occupational specialisations where the main tasks and duties are characterised by a high degree of similarity (skill specialisation) and are grouped together on the Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) as an occupation; occupations include trades and professions.

### **2.3.11 Occupational Qualification**

Occupational Qualification means a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession resulting from work-based learning and consisting of knowledge and theory modules, practical skills modules and work experience modules [note: the definition in the Skills Development Act (no. 97 of 1998) currently still refers to unit standards and the newly developed occupational qualifications on the QQSF are modular based and not unit standard based as the historical QQSF qualifications are, this definition would need to be amended accordingly].

### **2.3.12 Organising Framework for Occupations**

The OFO is a coded classification system to encompass all occupations in South Africa, used as the DHET's key tool for identifying, reporting and monitoring skills demand and supply in the South African labour market (SAQA 2014: 48).

### **2.3.13 Professional Body**

A professional body is any body of expert practitioners in an occupational field; this includes an occupational body (SAQA 2014: 52). A professional body can be both a statutory body such as the South African Nursing Council, South African Pharmacy Council, Engineering Council of South Africa or Health Professions Council of South Africa and it can also be a non-statutory body such as the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, Association of Accounting Technicians or the Institute of People Management.

Both the statutory and non-statutory bodies are recognised in relation to the South African NQF. 'Council' in the South African context therefore refers to statutory 'professional bodies' and these are referred to as Councils and not QCs.

## **2.4 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

Chapter 1 provides for a brief historical review and outlines the South African VET environment, the motivation for the research and the problem statement.

Chapter 2 presents the research objectives, research questions and research methodology. This chapter also gives the definition of concepts to be used throughout the study. Concepts include, Public Administration, South African Public Service, VET, Post-school Education and Training, Intergovernmental Relations, Public Policy, Policy Analysis, Policy Implementation, Policy Evaluation, Occupation, Occupational Qualification and Professional Body.

Chapter 3 outlines Public Administration theory in relation to the OQSF, the roles, responsibilities and functions of the QCTO are assessed based on the theoretical framework discussed. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the impact of policy implementation, policy evaluation and good governance on the public service; and how the policy process can influence whether or not the country realises its sustainable socio-economic development goals.

Chapter 4 analyses the IGR framework in post-2005 South Africa. Outlines the role and function of IGR forums, IGR practices and the impression IGR can have on policy implementation in South Africa.

Chapter 5 focuses on the OQSF and the determination by the MoHET on the 14 December 2012 as amended 30 August 2013. The OQSF context and scope is unpacked and commendations to encourage administrative co-operation, amongst the relevant stakeholders to positively contribute to the integration of the VET system in South Africa, are outlined.

Chapter 6 provides findings, recommendations, areas for further research and a conclusion in relation to the NQF, OQSF and the consolidation of the VET system in South Africa.

## **2.5 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The policy environment within which the OQSF and QCTO operates is still not stable, for example the WPPET is not yet an enforceable Act of parliament and the SETA landscape itself is still not consolidated and is in the process of review presently. Additionally, because this is a qualitative study which utilised secondary data sources, there were time and resource limitations specifically in relation to interviewing key stakeholders (primary data sources) at the National Treasury, the Presidency, DHET, CHE and the QCTO. Firstly, National Treasury would have been in a position to provide information about the degree to which the changes in the OQSF environment impact on the finances of the state and whether or not the QCTO approach was sustainable. Secondly, The Presidency to ascertain whether the post-2009 systemic

changes in the NQF landscape are in line with the objectives enshrined within the NDP. Thirdly, the DHET to ascertain how the NQF is perceived within the department, specifically at the office of the MoHET (to ascertain the vision of the minister for the broader skills development landscape). Fourthly, the CHE on the purpose of the vocational/occupational qualifications that are already within higher education especially the rationale for the introduction of the professional masters and professional doctorate within the HEQSF. Lastly, the QCTO in order to ascertain what the vision of the senior management is in relation to the QCTO approach and its sustainability.

The study did not examine the accessibility of the QCTO being one of the key NQF regulatory bodies (along with SAQA, CHE and Umalusi) because currently these regulatory bodies are all within the capital city (Pretoria) in the Gauteng province and are within a 6.3km radius of the University of Pretoria (figure 1.1). Examining the geographical location of these regulatory bodies in relation to the country (figure 1.2) one realises that access is limited to the capital city (Pretoria) yet these entities are serving the entire country. Is it sustainable to have the QCTO only in Pretoria when all the SDPs across the country would be accredited to do so by the QCTO accreditation unit/sub-directorate and how will the current geographical location impact implementation and ultimately service delivery?

The study is also concluded before the SAIVCET is operational and an analysis of the functions of SAIVCET suggest that this institution will be the key institution within the VET system and post-school education and training landscape especially in relation to research, monitoring and evaluation; and implementation of the South African VET system.

## **2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter outlines the objectives for the research, research questions and research methodology. The chapter also provides clarity on the concepts and terms to be used and the limitation of this study. This chapter seeks to assess the pre-1994, post-1994 and post-2009 policy directives on VET in South Africa. The new policy directives

introduced by the DHET and the DHET's relationship with the various stakeholders involved in VET in South Africa is provided. The policy framework is categorised in an attempt to enhance a more integrated VET system that will meet the development needs of South Africa.

## CHAPTER THREE: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Public Administration, as a discipline, is complex because of the mere fact that it is firstly part of the Social Sciences and by implication attempts to explain and understand human behaviour, what Meehan (1988: 21) referred to as finding a generalised pattern of (human) experience thereafter forming hypothesis from that pattern.

Secondly, as a discipline Public Administration encompasses many other disciplines such as law, economics, sociology and politics and according to Thornhill and van Dijk, rely on these related disciplines to explain, direct and inform study and practice (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 1).

Lastly, Public Administration is unique to these other disciplines in that it operates within a political environment not independently as Woodrow Wilson conceptualised that there was a separation between politics and the public administration (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 6). The political environment in which Public Administration operates can potentially be unstable and therefore Public Administration can be positively or adversely influenced by democratic consolidation or in turn influence such consolidation.

Consolidation is the final process in the political processes involved in democratisation. There are many definitions of what democratic consolidation really is but Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan's definition in Mottiar stands out when they argued that:

Democracies can be considered consolidated democracies when democracy becomes internalised behaviourally, attitudinally and constitutionally. Behaviourally, a democracy is consolidated when no significant national, social, economic, political or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a non-democratic regime or by seceding from the state. Attitudinally, a democracy is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion, even in the midst

of major economic problems and deep dissatisfaction with incumbents, holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life, and when support for anti-system alternatives is quite small or isolated from pro-democratic forces. Constitutionally, a democracy is consolidated when governmental and non-governmental forces alike become subject to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the bounds of the specific laws, procedures and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process (Mottiar 2002: 1).

Thornhill and van Dijk (2009: 1) contend that it is trite to state that the study of Public Administration is a product of the national state. The researcher agrees with this because even in the ancient Greek city-states for example, administration of the public by the councils and mere participation in the 'Assembly' back then was an administrative action.

The same Assembly where, for example Socrates the 'father' of philosophy stood trial and was convicted, that too was an administrative action well before the 16<sup>th</sup> century where absolutism in Europe would create an environment which would then be the origins of the nation state. "However, it is important to state that the Discipline as a member of the Social Science fraternity is inextricably linked to human action and human behaviour" (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 1). Public Administration operates within a state and more importantly therefore impacts on the *demos*.

Consolidation of democracy is hence very important for the modern state because consolidation represents a state which is stable and stability is important for foreign investment and foreign investment in the 'Global Village' is important for economic growth.

The free market capitalist world economic system is to a large extent controlled by multinational companies and organisations (e.g. IBM, IMF, World Bank) which will not invest in an unstable state. In order for the Public Administration to deliver its services to the *demos* there need to be resources available, the resources and a stable political system allows for an effective and efficient Public Administration (public service) which is transparent, accountable and not delegitimised by corruption.

### **3.2 BACKGROUND**

The New Public Administration, New Public Management and New Public Service theories of Public Administration represent an attempt by Public Administration scholars to realign the relevant theories/schools/movements to suit the requirements of the Discipline (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 10).

And a need arises for such theory because “contemporary governments believe that the hierarchical structures and top-down approaches to policy implementation no longer address the problem situations faced by policy makers” (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 10). Basically Public Administration needs to adapt to the ever changing global environment and determine new innovative ways for the Discipline to remain prominent or even relevant within the Social Sciences.

### **3.3 NEW PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

The New Public Administration (NPA) developed at the Minnowbrook conference in 1968, requested scholars that were all under the age of 35 for their views on Public Administration. The young scholars took the conference over and it had a lasting influence on Public Administration and the New Public Administration was born.

Various themes developed during the Minnowbrook conference including: Change, Values, Relevance, Social Equity and Client focus. The NPA should be aware of change and be able to adapt to the ever changing environment because the ability to adapt has a great influence on Public Administration and efficiency.

The NPA should be client based and bureaucrats should not be the decision makers; it should therefore be democratic. The NPA must focus on policy issues and policy development rather than management (Frederickson, 1997).

Public Administration has changed since the Minnowbrook conference, in practice, elections became more prominent, specifically as more colonies throughout Africa and



Asia gained independence, to give people fair opportunity to be part of the system and in academia the field has grown (Frederickson, 1997).

In 1988, there was a second Minnowbrook conference held at Syracuse University's Conference Centre co-ordinated by H. George Frederickson (Professor at the University of Kansas). At this conference (20 years later) the old scholars of the Minnowbrook conference in 1968 (the group of 1960's) with new scholars (the group of 1980's) came together to talk about Minnowbrook 1 and compare the two generations with each other and how Minnowbrook 1 influenced government affairs and what the future for Public Administration would be (Frederickson, 1997).

Differences between the 1960's and the 1980's groups included: firstly, there was only one female in the 1960's group and there were 14 females in 1980's group which pointed to the fact that gender equality had taken place (Social Equity). Secondly in the 1960's group all the scholars were educated in Political Science yet in the 1980's group most were educated in Policy Studies, Economics, Planning and Law therefore there was growth in the study of Policy (Frederickson, 1997).

The similarities of the 1960's and the 1980's groups was that: the same themes came forward like, social equity, human relations, democracy and so forth (Frederickson, 1997). Public Administration has the 3E's namely Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economic whereas the New Public Administration has the 3E's plus Social Equity as a fourth component.

The most recognised concepts from the NPA are fairness, social equity, anti-bureaucratic and client-focus approach. This means that NPA is all about the people and how government treats people in all spectrums of society, in many societies (especially in Africa) there is poverty and the government should concentrate on helping the poor and give them a fair chance and equal opportunity because they do not have the resources (education, excess to capital).

Anti-bureaucratic meant that the government should not have all the control in the country, but the people should have a say and they must govern together, government

should only be the leaders and not the decision makers. This in itself gives meaning to the ideal of democracy (rule by the people). Transparency is therefore very important in public administration and therefore clear communication channels are very important.

According to George Frederickson (1997) the key concept for NPA is *social equity*. Social Equity is all about the people and fairness. John Rawls (1971), each person should have equal rights. Frederickson (1980), equity in the public service.

Everyone in society must have equal rights no matter the age, gender or capability and these equal rights are most important in the public service and that is one of the main goals in the NPA.

### **3.3.1 Is NPA feasible in South Africa?**

Yes, because of social equity, social equity is an important ideal in a developmental state such as South Africa which has set itself certain socio-economic goals. South Africa is a Democracy and a Democracy is all about the people and involving them in all processes of governance.

South Africa is driven by social equity type of legislation such as the *Employment Equity Act* and the *Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act* amongst others. This is to ensure that people get the fair treatment they deserve in all aspects of society. One of the objectives of the South African NQF deals with the 'redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities' and therefore the NQF is also driven by social equity.

## **3.4 NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**

The New Public Management (NPM) was conceived by Christopher Hood in 1989. NPM is also known as "Entrepreneurial Government" which aims at Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness (The "famous" 3E's of public administration).

The NPM was formed in a time of globalisation, liberalisation and pluralism and therefore needed to change with the times (adapt) and be more goal oriented and measurable. As a new paradigm of public administration, NPM points to the failures and inadequacies of public sector performance over time and the problems lying squarely in the nature and processes of public sector activity and traditional public administration (Kalimullah et al 2012: 1). Kalimullah et al (2012) contend that this represents a way of reorganising public sector bodies to bring their management approaches closer to business methods.

Gaebler and Osborne characterised NPM as (ten principles): government performing a steering mechanism for service providers, government empowering their citizens, performance of government being efficient and economical, government emphasising goals, government being customer oriented, government fostering a competitive environment, government anticipating problems beforehand to prevent them in advance, government focusing on saving money and not spending it, government decentralising and lastly, government emphasising market mechanisms (Governance, D 2006: 4-5).

According to Christopher Hood (1991) the principles of the NPM are:

- a) Emphasis on measurable performance and not on policy.
- b) Emphasis on service and away from bureaucracies.
- c) Emphasis on cost-cutting.
- d) Give managers freedom to manage.
- e) Self-regulation.

The reduction of bureaucracy is one of the characteristics according to Carroll (1998) and Sharma (2006).

There are two principles recognised by Pollitt (1993) and Walsh (1995) for the NPM namely Managerialism and Indirect Control. Managerialism tries to increase efficiency through the use of better technology, productivity, clear management roles and the

authority which comes with management. Indirect control in order to improve quality place the emphasis on delegation, good information systems, contracts and markets, measurement of performance, regular audits and inspections (Kolthoff, Huberts. van den Heuvel).

Nicholas Henry (2004) has six ideas that are the root of NPM indicated by the University of Waseda:

- a) Government should be entrepreneurial and improve quality of service.
- b) Government should work with other governments and achieve social goals.
- c) Government must have measurable results to indicate their performance.
- d) Government should improve accountability.
- e) Government should empower citizens.
- f) Government should solve problems.

The most important concepts that came forward in the NPM are the 3E's (Effectiveness, Efficiency, Economy), a goal oriented approach, a customer oriented approach, and a result oriented approach (measurable results), employment empowerment, non-bureaucracies and the ten principles by Gaebler and Osborne (Governance 2006: 4-5).

The NPM is all about the customers and how they are being treated and they must be given good service. It is important that it can be measured to get actual results on how to improve bad service and make service even better. The government should save money and not spend it on things the clients do not need, they should not be selfish and spend it on themselves; it is very important to take the people into account when spending money.

Democracy is important to ensure everyone can have their say on how things must be managed in the government, but the government should not interfere in personnel relations and should give managers the freedom to manage and be self-regulating. Government should focus on decentralisation and not be the main decision makers in all areas of society.

We live in a world where globalisation is taking place and technology plays an important part in it, therefore it is important for the government to be updated with the latest in technological innovations to ensure a competitive environment and be able to recognise any problems in time to solve them.

### **3.5 NEW PUBLIC SERVICE**

The New Public Service (NPS) is a theory or movement which has been conceptualised by Public Administration Scholars Janet Denhardt and Robert Denhardt from the Arizona State University in the United States. According to Denhardt and Denhardt these are the seven principles embodied in the NPS:

- a) Public administration is politically neutral, valuing the idea of neutral competence.
- b) The focus of government is the direct delivery of services. The best organisational structure is a centralised bureaucracy.
- c) Programmes are implemented through top-down control mechanisms, limiting discretion as much as possible.
- d) Bureaucracies seek to be closed systems to the extent possible, thus limiting citizen involvement.
- e) Efficiency and rationality are the most important values in public organisations.
- f) Public administrators do not play a central role in policy making and governance; rather, they are charged with the efficient implementation of public objectives.
- g) The job of public administrators is described by Gulick's POSDCORB (1937: 13).

The theory encompasses the “notion of responsiveness and strengthening the interaction between public administrators and their society” (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 12). “A movement built on work in democratic citizenship, community and civil society, and organisational humanism and discourse theory” (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000: 549).

Democratic citizenship is an important part of the modern state. Two of the leading contemporary scholars of democracy Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan affirm the necessity of this link with particular forcefulness: [W]ithout a state, no modern democracy is possible...modern democratic government is inevitably linked to stateness (sic). Without a state, there can be no citizenship; without citizenship there can be no democracy” (Brown 2006: 130) therefore without the state, the New Public Service theory would be without its citizen to citizen relationship ideal.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) also mentions civil society in the NPS and “civic society theory is a loosely defined and diverse set of approaches, which emerged in the 1980s and was closely identified with struggles in Central and Eastern Europe against the Soviet Empire. Its distinguishing mark is that it privileges civil society over all other moments or spheres of social life, on the basis that civil society furnishes the fundamental conditions of liberty in the modern world. Its mission is to defend civil society from aggressive powers which beset it: on one side, the political power of the state, and on the other, the economic power of money” (Robert and Shirin 1997: 9).

Organisational humanism is the movement away from dogmatic bureaucratic control synonymous with public administration and the top-down approach, moving towards a more people centred approach. With the discourse theory wanting, foster an environment of participation “placing citizens, citizenship, and the public interest at the forefront” (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000: 550) of any activity.

### **3.6 POLICY INTERVENTION**

According to Fox, Bayat and Ferreira (2006: 53) there are eleven phases to the stage model of the policy process:

1. Initiation denotes becoming aware of a policy-making issue;
2. Agenda-setting is about placing the issue on the policy-making agenda and determining priorities;
3. Processing the issue includes identifying the problem and major stakeholders;
4. Considering the options is an identification of alternative forms of action;

5. Making the choice is selecting an alternative or combination of alternatives from among those that have been selected;
6. Publication is making decisions public through various media;
7. Allocation of resources refers to budgeting and selecting resources for implementation;
8. Implementation is the design and initiation of action programmes;
9. Adjudication means enforcing the policy through administrative and legal procedures;
10. Impact evaluation refers to monitoring the results and determining the value of policy action; and
11. Feedback refers to generating and sending reports to the relevant decision makers regarding the impact of the policy.

Policy evaluation and impact assessment (feedback) therefore deals with stage ten and stage eleven of the policy process.

### **3.7 POLICY EVALUATION**

Policy evaluation is one of the stages in the policy-making process and in the stage model of the policy process follows implementation and adjudication.

According to Anderson (2003: 245) when the policy process is viewed as a sequential pattern of activities, its final stage is policy evaluation. Anderson (2003: 245) further asserts that this is more an art than a science, policy evaluation encompasses the estimation, assessment, or appraisal of a policy, including its content, implementation, goal attainment, and other effects.

Anderson called policy evaluation an art because this stage of the policy process, unlike the other stages, can be applied retrospectively in the policy making process. Impact assessment is addressing the policy outputs and the policy outcomes of a specific policy or programme and thereby also providing a way for feedback (stage 11).

Cloete in Cloete and Wissink (2005: 211) wrote that “in its ideal form, policy evaluation or assessment should be viewed as a judging process to compare explicit and implicit policy objectives with real or projected outcomes or results or impacts”.

If policy evaluation is the assessment of the overall effectiveness of a national programme in meeting its objectives, or assessment of the relative effectiveness of two or more programmes in meeting common objectives (Dye 1998: 388) then policy evaluation research is the objective, systematic, empirical examination of the effects ongoing policies and public programmes have on their targets in terms of the goals they are meant to achieve (Dye 1998: 338). Thomas Dye’s definition is referring to the prospective nature of policy evaluation (not its retrospective potential) what Anderson (2003: 245) referred to as the “sequential pattern of activities”.

Fox and Meyer in Cloete and Wissink (2005: 211) defined evaluation as “the use of a policy-analytic research method or technique to measure performance programmes so that the continuous change in activities can be determined with a view to improving effectivity (sic), especially their impact on the conditions they are supposed to change; also the systematic measurement of performance in terms of specific policies, guidelines and procedures; passing judgment on others, assessing blame or praise; the use of research techniques to measure the past performance of a specific programme - in particular the programme’s impact on the conditions it seeks to modify - for the purpose of changing the operation of the programme so as to improve its effectiveness at achieving its objectives”.

According to Shafritz, Posavac and Carey in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 212) policy evaluation or assessment is normally undertaken for the following reasons:

- a) To measure progress towards the achievements of policy objectives.
- b) To learn lessons from the project/programme for future policy review, redesign or implementation strategies.
- c) To test the feasibility of an assumption, principle, model, theory, proposal or strategy.
- d) To provide political or financial accountability.



- e) To advocate a cause better.
- f) For public relations purposes

Valadez and Bamberger in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 212) further mention the following as benefits for policy evaluation:

- a) It will provide a precise assessment of the nature and the extent of the impacts that can be expected.
- b) It can show that the observed changes were not due to the projects (but to external factors) and thus avoid investment in projects that are unlikely to produce the desired benefits.
- c) It can assess the factors contributing to project impact and thus help planners improve project design.
- d) It can estimate the time period which the impacts are likely to occur.

Anderson (2003: 245) claims that “policy evaluation, as a functional activity, is as old as policy itself. Legislators, administrators, judges, pressure-group officials, media commentators, and citizens have always made judgments about the worth or effects of particular policies, programmes, and projects”.

With the dominance of liberal democracy globally and democratic modernity as a theory, evaluation is therefore inevitable. An example of this is participatory democracy which requires more citizen participation in decision-making in a country where this in itself would constitute evaluation, even the freedom of speech inherent in liberal democracy allowing the media to critique a policy is considered a form of evaluation.

Fox, Bayat and Ferreira (2006: 57) mention that “public bodies are stating their missions, as well as formulating, implementing and evaluating strategies to meet the demands of the modern government” therefore policy evaluation is crucial for the effective and efficient functioning of any modern state.

Given that evaluation can be time consuming, complex and can require substantial resources, Cloete and Wissink (2000: 213) outlined a few questions to be asked before a decision to conduct an evaluation is taken:

- a) Is there clarity about what is to be evaluated?
- b) Is the reason for evaluation clear and justified?
- c) Will the results influence future policy-making?
- d) Is there sufficient time for the evaluation?
- e) Is the evaluation feasible?

In the event of these questions not being answered to the satisfaction of the decision makers, then evaluation would therefore be fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

### **3.7.1 Types of Policy Evaluation**

Policy evaluation can be in the form of impressionistic evaluation, process evaluation and systematic evaluation. Impressionistic evaluation is the unsystematic evaluation done by for example the Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille (as a pressure group official) on a policy influenced by partisan ideology. Impressionistic evaluation is therefore a more subjective form of evaluation which incorporates many and all forms of bias.

Process evaluation focuses on the operation and administration of a policy and asks questions such as: Who is the target group or priority stakeholder? Is there accountability and transparency regarding the allocation of resources? What is the date of commencement of set policy? Are the rules and procedures being adhered to? Is the implementation being done in an ethical manner? Process evaluation would be useful to a Minister wanting to improve the administration of a policy within his or her portfolio.

Systematic evaluation according to Anderson (2003: 246) employs social science methodology to measure the societal effects of policies or programmes and the extent to which they are achieving their goals or objectives.

Dye (1998: 333) defines systematic evaluation to mean careful, objective, scientific assessment of the current and long-term effects of policies on both target and non-target situations or groups, as well as an assessment of the ratio of current and long-term costs to whatever benefits are identified. Both these definitions suggest a more scientific, formal and objective form of evaluation free of any bias.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 215-216) also mention different types of evaluation but these all fall within the parameter of process evaluation and systematic evaluation and exclude impressionistic evaluation. Schouwstra and Ellman (2006: 8) stated that the fact that evaluations should be an integral part of the continuous policy-making cycle and should be done at regular intervals by the policy makers themselves does not diminish the importance of separate evaluation units within ministries and organisations or independent evaluations done by outsiders. All those evaluations have their own function and can reinforce the learning process within the policy-making cycle and within organisations.

By excluding impressionistic evaluation, Cloete and Wissink did not formulate a holistic framework for the different types of evaluation. Theo Jans (2007) in his article stated that the problem with policy evaluation and assessment is that there is “no universal and fixed criteria” in the process. Cloete and Wissink attempt to formulate universal and fixed criteria which is difficult to do because of the prediction element inherent in the policy process. Every policy or programme has a unique set of factors that need to be evaluated.

### **3.7.2 Evaluation Designs**

Anderson (2003: 247) mentions three basic evaluation designs which are used by researchers namely: the experimental design, the quasi-experimental design and the before and after study. Dye (1998: 343) adds an extra design; the projected-trend-line and post-programme design.

The experimental design involves having two groups, namely a treatment group and control group randomly selected from the target population. The treatment group receive what the programme or policy has to offer while the control group does not. A comparison is made between the two groups. The disadvantage of this design is the cost implications, time and possible unethical considerations given that one is dealing with people.

The quasi-experimental design determines that the treatment group is compared with another treatment group thereby having a comparison group. An example of this is comparing Eastern Cape target group members with Western Cape target group members. The disadvantage with this design is that the results are tainted by internal characteristics that could influence the findings, for example comparing Mpumalanga malaria cases to Gauteng malaria cases when Mpumalanga is close to Mozambique which has definitive malaria issues.

The before-and-after study compares the results of a programme or policy after implementation to the conditions that existed prior to the programme or policy's existence. The disadvantage of this design is that there could be other explanations for particular results, for example a malaria vaccine programme in Mpumalanga commencing in June. The results will be compromised because it would be winter and mosquitoes cannot survive in temperatures below twelve degrees Celsius which would then qualify as an alternative explanation to the results of the malaria vaccine example.

The projected-trend-line and post-programme design is a comparison between the trends before a programme commences which are placed on a timeline and are projected prospectively. The results of the actual programme (post-programme) are then compared to those pre-programme projections with the difference then forming the basis for the actual results of a programme.

### **3.8 IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

According to Dye (1998: 338-339) the impact of a policy is all its effects on real-world conditions, including:

- a) Impact on the target situation or group
- b) Impact on situation or groups other than the target (spill over effects)
- c) Impact on future as well as immediate conditions
- d) Direct costs, in terms of resources devoted to the programme
- e) Indirect costs, including loss of opportunities.

Policy impact is therefore the examination of the tangible results of a policy or programme rather than examining the purpose of the policy. When assessing the impact of a policy, both policy outputs and policy outcomes must be examined to ascertain the actual impact of a policy.

Anderson (2003: 248) defined policy outputs as the things actually done by agencies in pursuance of policy decisions and statements. Using the 2010 World Cup or Gautrain as proxies will focus outputs on tax revenue collected, social grants paid and traffic fines collected.

Outputs can be calculated and statistically presented, but a focusing on outputs by a government department can give the illusion of successful implementation of a particular policy. The increase in the matric pass rate in recent years is a good example of the illusion of successful implementation by focussing on outputs because DBE decreased the pass rate from forty to thirty percent causing the pass rate (output) to increase.

Every policy is meant to remedy some pressing governmental or societal issue or wrong which in turn forms the goal or purpose of a particular policy. A policy could, for example, not be affecting its target group, yet statistics on collections and expenditure by a department could suggest progress when in reality the policy is not achieving its intended purpose (target group).

“Policy outcomes, in contrast, are the consequences for society, intended and unintended, that stem from deliberate governmental action or inaction” (Anderson 2003: 249).

An example in the South African context is the policy passed to allow social grants for mothers with children, the purpose of the policy was to help the mothers with the children (intended outcome), but the same policy has caused an increase in teenage pregnancy (unintended outcome).

Such unintended outcomes are common in the policy process because policy is reliant on prediction and human behaviour and social trends are unpredictable. The problem of error is common in social science disciplines.

Impact assessment is therefore a fusion of policy outputs and policy outcomes and is to be conducted as accurately and objective as possible. This assessment forms part of the stage eleven of the policy process stages (described earlier), the feedback on a particular policy or programme.

### **3.8.1 Policy and definitional incongruities within the NQF landscape**

Within the NQF related policy environment there are disjuncture's that have the potential to cause confusion within the NQF landscape and the South African society in general. This policy confusion has the potential for regulatory capture by unscrupulous persons and practices. For example, the establishment of the DHET and DBE has some unintended consequences for SAQA. SAQA is a schedule three public entity that falls within the mandate of the DHET yet the NQF itself also includes the functional space that DBE operates within (NQF Levels 1-4 within the GFETQSF).

Under the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) SAQA had a qualification development function and within the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) SAQA is responsible for the development of policy and criteria for registering qualifications onto the NQF on the recommendation of the QCs.

Within the ambit of the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) the qualification development and registration process meant that before a qualification would be registered onto the NQF it would be recommended for registration by the SAQA Qualifications and Standards Committee (QSC) and final approval for registration is the function of the

SAQA Board/Executive Committee (EXCO). The qualification would therefore go through two quarterly Committee/Board/EXCO sittings before it is registered on the NQF.

Within the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) SAQA's qualification development role shifted to the three sub-frameworks. The move from the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) to the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) was meant to simplify the NQF without compromising on the quality yet within the ambit of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) a qualification now has to go through four quarterly Committee/Council/Board/EXCO sittings before it is registered on the NQF. On the OQSF specifically before a qualification is registered it must be presented at the QCTO Occupational Qualifications Committee (OQC) for approval and thereafter it is presented at the QCTO Council before it is recommended for registration and submitted to the Directorate for Registration and Recognition (DRR) at SAQA. At SAQA it is still submitted for review by the SAQA QSC.

The SAQA QSC and the QCTO OQC evaluate the qualifications using the same national registration criteria and this represents duplication rather than simplification within the qualification development and registration process of the NQF. The SAQA QSC was established under the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) to support the registration process when there were still National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and Standard Generating Bodies (SGBs) as per the qualification development and standards setting mandate within the ambit of the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995). The NSBs and SGBs have since been abolished yet the QSC still exists seven years after the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) was repealed by the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008). As a result of maintaining the SAQA QSC, the registration of an occupational qualification within the ambit of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) does not support the notion of systemic coherence and the simplification of the NQF but instead amplifies bureaucratic bungle.

The NQF as a single integrated framework is meant to be a consensus-building mechanism but the SAQA lacks the "Authority" to really create uniformity within the NQF landscape, the three sub-frameworks and the SETAs should not be working in silos. The lack of a NQF forum that can foster consensus-building at a non-executive

but operational level is important in order to avoid causing confusion in the NQF landscape and South African society.

The NQF definition for a qualification is “a registered national qualification consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose or purposes, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning and which has been assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the NQF and certified and awarded by a recognised body”.

The HEQSF however defines a qualification as “the formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by an accredited institution (HEQSF 2014: 13) and a programme is “a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that lead to a qualification” (HEQSF 2014: 13). These different definitional interpretations of the same concept within the NQF amongst the regulatory bodies can lead to further confusion in the general public and further alienate the NQF from the society it is to serve.

In the amendment of the MoHETs determination published on the 30 August 2013 it states that the OQSF operates between NQF Levels 1-8 yet in the published HEQSF document, published more than a year after (17 October 2014), it states that “Qualification types beyond level 6 on the OQSF have not been determined pending further advice” (HEQSF 2014: 7) in stark contradiction to the amendment to the determination as determined by the MoHET this too can cause confusion within the NQF and create the perception that the NQF regulatory bodies are truly working in silos.

### **3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Weimer and Vining (2005: 284) contend that policy analysis inherently involves prediction and because the world is complex we must expect to err. To err is human and theories about human behaviour are simply not powerful enough for us to have great confidence in most of our predictions.



The ever changing economic, social, and political conditions can make even our initially accurate predictions about the consequences of adopted policies go far astray as time elapses. Our design of policies should acknowledge the possibility of error and therefore we ought to design policies that facilitate detection and correction of error (Weimer and Vining 2005: 284).

The answer to the question posed by Weimer and Vining is intrinsically linked to a blending of governance, policy implementation, policy evaluation and impact assessment.

An example of this potential 'blending' is how "the *ubuntu* concept is increasingly playing a role in South African organisations. It is based upon the principles of hospitality, collective trust and unconditional dignity" (Bergh and Theron 2006: 243).

The blending of concepts in the social sciences is not a new nor peculiar phenomenon; it is a necessary innovation which can help to keep a discipline relevant. This is necessary in the ever changing global environment which has placed new challenges to the social science disciplines and particularly social science concepts and definitions.

Governance ideology is influencing governments all over the globe as is evident in that most constitutions incorporate or enshrine governance as a tool to achieving sustainable development goals.

Olowu (2002: 1) wrote that governance has become an important issue in development policy discourse and social science research and defined governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social development (Olowu 2002: 4). This illustrates the immense way that governance is influencing the social sciences currently and could therefore be influential in any new theories within the social sciences.

In order to achieve economic and social development goals, efficient and effective policy is essential and policy evaluation and impact assessment is a crucial stage in

the policy process. According to Olowu (2002: 5), the primary criteria for distinguishing between good and bad governance has to do with the outcomes of policies promoted by public organs.

Good governance is the result of the activities of public service institutions as they work with other societal organisations to formulate public policies and programmes, which are implemented to improve the people's welfare, reduce poverty, and realise other public and societal goals (Olowu 2002: 5).

It seems then that the key to economic and social development, not just in South Africa, but on the continent as a whole, is governance coupled with the policy process with improvements in policy implementation, policy evaluation and impact assessment.

Improvements such as using project management in the public service, better education to improve skills development and having a more educated society overall should be pursued. In improving the policy implementation, policy evaluation and impact assessment, a programme for sustainable economic and social development is required. "Democracy is the dependent variable and economic development is the independent variable" (Landman 2000: 6). To support the cooperation, coordination and collaboration required for policy implementation a strengthening of the IGR mechanisms is required within the NQF regulatory environment.

Public Administration as a discipline is adapting to the demands of the modern state and more importantly the "global village" that we live in. The NPA, NPM and the NPS represent the stride the Discipline has taken to try and resolve the unpredictable demands of the modern world.

Even other Social Science disciplines such as political science have, over the years, realigned their theories in order to remain relevant to the ever changing human experience. An example of this is how Political Scientists readjusted Communism after the collapse of the Soviet Union and refurnished or reinvented their theory and then presented neo-Marxism and Orthodox Marxism as an alternative.

Much like the other Disciplines, the NPA, NPM and NPS represent a new alignment in the discipline. NPA represents an approach which puts the interests of the people first in that it focuses on social equity (the people and fairness) as an end goal. According to Thornhill and van Dijk, public administrators should not only be responsible for policy implementation but also for policy formulation - thus extending the boundaries of public administration.

The NPM relies on “market-like arrangements such as competition within units of government and across government boundaries to the non-profit and for-profit sectors, performance bonuses, and penalties (to) loosen the inefficient monopoly franchise of public agencies and public employees” (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000: 551). The NPM, because of its reliance on privatisation, market mechanisms and the business orientated approach, has brought about a new set of values to Public Administration. An example of this is that the citizen is treated more like a client this with the result that “numbers become more important than the welfare of the society it serves” (Thornhill and van Dijk: 12) which can lead to social welfare goals not being met.

The NPS encompasses the *ubuntu* concept which is based upon the principles of hospitality, collective trust and unconditional dignity (Bergh and Theron 2006: 243). The NPS stems from the view that “public administration should concentrate on balancing the alternative approaches to management and organisational design with the more humanistic tradition of serving society” (Thornhill and van Dijk 2009: 12).

The government belongs to its citizens (King and Stivers 1998:1)

The year 2004 is truly a time of celebration for all South Africans- a testament to how far a nation, that only ten years ago many believed was on the brink of civil war, **can come if there is a will to see that the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts.**

Nelson *Rolihlahla Mandela*

May 2004 (Sidiropoulos, E 2004:1)

The NPS therefore encompasses a more holistic approach to Public Administration as an alternative to laissez faire capitalism and strict managerial bureaucracy and will not

overlook democratic constitutionally enshrined principles such as fairness, justice and citizen participation. It is imperative for the OQSF to find ways to inculcate the ideals within the New Public Service in order to aid in the consolidation of the South African VET system.

## CHAPTER FOUR: INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) is a system used by government to achieve its cooperative government objectives. To clarify this point, consider the Department of Correctional Services. IGR incorporates all three spheres of government including the national department in Tshwane; the provincial department in *Bhisho*, Eastern Cape and the local prison in *Mdantsane*, a suburb in Buffalo City, Eastern Cape.

Cooperative government is when, for example the national director of formal education (*Tshwane*, Gauteng) coordinates with a regional director of education (*Bhisho*, Eastern Cape) who in turn coordinates with the teacher at the local prison (*Mdantsane*). This process of information sharing and consultation between the national director, regional director and teacher is the application of cooperative government principles in practice.

Bernadette Leon (2007) stated that intergovernmental relations are intended to promote and facilitate co-operative decision making and make sure that policies and programmes of government across all spheres encourage service delivery that meet the needs of citizens in an effective way. The emphasis being on the citizen as the primary beneficiary or primary stakeholder.

The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (no. 13 of 2005 - IGRFA) is relatively new legislation in South Africa and is meant to guide the three spheres of government in terms of effective collaboration, including the establishment of intergovernmental forums/structures.

This legislation also allows for the monitoring of the state of intergovernmental relations, with direct reporting to Parliament. Since the passing of the IGRFA in 2005, intergovernmental forums have been set up in all provinces and at district level.

The forums are the formal structures where intergovernmental dialogue takes place and although these forums are in many cases still in the process of maturing they do foster an environment for co-operation to take place.

## 4.2 BACKGROUND

According to Powell (2010: 3) there are political institutions that protect the national interest and integrity of spheres, facilitate coordination and consultation, regulate disputes and promote the rule of law. The IGR forums are such institutions or mechanisms and are therefore a platform for information sharing, consultation and dispute resolution. These forums aid in avoiding fruitless and wasteful expenditure within the spheres of government through spending on the same projects and by litigating against each other.

Section 41(3) of the Constitution (RSA: 1996) states that “an organ of state involved in an intergovernmental dispute must make every reasonable effort to settle the dispute by means of mechanisms and procedures provided for that purpose, and must exhaust all other remedies before it approaches a court to resolve the dispute”.

IGR fosters an environment for cooperative government which in turn needs to adhere to the principles of good conduct which according to Powell (2010: 3) are fair-dealing, inclusive and transparent decision-making, cooperation on matters of national interest and resolving disputes through political processes, not courts.

IGR forums are essential in facilitating cooperative government and thereby increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the spheres of government.

## 4.3 THE COMPOSITION OF IGR FORUMS

According to the IGRFA, IGR forums can be defined as consultative forums where executives of the different spheres of government come together to discuss matters of common interest. These forums play an important role in information sharing and resolving intergovernmental disputes.

According to the Practitioners Guide of IGR Systems in South Africa (2006: 63) “the forums are not decision making bodies, they are consultative bodies”. The

establishment of inter-provincial forums is enshrined in the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005.

Section 41(1) (a-h) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) recognises these forums under the principles of cooperative government and IGR thereby placing prerequisites that these forums should adhere to such as:

- a) preserve the peace, national unity and the indivisibility of the Republic;
- b) secure the well-being of the people of the Republic;
- c) provide effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for the Republic as a whole;
- d) be loyal to the Constitution, the Republic and its people;
- e) respect the constitutional status, institutions, powers and functions of government in the other spheres;
- f) not assume any power or function except those conferred on them in terms of the Constitution;
- g) exercise their powers and perform their functions in a manner that does not encroach on the geographical, functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere; and
- h) co-operate with one another in mutual trust and good faith by.

The major forum created was the President's Co-ordinating Council in 1999. The purpose was to assist in improving relations and coordination among national and provincial government. These structures according to the IGRFA are:

- a) President's Co-ordinating Council (PCC).
- b) National intergovernmental forums.
- c) Provincial intergovernmental forums.
- d) Municipal intergovernmental forums.

The President's Co-ordinating Council (section 6, IGRFA) comprises of;

- a) President;
- b) Deputy President;
- c) Minister in the Presidency;
- d) Cabinet member responsible for finance;

- e) Cabinet member responsible for the public service; the Premiers of the nine provinces; and
- f) Municipal councillor designated by the national organisation representing organised local government (SALGA).

The national intergovernmental forum (i.e. MinMec), which any Cabinet member may establish, is to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations in the functional area for which that Cabinet member is responsible. It comprises of (section 10, IGRFA);

- a) Cabinet member responsible for the functional area for which the forum is established;
- b) Deputy Minister appointed for such functional area;
- c) Members of the Executive Councils of provinces who are responsible for a similar functional area in their respective provinces; and
- d) Municipal councillor designated by the national organisation representing organised local government, but only if the functional area for which the forum is established includes a matter assigned to local government in terms of national legislation.

The Provincial Intergovernmental Forum (PIF) is a Premier's intergovernmental forum to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations between the province and local governments in the province. Premier's intergovernmental forum comprises of (section 17, IGRFA):

- a) Premier of the province;
- b) member of the Executive Council of the province who is responsible for local government in the province;
- c) other members of the Executive Council designated by the Premier;
- d) mayors of district and metropolitan municipalities in the province;
- e) the administrator of any of those municipalities if the municipality is subject to an intervention in terms of section 139 of the Constitution; and
- f) a municipal councillor designated by organised local government in the province.



The Premier is the chairperson of the forum and may invite any person not mentioned to a meeting of the forum.

Other provincial intergovernmental forums that the Premier of a province may establish include a provincial intergovernmental forum for any specific functional area to promote and facilitate effective and efficient intergovernmental relations between the province and local governments in the province with respect to that functional area. These forums comprise of (section 21, IGRFA):

- a) Any member determined by the Premier of the relevant province.
- b) Any provincial intergovernmental forum established for a purpose referred to until disestablished by the Premier.

The Municipal intergovernmental forum is a district intergovernmental forum to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations between the district municipality and the local municipalities in the district. It comprises of (section 25, IGRFA):

- a) mayor of the district municipality;
- b) the mayors of the local municipalities in the district or, if a local municipality does not have a mayor, a councillor designated by the municipality; and
- c) the administrator of any of those municipalities if the municipality is subject to an intervention in terms of section 139 of the Constitution.

The mayor of the district municipality or, if that municipality is subject to an intervention, the administrator of the municipality is the chairperson of the forum. The chairperson of the forum may invite any person not mentioned in a meeting of the forum.

#### **4.4 THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF IGR FORUMS**

These forums play very important roles in promoting and facilitating efficient and effective intergovernmental relations. These roles are stated in the Intergovernmental

Relations Framework Act (no. 13 of 2005) pertaining to the forums which are stipulated in the Act namely:

- a) President Co-ordinating Council (PCC)
- b) National intergovernmental forums.
- c) Provincial intergovernmental forums.
- d) Municipal intergovernmental forums.

The roles of the President's Co-ordinating Council are as follows (section 7, IGRFA):

- a) The Council is a consultative forum for the President to raise matters of national interest with provincial governments and organised local government and to hear their views on those matters.
- b) To consult provincial governments and organised local government on the implementation of national policy and legislation in provinces and municipalities.
- c) The co-ordination and alignment of priorities, objectives and strategies across national, provincial and local governments; and any other matters of strategic importance that affect the interests of other governments.
- d) To discuss performance in the provision of services in order to detect failures and to initiate preventive or corrective action when necessary.
- e) To consider reports from other intergovernmental forums on matters affecting the national interest, including a report referred to in section 21; and other reports dealing with the performance of provinces and municipalities.

The role of the National intergovernmental forums (MinMec) is to raise matters of national interest within that functional area with provincial governments and, if appropriate, organise local government and hear their views on those matters (section 11, IGRFA).

- a) To consult provincial governments and, if appropriate, organised local government on the development of national policy and legislation relating to matters affecting that functional area.

- b) The implementation of national policy and legislation with respect to that functional area.
- c) The co-ordination and alignment within that functional area of strategic and performance plans and priorities, objectives and strategies across national, provincial and any other matters of strategic importance within the functional area that affect the interests of other governments.
- d) To discuss performance in the provision of services in order to detect failures and to initiate preventive or corrective action when necessary.

The role of the provincial intergovernmental forums is to (section 18, IGRFA):

- a) Discuss and consult on matters of mutual interest, including the implementation in the province of national policy and legislation affecting local government interests, matters arising in the President's Co-ordinating Council and other national intergovernmental forums affecting local government interests in the province.
- b) Draft national policy and legislation relating to matters affecting local government interests in the province.
- c) The implementation of national policy and legislation with respect to such matters.
- d) The development of provincial policy and legislation relating to such matters.
- e) The implementation of provincial policy and legislation with respect to such matters.
- f) The co-ordination of provincial and municipal development planning to facilitate coherent planning in the province as a whole.
- g) The co-ordination and alignment of the strategic and performance plans and priorities, objectives and strategies of the provincial government and local governments in the province; and any other matters of strategic importance that affect the interests of local governments in the province.
- h) To consider reports from other provincial intergovernmental forums on matters of mutual interest to the province and local governments in the province and district intergovernmental forums in the province.

The interprovincial forum is a consultative forum and its role is for the participating provinces to discuss and consult on matters of mutual interest, information sharing, best practice and capacity building. Co-operating on provincial developmental challenges affecting more than one province and any other matter of strategic importance which affects the interests of the participating provinces (section 23, IGRFA).

The roles of the Municipal intergovernmental forums (section 26, IGRFA):

- a) The role of a district intergovernmental forum is to serve as a consultative forum for the district municipality and the local municipalities in the district.
- b) To discuss and consult each other on matters of mutual interest, draft national and provincial policy and legislation relating to matters affecting local government interests in the district.
- c) The implementation of national and provincial policy and legislation with respect to such matters in the district, matters arising in the Premier's intergovernmental forum affecting the district.
- d) Mutual support in terms of section 88 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998).
- e) The provision of services in the district, coherent planning and development in the district.
- f) The co-ordination and alignment of the strategic and performance plans and priorities, objectives and strategies of the municipalities in the district.

#### **4.5 IGR IN PRACTICE**

According to the Practitioners Guide to IGR South Africa (2006), IGR forums are meetings where regional development issues are discussed at a strategic level. The guide furthermore states that forums are in place so that the various role-players work closely together and that the activities they plan are integrated. Forums need to have clear channels of communication.

Within the NQF landscape there are IGR forums (NQF forum, CEO Committee and Inter-departmental NQF Steering Committee) which exist but are at executive level, the NQF forum particularly (comprising of the MoHET, respective QC Chief Executive Officers and chairpersons and the DHET Director-General) is somewhat detached from the operational level where senior and middle managers are involved in the implementation. The NQF forum is an inter-sectoral IGR forum which is in relation to section 13 (1) (f) (i) of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) which states that SAQA must, in order to advance the objectives of the NQF - develop a system of collaboration to guide the mutual relations of the SAQA and the QCs.

Proactive communication is the key for good IGR and it would seem that interaction between senior and middle managers within the NQF entities is essential. Proactive communication conveys information to relevant stakeholders in time so that all stakeholders are on track and are able to contribute to service delivery.

#### **4.6 IGR AND THE LAW**

The following four cases illustrate how the courts interpret matters pertaining to co-operative government and IGR with regards to the organs of state:

In *Uthukele District Municipality and Others v President of the Republic and Others* 2003 (1) SA 678 (CC) the court held that “the obligation to settle disputes is an important aspect of co-operative government, which lies at the heart of chapter 3 of the Constitution. If this court is not satisfied that the obligation has been duly performed, it will rarely grant direct access to organs of State (sic) involved in litigation with one another” (Akintan and Christmas 2006: 6).

In the *Ngqushwa Local Municipality v MEC for Housing, Local Government and Traditional Affairs* (2005) JOL 14776 (Ck) the court held that “the injunction against rushing off to court is aimed at ensuring the effective flow of communication and co-operation between the different spheres of government in order to enhance service delivery and to prevent the squandering of taxpayers' money on avoidable litigation” (Akintan and Christmas 2006: 7).

In the *National Gambling Board v Premier, KwaZulu-Natal and Others* 2002 (2) SA 715 (CC) the court held that “organs of State’s obligations to avoid litigation entails much more than an effort to settle a pending court case. It requires of the organ of State to re-evaluate the need...to consider alternative possibilities and compromises and to do so with the regard to the expert advice the other organs of State (sic) have obtained” (Akintan and Christmas 2006: 6).

In the *Matatiele Municipality and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others*, 2006 (5) BCLR 622 (CC) “The Court declined to express a view on whether Parliament can constitutionally exclude the legislature from the ambit of the IGR Framework Act. The issue was not argued before the Court in the case. It may well be argued at a later stage, at which time the definition of ‘intergovernmental dispute’ in the Act must also be considered. This exclusion is understandable based on the IGR Framework Act’s focus on executive intergovernmental relations. However, the exclusion does not exempt the legislature from the constitutional obligation to avoid disputes” (Akintan and Christmas 2006: 9).

IGR forums therefore play an important role in avoiding litigation between organs of state and are strategic platforms for open communication.

IGR forums are not restricted to entities in different spheres of government only they are also relevant to public entities within the same sphere that have mutual interests such as the NQF entities (SAQA, CHE, QCTO and Umalusi). There is a moral imperative for IGR forums to align operational processes and improve service delivery.

An example of this is the relationship between the SAQA’s DRR and the CHE’s Directorate for Programme Accreditation (DPA). Though the ad hoc arrangement is not a formal forum, it has helped improve the process between programme accreditation (CHE function) and qualification registration at SAQA in accordance with objectives of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008).

## 4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The composition, roles and functions of IGR forums are enshrined in the IGRFA and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The IGR forums therefore operate within a constitutional democratic environment and impact on the strategic planning of government.

A more modern definition of democracy defines democracy as “a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials. It is a social mechanism for the resolution of the problem of societal decision-making among conflicting interest groups which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence these decisions through their ability to choose among alternative contenders for political office” (Landman 2000: 66).

This definition adds a constitutional element and an element which is indicative of modern ideas such as cooperative government and IGR and the influence of such theory on modern government practices. IGR forums form part of what Landman (2000: 66) referred to as the social mechanisms for the resolution of the problem of societal decision-making but in this instance social mechanisms for decision-making within the spheres of government.

The NQF landscape needs SAQA to play a more prominent role in the system of collaboration which currently exists by forming and managing inter-sectoral IGR forums (between the QCs and SAQA) to enhance systemic coherence. It is the view of the researcher that the current system of collaboration within the NQF is at too high a level to have a meaningful impact on policy implementation and SAQA has a crucial role to fulfil in this regard. These IGR forums should assist in streamlining the mutual operational processes that exist between the QCs and SAQA and aid NQF implementation.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY - THE QSF WITHIN THE NQF

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mines and Works Act (Colour Bar Act), Act no. 12 of 1911, amended in 1926 (Act no. 25 of 1926) prohibited any person of colour from obtaining certification for their skills, as a result people of colour were forced into the 'cheap labour' category (Ndou 2013: 2). The Colour Bar Act aimed to reserve skilled work for whites only and resulted in the beginning of economic oppression for people of colour.

According to Ndou (2013: 2) the Colour Bar Act was originally designed to counteract the force of any economic advantages enjoyed by the Black community and the revised 1926 Act mirrored the belief that Whites would suffer significantly if Blacks were not legislated out of the labour market. The unfair exclusionary practices that developed in the workplace as a result of this Act was the catalyst for the formation of the ANC.

The unbanning of the political parties such as the ANC and the release of political prisoners in the late 1980s and early 1990s culminating in the first democratic elections in 1994 were the beginnings of a new reformed education system.

The education system was to cater for the training and education needs of all South Africans. The South African NQF was to be a key regulatory framework in which this reform would be possible. According to the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) the NQF is meant to:

- a) create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- b) facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within the education, training and career paths;
- c) enhance the quality of education and training;
- d) accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby
- e) contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.



VET and LLL are important elements of the current South African system and seem to be essential for any country attempting to eradicate poverty and increase the standard of living for its citizenry. Because of the segregationist legislation (1920-26) and *apartheid* regime (1948-94), the segregated labour market and education system needed to be transformed into a single integrated skills development system which would cater for all South Africans.

The South African NQF is one of the first generation NQFs, the only first generation NQF on the African continent and is unique in that it was the first transformational NQF in the world. There are three types of NQFs (Table 1.2) and not only is the South African NQF transformational in nature, but it is also inherently a social construct; a consequence of “negation politics” which took root in South Africa in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s through structures such as the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). As a transformational instrument, the NQF was to be utilised to accelerate redress of past unfair discrimination.

In the years after 1995, the NQF was reviewed twice and resulted in the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995) being replaced with the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008). The NQF Act, continued to mandate SAQA with the further development and implementation of the NQF, as the apex body in the NQF landscape.

The South African NQF had centralised ‘leadership and control’ under the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995). This was “diluted” under the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) which assigned the quality assurance role to three Quality Councils (QCs), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi).

The NQF Act required SAQA to develop a system of collaboration between SAQA and the three QCs for the further development and implementation of the South African NQF.

This chapter investigates the feasibility of limiting the OQSF to NQF level 6 (even NQF level 8) and the impact this would have on LLL in South Africa.

The chapter will briefly explore some of the current and emerging theories about teaching, learning and public administration. It will reintroduce VET as a concept and examine what the current status of OQSF qualifications registered on the NQF. Quintessentially, the status of the QCTO qualifications that have been recommended to the DRR of SAQA, thereafter will present the QCTO perspective determined from documents in the public domain to arrive at a conclusion about the OQSF, VET and LLL in South Africa.

## **5.2 CONTEXT**

On 14 December 2012, the Minister of Higher Education and Training (MoHET) determined the three NQF sub-frameworks, namely the Occupational Qualifications Sub-framework (OQSF), the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF), and the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework (HEQSF) which are under the authority of the three QCs respectively and which, collectively, comprise the NQF.

The MoHET, in the determination, had limited the OQSF to NQF Levels 1-6 when it was initially envisaged by some as a ten level sub-framework (levels 1-10 on the NQF). The MoHET had directed the SAQA to conduct a study on the feasibility of having occupational qualifications beyond NQF Level 6 on the OQSF. The SAQA had undertaken a study, in collaboration with the other QCs and recognised professional bodies and presented a report in fulfilment of the ministerial directive. The recommendations of this report had resulted in an amendment to the determination (30 August 2013) which increased the scope of the OQSF to Level 8 on the NQF.

For the South African NQF to succeed will require SAQA and the QCs to cooperate, communicate and collaborate within the legislative imperative of a single integrated framework. An additional feature of the NQF is that it is a relational framework which promotes and enables relationship building in generating a single coherent framework

which enables vertical, horizontal, and diagonal articulation between the three sub-frameworks.

Hypothetically, even if the OQSF only had one or two occupational qualifications within the NQF levels 9 to 10 space, the framework ought to accommodate these in the interest of promoting LLL within the OQSF space and on the NQF as a whole. At the same time, system coherence is also important and should be a serious consideration.

Everything that is done by the state is to be in the best interest of the learner (the priority stakeholder - the citizenry). To this end, the public administrators in the NQF landscape should create an environment where there are no “dead ends” for the learner. Social value is about optimally using the inputs, policies and resources available in order to improve the lives of the individual (learner) and society as a whole.

The MoHET published the sub-frameworks that comprise the South African NQF and outlined the nomenclature to be used within each NQF sub-framework. The nomenclature of each sub-framework of the NQF is illustrated in figure 1.3 (14 December 2012 Ministerial determination) and figure 1.4 depicts the NQF after the 30 August 2013 amendment to the Ministerial determination.

The general public understanding is that Umalusi and the QCTO are the custodians of VET in South Africa (in the absence of SAIVCET). The TVET colleges [formerly known as the Further Education and Training (FET) colleges] are under the jurisdiction of Umalusi and the occupational qualifications which are quality assured by the QCTO are on the OQSF. The QCTO (overall quality assuring body of the Occupational Certificates) and Umalusi (the QC which has jurisdiction over the TVET colleges and NCV) are key stakeholders in the South African VET system.

The occupational qualifications which are being developed by the QCTO, especially NQF Levels 5-6, are likely to be offered at the TVET colleges. The occupational qualifications beyond NQF Level 6 on the OQSF will be the qualifications that would build on from the NQF Levels 1-6 occupational qualifications which would allow for

articulation possibilities for the learner. Occupational qualifications fall within the ambit of the South African VET system, which is not yet consolidated.

A critical logic deficiency in the NQF environment, specifically in relations to the public entities or organs of state is the disregard for Administration theory. These practitioners tend to focus instead on learning and teaching theories to address systemic problems within the public sector. The teaching and learning theories seemed to relate to the QCTO's qualifications approach with the three components namely the theory/knowledge, practical skills and work experience component (RSA 2014: 23) rather and not on the OQSF as a regulatory sub-framework within the NQF (systemic coherence). This researcher argues that this focus is incorrect and has largely contributed to existing misalignment and lack of delivery on the part of the QCTO. The QCTO is a public entity which operates within a specific political and public administration environment and referring to public administration theory to explain the systemic issues within the public sector would have been useful.

In order for any study to be objective and credible all views need to be taken into account without bias regardless of how a view could be perceived at the organisation conducting such a study. The MoHET in the 14 December 2012 determination had stated that "it does without saying that the QCTO is vitally interested in this matter and its views must be accorded full weight" (RSA 2012: 6). It is unclear in the Ministerial determination of 30 August 2013 whether SAQA did in fact consult with and take into account the views of the QCTO.

### **5.3 SCOPE OF THE OQSF**

This chapter seeks to understand the rationale for the OQSF being limited to NQF level 6 and how this limitation could impact on LLL in South Africa. Furthermore, it seeks to understand the social value of having the OQSF up to NQF Level 8 or even 10 and further seeks to ascertain the unintended consequences this limitation could have for the South African NQF.

### 5.3.1 Theorising Learning

This chapter asserts that the OQSF encompasses teaching and learning which is focused on lifelong, life-wide and life-deep occupational and professional learning (Illeris 2008). In order for the QCTO to meet its mandate there needs to be development of occupational qualifications and part qualifications to enable greater access, mobility and progression within the South African NQF and furthermore this must facilitate the development of career pathways for learners.

The development of career pathways for the learner that are not just within the traditional academic system (theory based) but also within the VET system (practical skills and work experience based) which is within the scope of the OQSF. The QCTO approach intends to enable LLL in a non-traditional stream (theory/knowledge, practical skills and work experience components) in order to resolve the disjuncture between the competencies acquired by the qualifying learner (graduate) and what is needed by the labour market, what Illeris (2009) refers to as the “school-workplace interaction”.

Illeris when referring to learning (2003: 397) states that learning can no longer be perceived of as merely the acquisition of a syllabus or curriculum. In examining job advertisements or interviews for personnel managers, it becomes obvious that general skills and personal qualities are considered at least as important as professional qualifications.

The QCTO qualification development approach is aligned to a learning theory with three integrated components (theory/knowledge, practical skills and work experience component) and seems to be attempting to resolve the issue of graduate readiness by having the qualifying learner work ready.

The logical sequence is that what should comprise the qualification is much more than theory. Rather, “what should be learned in education as well as in working and societal life is a complex totality of traditional and up-to-date knowledge, orientation and overview, combined with professional and everyday life skills and a broad range of

personal qualities such as flexibility, openness, independence, responsibility, creativity etc.” (Illeris 2003: 397).

Illeris (2003) explains that the combination of the variety of learning theories into a comprehensive framework, using a very broad and open definition of learning, covering all processes that lead to relatively lasting changes of capacity... “avoids any separation between learning, personal development, socialisation, qualification and the like by regarding all such processes as types of learning when viewed from different angles or positions” (Illeris 2003: 397).

Anna Sfard (1998: 4) in her article states that there are two metaphors to learning (acquisition or participation metaphors) which in essence encompass the input approach (acquisition) and the outcomes-based and competency-based approach (participation).

The South African NQF has an outcomes-based and competency-based approach but has traces of the acquisition metaphor, with the character of both the GFETQSF and the HEQSF appearing to be inclined towards the acquisition metaphor (although not in totality, for example veterinary sciences, health sciences, education and engineering), whilst the OQSF appears to be more inclined to the participative metaphor. The definition of learning in the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008), defines learning as “the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, values, skill, competence or experience”, accommodates both metaphors.

### **5.3.2 The Locus of the QCTO within Public Administration**

The public administration theory used in this chapter is the ‘New Public Service’ and is used in order to contextualise the space the QCTO is operating within; also this will lead the analysis beyond merely learning and teaching theory.

The QCTO, as a schedule three public entity, functions within the Public Service in South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA: 1996) states in section 197 (1) that within public administration there is a Public Service for the

Republic, which must function, and be structured, in terms of national legislation, and which must loyally execute the lawful policies of the government of the day.

Chapter 1 of the White Paper on Human Resource Management (1997: 8) states that there needs to be a professional and impartial Public Service which is representative of all sections of society is essential for efficient and effective government, and the achievement of South Africa's democratic, economic and social goals. The Public Service therefore is the driver of government policy and priorities, the custodian of service delivery.

Public Administration as a discipline is adapting to the demands of the modern state and more importantly the "global village" that we live in. The New Public Service theory represents the stride the discipline has taken to try and resolve the unpredictable demands of the modern world.

In the QCTO context, a people-centred approach would help and more specifically an adherence to the Batho Pele principles.

As a public entity, the QCTO is in the service of the people, the "*demos*" in democracy and a people-centred approach is essential when dealing with members of the public. A people centred approach is described well in the eight *Batho Pele* principles which emphasise the manner in which the public service is to operate. *Batho Pele* principles, "people first", were introduced to transform the public service delivery and encompass (RSA 1997):

- a) Consultation
- b) Setting service standards
- c) Increasing access
- d) Ensuring courtesy
- e) Providing information
- f) Openness and transparency
- g) Redress
- h) Value for money

NPS theory encompasses the notion of responsiveness and strengthening the interaction between public administrators and their societies (Thornhill and van Dijk: 2009). It is argued that the QCTO needs to be guided by this notion because the QCTO is a public entity which is in service of the citizenry. The NPS is built on work in democratic citizenship, community and civil society, and organisational humanism and discourse theory (sic) (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000: 550).

Democratic citizenship is an important part of the modern state. Brown (2006) cites Juan Linz and Alfred Stephan when they “affirm the necessity of this link with particular forcefulness: [W]ithout (*sic*) a state, no modern democracy is possible...modern democratic government is inevitably linked to stateness (*sic*). Without a state, there can be no citizenship; without citizenship there can be no democracy” (Brown 2006: 130). Without the state the New Public Service theory would be without its citizen to citizen relationship ideal. The NQF as a relational framework (Bolton and Keevy 2012) needs this type of interaction amongst the various stakeholders, the collaboration, communication and coordination which is a LLL principle. Without democratic citizenship being encouraged, coupled with visionary leadership within the NQF landscape in South Africa, the South African NQF will not fully achieve its objectives.

The NPS furthermore encompasses the *ubuntu* concept based upon the principles of hospitality, collective trust and unconditional dignity (Bergh and Theron 2006). The QCTO would better serve the landscape if they applied this principle rather than an inflexible bureaucratic approach.

The NPS stems from the notion that public administration should concentrate on the balancing of the alternative approaches to management and organisational design with the more humanistic tradition of serving society (Thornhill and van Dijk, 2009) by placing citizens, citizenship, and the public interest at the forefront (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000: 550) of any activity. King and Stivers (1998:1) stated that the “government belongs to its citizens” and therefore government does not belong to the public servants. Public servants are to act *bono fide* and in the best interests of the public they serve as custodians of the public interest.



### 5.3.3 Lifelong Learning

“Lifelong learning as a guiding principle for educational reform...has the potential to assist people/countries/regions in sustainable socio-economic development” (Walters, Yang and Roslander 2012: 11).

### 5.3.4 VET as part of Lifelong Learning

VET is a vital component of LLL and plays an important role in poverty alleviation and can potentially increase the standard of living for all South Africans. VET originates from the word vocation (*vocare* - Latin) which according to Macdonald (1981: 1519) means “a calling...one’s occupation, business, or profession”.

VET has been perceived as a key driver in the industrialisation of successful East Asian countries (Fredriksen and Tan 2008) and yet, in the South African context, the VET system is the system in which the weakest learners are placed. This is equivalent, in the United States context, to Harvard University (HU) getting the best learners and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) receiving the weaker learners due to a perceived parity of esteem issue. HU is in the traditional system whilst MIT operates within the VET system and furthermore MIT has more Nobel Laureates than HU (48 and 81 respectively - official count).

The parity of esteem issue between the traditional academic system (theory based) and the VET system (practical and work experience based) is not well understood in the South African context because employers, parents as well as learners still perceive the VET system as a system where the weakest learners are accommodated.

Vocational, according to Macdonald (1981: 1519), is therefore “pertaining to, concerned with, or in preparation for, a trade or occupation...provides skills and knowledge for work through a standardised national training system”. In the South African context, the VET standardised national training system is epitomised in the OQSF and GFETQSF (within the NQF). This however still represents some duality

because two different QCs are functioning within the VET system instead of one central institution as the literature seems to suggest.

According to McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 8) the core function of VET is promoting employment chances and this is therefore linked to the NDP. VET according to McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 8) has resulted in a growing focus on the need for a 'radical' curricular overhaul and better relationships with the world of work. The NDP is meant to create wealth (Table 1.5) for the citizens of South Africa, the NDP represents the vision for the achievement of wealth for the citizenry. Strengthening the VET system can lead towards the creation of such wealth and have a positive impact on the South African economy and social cohesion.

McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 4) stated that the reason VET is neglected in the third world nations is because the emphasis on the international agenda for third world aid is on basic education. McGrath (Akoojee et al 2005: 5) further added that because VET did not become a Millennium Development Goal (MDG), VET was therefore downgraded in the donor agenda whilst it moved up the domestic agenda of donor countries (developed nations).

The contradiction in policy between the developed nations and developing nations was justified by the need for basic education amongst poor countries. Pertaining to basic education enrolment is high in South Africa, South Africa is regarded as having an emerging economy (hence its inclusion in BRICS), this reinforces the need for a strong VET system because learners are seeking post-schooling training and the lack of VET opportunities to support the increase in basic education provisioning since 1994 is now evident.

In the post-2013 era DHET would seem to be having a primary focus on VET, in order to enhance LLL and move away from the traditional HE focused paradigm to a VET focused paradigm within the South African society. Advocacy on VET is an essential component to shifting the thinking in the South African society and truly making the VET system the focal point and landscape of 'choice' for learners exiting from the basic education system.

### 5.3.5 Discussion

Fenwick (2013) cites Evetts (2011: 5) when referring to the “professional as being the knowledge-based category of service occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary education and vocational training and experience, with particular focus on what Evetts characterizes (sic) as Anglo-American systems of professional practice”.

In 2009, in an attempt to aptly address the education and training needs of the country, government split education into two Departments namely the DHET and Basic Education (DBE). These two Departments have different policy and functional directives to improve the quality of education thereby addressing basic education (DBE), VET and skills development separately (DHET). VET is turning out to be the vehicle for skills development in South Africa. The QCTO occupational qualifications will therefore be an important vehicle to enhance VET and LLL in the South African context.

Within the NPS, the public administrator grapples with issues around political power and the economic power of money. Professional bodies now occupy a central role in the NQF following the inclusion of sections in the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008) providing for the recognition of professional bodies. Many of these professional bodies had a vested interest (economic interest) in the OQSF operating beyond NQF level 6. The opinion rendered by the recognised professional bodies is not concerned with systemic coherence within the NQF and the opinion of such bodies should thus not have greater weight than that of the QCTO.

The QCTO approach is an attempt to resolve the disjuncture between attaining the qualification (graduating) and work readiness. This is in line with the government’s focus on the more than 3 million young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Minister Blade Nzimande (DHET: 2010) stated that there are approximately three million unemployed youth, between the age of 18-24 years old, who are not in a tertiary institution in South Africa or employed. The current VET system is therefore failing the youth and citizenry of South Africa and needs to be revamped. VET is specifically apt in improving employment rates and can help with the high

unemployment problem, estimated at around 26% (officially) and close to 40% (in the expanded definition of unemployed). The QCTO has a key role in VET and LLL and could serve as a catalyst in creating career pathways for learners within the OQSF.

#### **5.4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

The National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) was accessed to ascertain the current status of registered OQSF qualifications at NQF Levels 8-10; the qualifications which are classified under the OQSF which would be under the quality assurance mandate of the QCTO. From this data, which reflects qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF, it is apparent that there are a number of qualifications which are currently registered that are above NQF level 6. Table 1.3 illustrates the number of NQF registered occupational qualifications beyond NQF level 6 (updated 30 September 2014).

The summary in table 1.3 illustrates that there are national occupational qualifications in the NQF Level 7-8 space on the OQSF. A limitation would impact on LLL because this would cause a blockage in the system which would impact the learner and LLL. The table 1.3 summary is to merely illustrate the existence of these qualifications, some of these occupational qualifications are quality assured by the SETAs (a function delegated to them by the QCTO) and are linked to learnerships and apprenticeships.

A systemic blockage could have a negative effect on the country's learnership and apprenticeship model; and will have specific consequences for the learner (limit access to education and training opportunities within the OQSF). This would impact on LLL because there would be no progression on the OQSF. The OQSF represents a shift from the traditional academic pathway for learners in the South African context.

The education system in South Africa, having moved from a segregated pre-1994 system (along racial demarcation) toward a non-racial post-1994 system encompassing equality and guided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (no. 108 of 1996 - specifically the Bill of Rights - Chapter 2), needs innovation and strategic linkages within the NQF landscape.

Because there seems to be no set definition of learning and additionally no fixed model for the development of an occupational qualification, the QCTO approach with its three components (theory/knowledge, practical skills and work experience) could possibly be an enabler for more flexible forms of learning.

The practical skills and work experience component could help the learner to better understand the theory component which can sometimes be too abstract for the learner to conceptualise easily.

Illeris (2003) uses a broad and open definition of learning which covers all processes that lead to relatively lasting changes of capacity, whether they are of a motor, cognitive, psychodynamic or social character. “Lasting changes of capacity” is what LLL is about, a continuous, timeless and limitless process of learning captured in the “Yellow Book” (the ANC policy document preceding the 1994 elections) and translated into the documented objectives of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008).

It has become apparent that the modern higher education institution is to try and resolve the disjuncture between the competencies of the qualifying learner and work readiness, especially in the knowledge economy that South Africa aspires to have.

There seems to be a paradigm shift towards the integration of the acquisition and participation approaches on learning (Sfard, 1998) and the QCTO approach seems to be in line with this shift. In the QCTO approach, the employers (industry) and stakeholders in the education and training landscape partner together in order to integrate the learning in occupational qualifications to support the drive towards innovation and the socio-economic emancipation of all South Africans.

A number of recognised professional bodies are working with the QCTO to develop occupational qualifications at Levels 7 and 8 to meet the requirements of their specific profession. In 2013, DRR within SAQA received 18 recommendations from the QCTO for the registration of their occupational qualifications, of which four were above NQF Level 6 (all of them linked to NQF recognised professional bodies):

- a) Occupational Certificate: Tax Professional at NQF Level 8

- b) Occupational Certificate: Professional Principal Executive Officer at NQF Level 7
- c) Occupational Certificate: Supply and Distribution Manager at NQF Level 7
- d) Occupational Certificate: Financial Markets Practitioner at NQF Level 7

It would appear that professional bodies in the main would favour competencies at NQF levels 7 and 8 or higher. While the need for occupational qualifications beyond NQF level 6 has been established, the necessary question to be answered has to do with the viability for the system of such an arrangement.

The QCTO is relatively new (having been established in April 2010) in comparison to the other two QCs. The QCTO may well be more effective operating between NQF Levels 1-6 in the short-term until such a time as the organisation is well established before it can operate beyond NQF Level 6. The QCTO could focus on capacity building before it is expected to operate optimally as the CHE and Umalusi. The QCTO was initially incubated at the DHET and only since December 2013 has the QCTO even had its own premises and other infrastructure such as its own IT, HR, Finance and other support functions essential in any organisation in order to function optimally. In the long-term however to limit the OQSF in anyway could have negative effects on the VET system and the potential growth within the occupations accommodated within the OQSF that cannot be accommodated within the HEQSF. Limiting the OQSF even to NQF Level 8 could cause a systemic blockage and limit innovation within the South African VET system. MIT for example operates within the VET system and is renowned globally for innovation in technology and novelty is a NQF Level 10 competence not NQF Level 8 or even 9.

## 5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

"For anyone to think that in 19 years we will have corrected everything, particularly if you take the fact that education was used as an instrument to subjugate the majority of the country, then indeed that would be funny in my view." Jacob Zuma

(Sourced from an article by Natasha Marrian in the *Business Day* newspaper, 25 June 2013)

In light of the historical context of education and training in South Africa the NPS theory encompasses a more holistic approach to Public Administration as an alternative to laissez faire capitalism and strict managerial bureaucracy and will not overlook democratic constitutionally enshrined principles such as fairness, justice and citizen participation.

The QCTO, as a state entity was established only five years ago and still needs adequate “Staffing” in order to deliver on its mandate. Staffing is a critical component which is included in one of the seven principles embodied in the New Public Service. The NQF as a regulatory framework needs individuals who are schooled in the discipline of Public Administration; individuals who understand how the public administration is to function. This would help with the implementation problem South Africa is experiencing within the public service. In Germany for example there are even public administration universities that train public officials within the discipline in order to better understand the public service they are to operate in. The South African government, in attempting to up-skill public officials has recently established the NSoG for this purpose. However, the jury is still out whether the new model will work given the NSoG predecessors, namely PALAMA and SAMDI.

The QCTO approach encompasses a modern outlook on learning and is well suited to cater for the modern day professional. The QCTO at the moment seems to be having a human resources challenge (small staff contingent) rather than a flawed qualifications approach as it is perceived within the NQF landscape.

At this point there is no research that shows whether or not the current QCTO approach will be successful because the QCTO was only established five years ago (impact assessment) unlike the other two QCs that have been in existence for well over a decade. Capacity building should be the primary focus for at least the next 5 years whilst allowing the newly formed SAIVCET to assist with the conceptual (including revising the current delegation model which is heavily reliant on a consultancy driven model) and other research related issues.

The DRR and the NLRD directorate allocated each of the currently registered qualifications to one of the three QCs; 59 occupational qualifications were allocated to be registered at NQF Level 7 and above on the OQSF (some previously allocated at NQF Level 6 in the pre-2009 eight level NQF).

The MoHET at the NQF conference earlier in 2013 had spoken about not wanting blockages and dead ends in the system, but rather wanted an integrated system that supports vertical, horizontal and diagonal articulation possibilities across the three sub-frameworks.

The QCTO itself is not ready to increase its scope of operation within the NQF level 7-10 space and for systemic coherence the scope of the CHE could have been increased to cater for occupational qualifications in the NQF level 7-10 space because it is already well established. The CHE is already offering vocational qualifications such as Higher Certificates, Advanced Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Postgraduate Diplomas, the Professional Masters and the Professional Doctorate which cater for work-integrated learning (WIL) which includes... 'workplace-based learning' (HEQSF 2014: 17) and this is the same as the work experience component in the QCTO approach.

However, the HEQSF and the CHE caters for provider-based qualifications and is already well established and changing anything in the HEQSF and CHE space could have an adverse impact on a well-established sub-framework of the South African NQF and result in systemic instability on the NQF. Limiting the OQSF could have an adverse effect on the VET system of the country and therefore the OQSF should be operating at all levels of the South African NQF (1-10) as originally envisaged in order to enhance systemic coherence and the potential for innovation (new methods, techniques, processes, systems or technologies) by the SDPs and NQF recognised professional bodies operating within the OQSF.

The scholars (Walters, Yang and Roslander: 2012) seem to suggest that lifelong learning can aid sustainable socio-economic development; lifelong learning can also



be an enabler for consolidating the South African democracy and assist South Africa in having a knowledge economy.

Limiting the OQSF initially to NQF level 6 in the 14 December 2012 MoHET's determination due to the limited number of qualifications registered at the NQF Level 7-10 on the OQSF at the time, based on quantitative findings and not on qualitative research findings, was not good for the South African VET system. Even though the QCTO is not ready to assume the AQP function itself it can delegate the function to the NQF recognised PBs (in the interim) and thereafter monitor these already well established bodies. SAQA also monitors the NQF recognised PBs and this dual monitoring and evaluation of the NQF recognised PBs can assist in allowing the OQSF to operate at the 7-10 NQF Level until the QCTO can assume the function completely.

## CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The dissertation entitled: “An analysis of the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework in South Africa” intended to examine current policy options within the South African VET system and formulate an analytical framework that could lead to a consolidated VET system in South Africa. VET as a tool for sustainable development has an important role within the South African NQF and the South African economy. The policy options taken by the leadership can resolve the socio-economic problems faced by the country. The proposed framework is envisaged to guide the leadership in their policy options within the OQSF in order to facilitate coherent implementation.

Systemic coherence is essential in the NQF landscape and the roles of the SAQA, SAIVCET and the QCs need to be clearly defined. Any deviation in the legislative mandates of SAQA, SAIVCET and the QCs can have lasting negative effects on the sub-frameworks and ultimately the citizens of the country (long-term). The South African NQF was reviewed twice between 2000 and 2007 which resulted to the promulgation of the NQF Act (no. 67 of 2008), repealing the SAQA Act (no. 58 of 1995).

The main concern of the study was to analyse the OQSF and describe the policy environment in which the QCTO operates in order to aptly support the consolidation of the South African VET system. The main questions were:

- a) What is the QCTO approach?
- b) Which incongruities are potentially causing confusion and could negatively influence systemic coherence within the NQF policy environment?
- c) What mechanisms are in place to support systemic coherence within the OQSF and NQF?
- d) Should the OQSF have occupational qualifications at all levels of the South African NQF?

The main questions are to reveal how the OQSF is being configured in order to facilitate the consolidation of the South African VET system. The objective of the

OQSF and the QCTO approach is to bring education and training closer to the labour market by improving on the weak links between VET outcomes and labour market requirements.

Chapter 1 provides a brief historical review to the South African VET environment by outlining the pre-1994 education and training system, the South African NQF, VET and LLL. The motivation for the research and problem statement highlight the importance of strengthening the South African VET system. The QCTO approach is expounded and is linked to the NSDS III goals which are linked to the consolidation of the South African VET system. The notion of PPAs is introduced and explained using the SUWI and EWSETA instance as a mechanism that can assist within the South African VET system.

The purpose of an occupational qualification is to allow the qualifying learner to practice an occupation, reflected on the OFO including those occupations for which an artisan qualification is required (trades). The OQSF is therefore to develop occupational qualifications in order to respond to rapid changes in the skills demanded by the South African economy (Frederickson and Tan: 2008).

Chapter 2 focuses on the research objectives, research questions and research methodology to be outlined and utilised. This study utilised secondary data sources such as national databases (NLRD), government policy documents and; scholarly books, articles and journals. This chapter provides the definition of the concepts to be used, throughout the study, and the research framework.

Chapter 3 outlines Public Administration theory in relation to the OQSF, the roles, responsibilities and functions of the QCTO are assessed based on the theoretical framework discussed.

This chapter suggests possible Public Administration theories that could be utilised within the OQSF in order to support systemic coherence and lead to the success of the QCTO approach. The impact of policy implementation, policy evaluation, policy assessment and good governance on the public service is described (policy

intervention); and how the policy process can influence whether or not the country realises its sustainable socio-economic development goals is examined.

The policy process is described and incongruities in the NQF policy environment are outlined. One of the objectives of the OQSF and the QCTO approach is to bring education and training closer to the labour market by improving on the weak links between VET outcomes and labour market requirements. In order to achieve the above mentioned objective for example collaboration, cooperation and coordination is required and in this an integrated regulated IGR system is key.

Chapter 4 analyses the IGR framework in post-2005 South Africa. Outlines the role and function of IGR forums, IGR practices and the impression IGR can have on policy implementation in South Africa. The QCTO occupational qualification development approach is envisaged to cater for rapid changes within the various sectors and industries within the South African society. In order to achieve this political will and visionary leadership will be needed, together with consensus building mechanisms. The chapter expounds on the need for an improved IGR system and mechanisms (such as IGR forums) within the NQF and broader skills development landscape. Regulated IGR forums can have a positive effect on implementation within the NQF.

Chapter 5 focuses on the OQSF and the determination by the MoHET on the 14 December 2012 as amended 30 August 2013. The OQSF context and scope is unpacked and commendations to encourage administrative co-operation amongst the relevant stakeholders to positively contribute to the integration of the VET system in South Africa are outlined. The chapter investigated the feasibility of limiting the OQSF to NQF level 6 (even NQF level 8) and the impact this would have on LLL in South Africa, it also briefly explored some of the current and emerging theories about teaching, learning and public administration linking these to the QCTO approach.

Chapter 6 provides recommendations, conclusions and implications for the NQF, OQSF and the consolidation of the VET system in South Africa. Additionally, this chapter propositions areas for further research that could assist the decision makers within the VET system to make informed decisions.

## 6.2 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are ten key findings and recommendations that have emerged from this study:

### Finding 1

The quality assurance function of the QCs and specifically the QCTO is essential for the assurance of standards within the OQSF and NQF. Considering the lack of generic standards setting mechanisms within the SETA education and training quality assurance environment, the establishment and capacitating of the QCTO to be the single overarching standards setting and quality assurance body in the occupational (SETA) landscape should be prioritised.

### Recommendation 1

**Adequate staffing of the QCTO with personnel with the relevant expertise should be prioritised in order for the QC to fulfil its legislative mandate.** In fulfilling its legislative mandate as the overarching body in the occupational qualification quality assurance space the QCTO could improve how the OQSF is perceived by improving the quality across the entire occupational (SETA) landscape. An improvement of the quality within the OQSF can assist with articulation because articulation between the sub-frameworks of the NQF is dependent on trust and trust is present when the sub-framework in question is perceived to be producing quality learners. Furthermore, the QCTO approach ought to aid in the achievement of the goals enshrined in the NSDS III and NDP.

### Finding 2

The current IGR mechanisms within the NQF are at an executive level and need to be improved in order to create a community of practice at operational level within the NQF and specifically the OQSF landscape. Regulated IGR forums can assist with the

coordination, cooperation and collaboration needed between the main NQF regulatory bodies in order to fulfil the objectives of the NQF.

## **Recommendation 2**

**Improve the IGR mechanisms within the NQF regulatory bodies to support systemic cohesion.** Regulated IGR forums can create a community of practice at operational level within the OQSF landscape in order to assist implementation. A regulated IGR forum encompassing the DHET, SAIVCET, NSA, QCTO, SETAs, TVET colleges, Community colleges and employers could assist in identifying implementation overlap and areas of best practice.

## **Finding 3**

Though the HEQSF has occupational/vocational qualifications at NQF Levels 5-10 (Higher Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Postgraduate Diplomas, the Professional Masters and the Professional Doctorate) that have WIL much like the work experience component in the QCTO approach, the HEIs however have weak ties with the labour market (it is noted that this does not apply to all faculties/departments within all HEIs). Universities do not train for the labour market specifically but are in existence for knowledge creation. The strength of the occupational qualifications developed and registered on the OQSF is that they are developed through a demand driven approach and cater for the skills gaps (competencies) identified by the specific industry/profession/sector (labour market). Some of these competencies can be additional competencies needed within the work context and are beyond the generic competencies identified and taught by universities within a specific discipline or field.

## **Recommendation 3**

**The OQSF should function at all levels (1-10) of the South African OQSF and NQF in order to promote the LLL principle and support the potential for**

**innovation within various sectors and occupations in South Africa.** The sub-framework (OQSF) should enable innovation and aptly cater for the South African labour market; and not become a blockage or barrier to any occupation needing competencies beyond NQF Level 8.

#### **Finding 4**

The study found that the current duality in the TVET landscape is not assisting systemic cohesion and the consolidation of the South African VET system. The N1-N3 programmes currently assigned to the GFETQSF and Umalusi should be reassigned to the OQSF in order to cater for systemic coherence as the N4-N6 already reside with the OQSF. The GFETQSF should focus on the quality assurance within schooling and VET should be within the ambit of one NQF sub-framework (OQSF) and the responsibility of one QC. The TVET colleges should therefore be within the ambit of the OQSF and the QCTO in order to support systemic coherence and avoid duality.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The TVET colleges and N1-N6 programmes should be within the ambit of the OQSF and the responsibility of the QCTO.** This would enable the TVET colleges to offer labour market relevant occupational qualifications and all VET related qualifications would fall within one NQF sub-framework.

#### **Finding 5**

There is currently a negative perception or stigma toward the TVET college space (VET system) in South Africa and in order for the TVET college space (VET system) to be the landscape of 'choice' than a realignment is needed. This realignment could begin with a change in the nomenclature used within the VET system currently (FET colleges to TVET colleges). Not everything offered within the TVET college space is

‘technical’ and therefore TVET is not appropriate for all offerings within the TVET colleges, for example business studies is not technical.

### **Recommendation 5**

**TVET colleges should be named VET colleges in the South African context.** The TVET colleges should ideally be VET colleges in order to minimise the social stigma associated with the word “technical” and aid in consolidating the South African VET system and resolving the parity of esteem issue between the traditional academic system and the VET system. Perceptions and the negative stigma associated with the word ‘technical’ could negatively influence the realigning of the VET system as the system of ‘choice’ for learners in South Africa.

### **Finding 6**

The naming convention of the three sub-frameworks of the NQF is vastly different and ought to be the same in order to distinguish the Quality Councils from the statutory professional bodies (also known as Councils) and support systemic coherence. The current naming convention (Umalusi, CHE and QCTO) suggests that the three QCs are separate frameworks on their own rather than being three sub-frameworks of a single integrated NQF.

### **Recommendation 6**

**The CHE should therefore be renamed the QCHE, Umalusi should be the QCGFET and QCTO remain QCTO.** In the long-term this will help to consolidate the three sub-frameworks of the NQF and remove the confusion in terms of naming convention. The naming convention of the QCs responsible for the three NQF sub-frameworks should reflect their key responsibilities.



## Finding 7

With SAIVCET envisaged to assist with the implementation, research, monitoring and evaluation of the South African VET system. The establishment of the SAIVCET should be prioritised in order to operationalise the institute as quickly as possible in order to support the South African VET system and prevent scope creep (taking on functions beyond quality assurance) on the part of the QCTO and other entities in the skills development landscape.

## Recommendation 7

**Establishment and operationalising of SAIVCET should be prioritised.** The potential for scope creep can be detrimental for any QC and can result in a compromise in the quality assurance within a specific sub-framework. A compromise in quality in one sub-framework compromised the entire NQF and can negatively affect the operations of the institutions within another NQF sub-framework.

## Finding 8

SAQA's role should focus on the countrywide advocacy of the NQF (primary, secondary and tertiary level) and should have a chamber/directorate/unit with an ombudsman function much like the ombudsman in the financial sector in order to safeguard the citizenry. This legal authority will facilitate the ability to impose sanctions on bogus SDPs and unscrupulous individuals in order to safeguard the learners (citizens) from unscrupulous practices within the entire NQF landscape. Merely establishing a fraud unit that must still go through a SAPS unit can increase the effectiveness of the legal process but when there is an ombudsman the ombudsman has the authority to impose sanctions quickly with the same legal authority of a high court judge.

## Recommendation 8

**SAQA should have a national advocacy and ombudsman function.** In order to safeguard the citizenry the entire NQF landscape needs to be well understood and there needs to be a quicker manner to dispense justice on unscrupulous institutions and individuals within the NQF landscape.

## Finding 9

The QCTO does not have regional offices and in order to aptly cater to the TVET colleges (VET colleges), decentralising would help the QCTO better carry out its quality assurance mandate which is essential for the South African VET system.

## Recommendation 9

**The QCTO should be decentralised and have regional offices.** The lack of regional offices for the QCTO especially considering that every occupational qualification developed and registered will need accreditation of SDPs and assessment centres for the external integrated summative assessment. The SDPs and assessment centres are all over the country and QCTO officials having to move from a central local and this will be an expensive exercise and is not sustainable in the long-term.

## Finding 10

The proposed OQSF nomenclature is Doctorate Occupational Certificate, Masters Occupational Certificate, Postgraduate Occupational Certificate, Advanced Occupational Certificate, Diploma Occupational Certificate, Higher Occupational Certificate, National Occupational Certificate, Intermediate Occupational Certificate, Elementary Occupational Certificate and General Occupational Certificate (depicted in Table 1.6). The suggested OQSF nomenclature is aligned to the nomenclature within the other two sub-frameworks (GFETQSF and HEQSF) in order to easily

establish equivalence between qualifications in different sub-frameworks and aid systemic cohesion.

## **Recommendation 10**

**The OQSF nomenclature should be aligned with the nomenclature within the other two sub-frameworks (HEQSF and GFETQSF) in order to support systemic cohesion within the NQF.** In order for the OQSF to be a sub-framework of choice there should be no parity of esteem stemming from the nomenclature used within the NQF.

## **6.3 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

A comparative analysis on how occupational qualifications are developed in South Africa versus other countries with NQFs globally and the quality assurance methods, techniques, processes and systems utilised within the VET system in these countries. This could assist in the simplification of the current QCTO occupational qualification development process and quality assurance in order to aptly cater to the South African labour market (timeously without compromising on the quality within the OQSF).

The fundamental differences between traditional academic qualification and occupational qualification still needs to be unpacked and this could assist to better understand the articulation possibilities between traditional academic qualifications and occupational qualifications. This could assist HEIs with access related issues from the OQSF to HEQSF.

The QCTO approach caters for national qualifications (impacting on the labour market at a macro level) and not regionally specific provider-based qualifications (micro level) and the impact this could have on the labour market in a specific region and regional development has not been unpacked. The potential social value of having provider-based occupational qualifications on the OQSF as opposed to only national

qualifications only and how this would impact on systemic coherence within the OQSF and South African NQF is unclear.

## 6.4 CONCLUSION

NQFs and indeed the OQSF are LLL instruments or tools which can provide a platform for social dialogue. The OQSF can potentially lead to an increase in quality and create a legitimate quality assurance mechanism for VET in South Africa.

Even though the legacy of apartheid remains a significant challenge (created profound inequality) in the South African context, the OQSF and the action learning methodology within the QCTO approach, can equip the NEETs (and other learners) with occupation specific skills rather than focusing on abstract and theoretical content that is difficult to apply in the workplace (Service Delivery Review 2013: 25).

At the Vocational Education and Training Network (VET-NET) colloquium hosted by the University of Witwatersrand's Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL), Tamene (2013) stated that cooperation and collaboration between the Universities and the TVET colleges improved in Ethiopia only when there was state pressure through regulation because Universities have no TVET research focus (Tamene and Alemayehu, 2013: 21). Additionally, networking between universities and TVET colleges is non-existent and the VET-NET provided an opportunity for dialogue between Jimma University and surrounding TVET colleges and this served as a catalyst for the enhancement of professional competence (Tamene and Alemayehu, 2013: 24). This is largely also the case for the South African traditional academic universities and TVET colleges.

Through state regulation the universities and colleges were to share resources because of the common goals that had been created through such regulation, this is essential in an environment where resources are scarce and need to be utilised well. The University-TVET college relationship should be mutually beneficial:

- a) The university will increase its research output on VET; and

- b) The TVET College will benefit from an exchange of expertise, shared equipment and other resources.

There needs to be a change in the regulatory environment impacting on the funding model to aid VET and especially the linkages between the Universities, Universities of Technology, TVET colleges and Community colleges. If the funding model does not place an emphasis on VET research and VET collaboration within the NQF landscape, then the ideals in the WPPET will remain as ideals that are abstract from the South African reality.

Perceptions are important in an effort to change the stigma within VET and to have the TVET colleges as the institutions of choice for the school leaving learners, the word “technical” should be removed and colleges should be called VET colleges. The word ‘technical’ has a negative connotation in the South African context.

In South Africa, learners who are not capable or learners that were perceived to be injudicious went to technical high schools or Technikons and therefore the use of the word ‘technical’ is not going to help change the perceptions toward VET within the South African context. If South Africa is truly to have these institutions (TVET colleges) as the institutions of choice than perceptions also need to be changed and removing the word ‘technical’ can aid soothe perceptions. VET schools (secondary) could offer the occupational certificates between NQF Levels 1-4, whilst the VET colleges (tertiary) NQF Levels 5-6 (in the interim). In the long-term, with improved infrastructure, these VET colleges could function much like the Polytechnics that exist in the East Asia countries and the creation of clear career pathways for learners at all levels of the OQSF (1-10) is essential to support LLL and the potential for innovation within the VET system in South Africa.

The quality assurance function of the QCs is important because with improved quality within the sub-frameworks vertical, horizontal and diagonal articulation becomes easier across the sub-frameworks because articulation is reliant on trust whilst trust is reliant on the quality in education and training between various SDPs. The QCs should perfect their quality assurance practices without having to have their mandates

extended beyond quality assurance because scope creep can lead to a compromise in the quality assurance that each QC is mandated with. Umalusi for example has been critiqued on the quality of the National Senior Certificate in recent years supposedly due to compromised quality assurance mechanisms caused by scope creep, a result of the decline in quality has led to HEIs having to introduce the National Benchmark Test.

The qualifications that are developed within the OQSF are demand driven and are to rapidly cater for the South African labour market. These labour market related occupational qualifications should tap into the potential labour pool within the NEET population and also provide career pathways within the OQSF for the South African society.

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